

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION IN THE
TRIPLE A SCHOOLS OF MISSOURI

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

History of the Problem

Prior to the passage of Public Law 94-142 the public schools of America had seemingly been negligent in providing free and appropriate educational opportunities to handicapped children. Data reported in Sec. 602 (b) of Public Law 94-142 substantiated the fact that in 1974 approximately five million of the nation's eight million handicapped children were either being denied access to public educational programs or not provided with an adequate education appropriate to their needs. Because of this situation, a series of class action suits initiated in behalf of handicapped children resulted in a growing national awareness of the existence of educational inequalities and an apparent disregard of constitutional rights to which the handicapped were entitled (Turnbull and Turnbull, 1979). Subsequently, legal precedents were established, and federal influence began to emerge in the movement toward improved educational services for the handicapped.

Preceding Public Law 94-142, there were laws instrumental in advancing the movement toward improved facilities and free appropriate educational services for handicapped children (Turnbull and Turnbull, 1979). These laws were the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1967, the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968, the Economic Opportunities Act of 1972 (Headstart), the Education of the Handicapped Act, Section

504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Higher Education Amendments of 1972, the Developmental Disabilities Assistance Act, and the Bill of Rights Act of 1974. In 1975, the 94th congress passed Public Law 94-142 to ensure that a free appropriate public education would be implemented for all handicapped children.

The implementation of Public Law 94-142 has been complex and difficult in addition to having a direct impact upon the total operation and administration of public schools. The monumental task of translating the specific and uncompromising regulations into meaningful programs for handicapped children rested upon public school personnel. For example, the most significant trend that increased the tension in public schools in regard to special education was the issue of mainstreaming and the concept of least restrictive environment. According to Allen, Jason, and McKean (1982, p. 1), least restrictive environment meant, "placing a handicapped learner in the educational situations which will give him/her the best chance to succeed in life." The term mainstreaming was not mentioned in Public Law 94-142, but was a term popularized by educators to describe the integration of handicapped students into regular programs. Therefore, mainstreaming has been a concept based upon a fundamental belief that handicapped children benefit from involvement in educational environments with non-handicapped children.

With the gradual increase of additional definitions concerning who was handicapped among school age youth and with additional services being provided within the school, the need to designate a special supervisor or director position became more prevalent. Persons filling roles as special education administrators were usually selected for their knowledge of specialized educational programs and, as the programs de-

veloped, they were also seen as serving separate educational roles and populations. Special education became in many cases a parallel and often competing system within general education. Likewise, the special education administrator role became more complex. In situations where special education was accepted as an integral part of a general education system, the direct line of authority for administration of special education continued to reside with the general administrator. In this latter case, the special education administrator played a nominal role and had less responsibility for the services provided to special education programs. The literature seems to indicate that both types of administrative structure, general and special, have had distinct advantages for the provision of educational services to handicapped students. However, the move toward the least restrictive environment concept for special education has demanded administrative structures that permit and facilitate leadership functions beyond those found in the traditional type of educational systems.

Robson (1981) noted that special education administrators have been sensitive to their apparent role as outsiders in the affairs of educational organizations, but nothing in special education legislation has provided special education administrators with a rationale to increase their sphere of influence. However, the administrators of special education began to take on more traditional line responsibilities where handicapped populations produced role expectations upon building principals to which they were unable to respond effectively. Otherwise, it has behooved the building principal to do more than simply fight against incursions on their turf.

A study of role responsibilities in conjunction with the implemen-

tation of Public Law 94-142 conducted by Crossland, Fox, and Baker (1982) found that the greatest ambiguity and misinterpretation of responsibilities has occurred in the area of administration. Increasing importance has been placed upon the need for educators at all administrative levels to understand their job function related to the delivery of services to exceptional learners. The study concluded that role clarification has been an issue that has needed specific attention at the local education agency level.

Statement of the Problem

Although the history of special education has covered a relatively short period of time, the successful achievement of an efficient system of administration has been needed to ensure quality of special education services and to meet the guidelines mandated by Public Law 94-142. Further, perception of school personnel regarding the role, responsibilities and functions of the special education administrator have appeared ambiguous.

Torres (1977) felt that a need has existed for a person to serve in a full-time capacity as special education administrator in schools of over 4,000 students. The complexity of providing educational services to handicapped students has seemed to be evident, and general administrators have not appeared to possess the necessary background and qualifications to deal with this aspect of public school administration. Therefore, some educators advocated that a person knowledgeable in special education, whether general or special, should administer that phase of educational programs designed for handicapped students. Moreover, with the rapid increase in numbers of handicapped youth being

served by public schools and with the least restrictive environment concept being stressed, it has become all the more important to resolve any role conflicts which might exist regarding accountability for special education programs within school systems.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this investigation was to survey the status of the role and responsibilities of special education administrators in the public schools of Missouri. The study was designed to provide descriptive data that would reveal differences that might exist between the actual and ideal administrative responsibilities of the special education administrator as viewed by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators. The study was also designed to provide information on the personal characteristics of special education administrators, professional qualifications of the special education administrator, and characteristics of the special education services offered by the school districts. The research questions specifically addressed were:

1. Do significant differences exist between the actual responsibilities of special education administrators and the perceived ideal responsibilities of special education administrators as viewed by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators?
2. Do significant differences exist among the three professional groups, superintendents, principals, and special education administrators, regarding their perceptions of the ideal responsibilities of the special education administrator?

Objectives and Hypotheses

For the purpose of this study the following objectives were formulated:

1. To report the responsibilities actually performed by the special education administrator as determined by school superintendents, principals, and special education administrators.

2. To describe the ideal responsibilities of the special education administrators as perceived by school superintendents, principals, and special education administrators.

3. To compare the actual responsibilities with the perceived ideal responsibilities of the special education administrator.

4. To compare the perceptions of the three administrative categories, superintendents, principals, and special education administrators, regarding the ideal responsibilities of the special education administrator.

5. To identify the staff member who administers special education programs and at what level the staff member was placed in the hierarchy of the administrative organization.

6. To identify the professional background which superintendents, principals, and special education administrators believed to be necessary for special education administrators.

7. To identify the personal qualifications of special education administrators.

To accomplish the third objective, the following hypothesis stated in the null was tested:

H_1 : There are no significant differences between the actual re-

sponsibilities of special education administrators and the perceived ideal responsibilities of the special education administrators as viewed by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators.

To accomplish the fourth objective, the following hypothesis stated in the null was tested:

H₂: There are no significant differences among the three professional groups, superintendents, principals, and special education administrators, regarding their perceptions of the ideal responsibilities of the special education administrator.

Significance of the Problem

A review of the literature revealed that administration of special education has required leadership personnel knowledgeable in legalities and program development in order to meet the needs of handicapped students as mandated under Public Law 94-142. Furthermore, the literature indicated that there has been confusion between the specialist and the general administrator regarding their respective responsibilities in special education administration. This study approached the resolution of the problem by seeking to identify the actual responsibilities that were performed by the special education administrators, describe what superintendents, principals, and special education administrators believed the responsibilities of the special education administrator ideally were and to compare the actual responsibilities performed with the ideal as perceived by the three different professional groups. In addition, this study sought to identify the staff member who administered special education in the public schools of Missouri and the placement of that individual in the hierarchy of the school organization. The desired

professional requirements and personal qualifications of special education administrators as recommended by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators were also identified.

Assumptions

For the purposes of this study the following assumptions were made:

1. That ambiguities of administrative responsibilities and related functions in regard to special education programs have a direct impact upon the effectiveness of special education administration.

2. That building principals were accountable for the delivery of all educational services within their administrative jurisdiction.

3. That the respondents answered the questionnaire accurately and honestly.

4. That the size of the school district does not affect the perception of the actual and ideal role of the special education administrator by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators. This assumption was necessary because in the state of Missouri there are a great number of very small school districts which actually do not employ an individual specifically for the purpose of directing the special education program. There appears to be a tendency for districts to move in this direction. Further, the future promises an increase in the number of very small districts which will either designate an individual to coordinate special education programs or join a cooperative arrangement to provide this service. The Missouri State Directory (1984) indicates that a very small percentage of these small districts currently possess this potential. In contrast, in larger districts, the likelihood of a district employing an individual

full time to direct special education programs increases in direct proportion to a district's size. In reality, it would appear that the size of the school district would affect the perceptions of the actual and ideal role of the special education administrator by superintendents, principals and special education administrators. However, it would go beyond the scope of this research study to consider district size. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, this assumption was made.

Limitations of the Study

The following are the limitations of this study:

1. This population was limited to 546 school districts in the state of Missouri as listed in the Missouri School Directory, 1984-85.

2. The sample for the study was limited to 170 schools classified as triple A in the State of Missouri. Triple A signifies the highest level in the classification system utilized in the State of Missouri. It is based on the quality and quantity of educational programs and services offered within a school district. The components of the classification system are teacher qualifications, class size, instructional equipment, library resources, instructional materials, courses offered, services rendered, and activities and opportunities available to students. Due to the large number of small school districts in Missouri classified as double A (AA) and Unclassified (U), which do not employ full time special education directors, it was believed that the sample should be limited to include only those districts which would have the ability to contribute meaningful and useful information regarding the special education director position.

Definition of Terms

Generalist. For the purposes of this study, the building principal is referred to as a generalist, implying that this is an individual administratively accountable for all educational programs within a designated facility.

Handicapping Conditions. As defined by Public Law 94-142 (Federal Register, 1977), handicapped school age youth are those who have been diagnosed as mentally retarded, hard of hearing, deaf, speech impaired, visually handicapped, emotionally disturbed, orthopaedically impaired, exhibiting specific learning disabilities, or otherwise health impaired.

Individual Education Program (IEP). A written educational program that has been developed for the child's specified educational needs and implemented in accordance with federal and state guidelines in compliance with the laws for the handicapped (Federal Register, 1977).

Least Restrictive Environment. A provision of Public Law 94-142 (Federal Register, 1977) that has required placement of a handicapped student that, to the greatest extent appropriate, assured the student an education comparable to that of their nonhandicapped peers.

Local Education Agency Representative. A required member of the IEP Committee other than the child's teacher who represented the local agency and was qualified to provide or supervise the child's special education program (Federal Register, 1977).

Mainstreaming. For the purposes of this study, mainstreaming was the placement of students, part- or full-time, into programs with non-handicapped peers.

Public Law 94-142. The Education of All Handicapped Children Act, enacted in 1975, amended the Education of the Handicapped Act (20 U.S.C. Sec. 140101420), and Sec. 504, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. As a condition of receiving federal funds, the local education agency has been required to comply with the provisions of Public Law 94-142.

Special Education. Programs and services provided for students defined under Public Law 94-142 as having handicapping conditions.

Special Education Administrator. A member of a school district staff designated to administer special education programs and bearing such titles as director, consultant, coordinator, supervisor, specialist, or administrative assistant.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Literature dealing with the organization and administration of special education has been limited. Much of the writing and research dealing with special education leadership personnel is scattered and segmented; it seemed to lack a clear focus regarding the direction that special education administration has needed to take in public schools. The purpose of this chapter is to synthesize literature relating to administration of special education.

As a means of establishing an appreciation for the increasing complexity of special education administration, this literature review began with a brief summary of the broad field of special education. This was followed by a review of the legislation and litigation that has affected the special education movement in public schools and the progressive growth of special education programs. Next, a review of the impact of special education upon the authority structure of general education administration was presented. A study of the principals' involvement in administration of special education programs was believed to be relevant to the study of special education administration, and a section reviewing that relevant literature was included. Literature regarding the administrator of special education was reviewed. The

final two sections dealt with role expectations of special education administrators and the professional preparation and certification of such school officials.

Field of Special Education

A treatment of the broad field of special education itself seemed necessary before undertaking a consideration of the problems and concerns of special education administration. The creation of the special education administrator's position has needed to be given serious consideration when the special education program has grown to such an extent that responsibilities were comparable to other administrative services of the district.

Gallagher (1968) estimated that 10% of the school population, or five million children, were handicapped. At the time of this research about eight million students, representing a wide range of disabilities and needs, required some type of special education services. The expanding movement of special education advocate groups in the last four decades demanding improved services for exceptional children was noted by Kohl and Marrow (1970), who listed several motivating factors for the increase. These factors included: (a) the return of handicapped veterans from World War II; (b) the launching of Sputnik which created concern for educating the gifted; and (c) the advance of interest engendered by John Kennedy's President's Panel on Mental Retardation.

Meisgeier and King (1970) reported an expansion in special education enrollment of 500% between 1948 and 1966, or almost seven times faster than the 70% increase in the nation's school age population during that same period. They also reported that the estimated enrollment of two

million exceptional children in 1966 represented only 30% of those needing services. Boyer (1979) wrote a letter to the chief state school officers. In his letter, he stated that reports received from all 50 states and the District of Columbia indicated approximately 3.7 million handicapped children of school age were receiving an education consistent with their needs. However, he went on to observe that this number was far short of those needing services and called on states to identify and provide services for all school age children.

McDaniels (1979) noted wide variances in the way states have been serving exceptional children. McDaniels (1979) pointed out that Utah has served 3.1% of its school age population for emotional disturbances while Mississippi served only .01% for the same handicap. In the area of speech impairment, Louisiana served 3.9% while New Hampshire served only .7%. This vast diversity in the numbers and types of exceptional children served, and the great number still needing services, has made the field of special education exceedingly confusing. The pressure put on local school districts by higher governmental agencies to identify and offer programs and services to all children has created a stir within the administrative structures of most schools. What emerged has been a magnification of the administrative position in special education.

Legislation and Litigation

The recognition of the need to educate the handicapped and the conditions under which their education was to be provided according to Public Law 94-142 committed the nation to locate and serve the educational needs of the handicapped. This has placed additional

responsibility upon school administrations and increased the threat of litigation if regulations were not met.

When viewing the position of the special education administrator, one has needed to be aware of the judicial and legislative factors which have affected the field of special education and, as a result, the role and training of special education leadership personnel. A number of authors (e.g., Trudeau (1971); Carey (1971); Martin (1968) studied the various aspects of legislation and litigation regarding special education in the country.

Trudeau (1971) noted that state legislation concerning exceptional children was not new. Abeson and Weintraub (1971) observed that the earliest forms of mandatory law were passed in New Jersey and New York (1911) and Massachusetts (1920). Most states in the past gave local school districts the option of serving handicapped children through enabling or permissive legislation as opposed to mandatory laws. Abeson (1972) noted that the passage of mandatory legislation by an increasing number of states was responsible for removing this option. Carey (1971) outlined the following history of federal legislation related to special education.

1954. President Eisenhower signed into law the Cooperative Research Act which established a program of grants to be given to institutions of higher education and to states providing for cooperative support of educational research surveys, and for dissemination of information from educational research.

1958. Public Law 85-926 was designed to encourage teaching of mentally retarded children through grants to institutions of higher education and to state educational agencies. Under this program, these

grants were used to train professionals who would train teachers of the mentally retarded.

1961. Public Law 89-276 authorized support for training of classroom teachers of the deaf.

1962 and 1965. Public Laws 87-715 and 89-258 broadened the programs instituted by Public Law 85-905 into a comprehensive instructional program involving research and development, production, acquisition and training of teachers.

1962 - 1963. Programs passed under President John F. Kennedy for personnel working with the mentally retarded and the deaf provided a framework for much of the legislation to follow regarding the education of the handicapped. This resulted from President Kennedy's Mental Retardation Facilities and Community Mental Health Centers Construction Act of 1963, Public Law 88-164. Title III of this legislation combined already existing programs for the training of teachers for all handicapped children. Title III also authorized grants for research and demonstration projects relating to education of handicapped children.

1965 - 1966. The 89th Congress in 1965 and 1966 created long reaching programs for the education of the handicapped. The first piece of legislation was the National Technical Institute for the Deaf Act, Public Law 89-36, which provided for the establishment of an educational institution to complement the efforts of Gallaudet College.

The most important education legislation passed in the 89th Congress was the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Public Law 89-10 and its amendments, Public Laws 89-313 and 89-750, which provided direct assistance for educating the handicapped. Title I provided for a program of federal grants to the states for allocation to school districts

having children from low income families. The money was for projects supplementing the districts's existing programs for the disadvantaged.

1967. Public Law 90-247, the ESEA Amendments of 1967, authorized Regional Resource Centers to assist teachers and other school personnel in developing specific educational strategies. It authorized grants for recruitment of personnel and information on education of the handicapped, set aside Title III funds for innovation, and increased the program for research and related purposes in the education of the handicapped.

1968. Public Law 90-536, the Handicapped Children's Early Education Assistance Act, provided project grant funds for experimental pre-school and early education programs for exceptional children.

1969. Public Law 91-61 established a national center on educational media and materials for the handicapped to facilitate the use of new educational technology in programs for handicapped persons.

1970. ESEA Amendments, Public Law 91-230, extended the major aid programs for the handicapped under ESEA and created a program of special grants for research, training, and the establishment of model centers for the education of children with learning disabilities.

In addition to Carey's (1971) outline of the history of federal legislation, Turnbull and Turnbull (1979) noted that 1973 and 1975 were the two years that produced the most important and extensive acts of legislation regarding the education of the handicapped: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 with its implementing regulations and Public Law 94-142, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975. These two acts of legislation had an explosive and profound effect on the educational structure of this nation.

Keller (1977) wrote that Section 504's basic provisions were:

1. That handicapped persons be provided a free appropriate public education, regardless of the nature or severity of the handicap.
2. That handicapped students be educated with non-handicapped students to the maximum extent appropriate to their needs.
3. That evaluation procedures be improved in order to avoid inappropriate education resulting from misclassification.
4. That procedural safeguards be established so that parents and guardians can voice their opinions on evaluations and placement of children.

In the state of Missouri, House Bill 474 was passed by the 77th Missouri General Assembly to provide to all handicapped and severely handicapped students special education services to meet their needs. This law went into effect July, 1974 (Missouri House Bill 474, 1974).

The court for many years did not uphold the rights of exceptional children. However, beginning with the mid-1960s a series of court cases established the educational rights of the handicapped (Hobson v. Hansen, 1967; PARC v. Pennsylvania, 1972; Mills v. Board of Education of District of Columbia, 1972; Larry P. v. Riles, 1972; Lebanks v. Spears, 1974; Frederick L. v. Thomas, 1966).

Abeson (1974) wrote that in regard to the relationship between litigation and the special education administrator, that many special education administrators have avoided lawsuits. However, many soon welcomed lawsuits because they realized that favorable decisions could provide an effective lever to encourage administrators and policy-makers to do what was really needed for the handicapped. Bernstein, Kirst, Hartman, and Marshall (1976) expressed their concern that there is a growing need throughout the educational system to provide educational

opportunities for handicapped children. Their concern has been translated into action in the form of the removal of legal barriers to education for the handicapped.

Singletary, Collings, and Dennis (1977) reported that as of June, 1975, 33 states had proposed 106 new pieces of legislation regarding exceptional children. Nearly all states eventually passed extensive laws mandating full educational opportunity for the full spectrum of exceptional youth.

Weatherman and Harpaz (1975) noted the historical development of litigation and presented a series of court decisions which outlined the concept of least restrictive alternatives. These court decisions have essentially ended the old era of special education administration and management which used a simple model based on the premise that handicapped children's educational programs should be operated as a satellite system of mainstream education. Under this satellite system all the components of the special education program, including personnel, materials, equipment, and facilities, were seen as separate budget line items; they functioned as a separate subsystem. When special education and general administration did come into contact, general administrative concerns and decisions usually took precedence, especially regarding a child's placement in the educational mainstream. Weatherman and Harpaz's (1975) study indicated that because of recent litigation supporting and clarifying the rights of the handicapped, special education has been given the legal backing to support the movement from a quasi, separate but equal, educational system to a legitimate partner in the general school system.

Under the old satellite system the most important competencies for

a special education administrator to possess were detailed knowledge of handicapping conditions, options for placement, curriculum development, and state and local policies. However, the courts have caused a change in the position of the special education administrator.

Weatherman and Harpaz (1975) concluded that the recent judicial decisions affecting special education have done away with the old satellite system of special education and have caused a reentry into the mainstream of education. As a result, special education administrators are being thrust into new responsibilities requiring new skills and competencies.

Legislation firmly established the nation's responsibility to identify and educate the handicapped and, due to the highly specialized nature of the educational processes in the light of the laws, the need for special education school administrators was emphasized. Special education administrators saw litigation as a means of assisting them in the accomplishment of serving the educational needs of the handicapped. From this arose new responsibilities that were thrust upon the special education administrators and the eventual conflict that became apparent between special education administrators and general administrators.

Impact of Special Education Upon Authority

Structure of General Education

Administration

In the past regular educators and special educators have respected each others' expertise, but have made little attempt to understand their respective disciplines. Both categories of educators have been forced together more closely and consequently have had to share their expertise. Strong leadership has been required if Public Law 94-142 was to be effec-

tively implemented. Such leadership had to be concerned with innovation rather than maintenance.

Howe (1981) stated that role conflicts have frequently emerged between general and special education administrators. Often the principals were responsible to one assistant superintendent, and the special education director reported to a different assistant superintendent. This has made fertile ground for conflict. Moreover, with the rapid increase in numbers of handicapped children served by the least restrictive environment ideology, it has become most important to resolve the role conflict of who was responsible for what within a school building. In Howe's (1981) words:

The time when the principal had complete unilateral authority has gone. Most principals have needed to operate in a climate of participatory management. Special education directors have felt comfortable in using participatory management principles.

Robson (1981) stated that the principal has been expected to take the major responsibility in all supervisory and evaluation aspects of personnel administration within the building. Directors of special education have been appointed to provide minimal amounts of direct service in pupil functions or personnel administration. If principals were expected to deal effectively with new role expectations and avoid role conflict, they have needed to either consider sharing the special education responsibilities or ultimately equip themselves to assume the responsibilities.

Joiner and Sabatino (1981) concluded general administrators have demonstrated the lowest level of awareness of the handicapped compared to other groups studied. Their research confirmed the need to elevate the awareness of general education administrators, so they were in turn

able to influence their staffs in a manner favorable to the education of handicapped children. Special education administrators displayed the highest level of awareness and were characterized as having performed an advocacy function in response to the tenets of Public Law 94-142.

Shulman (1980) strongly felt that someone should be given the authority to write an IEP, and the same person should make certain the plan was implemented. This singular administrative designation has been necessary because in the past, after a plan was presented, someone with higher administrative authority might veto all or part of the plan. Shulman (1980) said the administrator could be a member of a building staff, a qualified special education administrator, or some other administrator.

Principal's Involvement in Administration of Special Education Programs

A first step toward providing appropriate education programs for the handicapped in the least restrictive environment has been determining what leadership roles are necessary, and what basic knowledge is needed by building principals. Increasingly, more responsibilities have seemingly been placed on building principals toward meeting the educational needs of the handicapped. The responsibilities have seemed to include overseeing all aspects of the special education delivery system ranging from referral to placement. Thus, the principal has seemed to need to assume a critical role in every phase of the prescribed process outlined by Public Law 94-142 in determining if a child needs special education services, what services are necessary, and how they will be provided. These demands upon the principal have seemed to imply a need

for principals to include in their background special preparation in the way of in-service training, seminars, or university courses as a means of enabling them to understand the educational services to be delivered to the handicapped as mandated by Public Law 94-142. Otherwise, when the principal has not assumed direct responsibility for special education administration, the goals of special education have seemed to become confused, ineffective, and subject to being ignored. Such a condition has many times become a source of litigation. Furthermore, the lack of direct leadership from the principal has seemed to introduce the possibility of shared responsibility with a special education administrator and the eventual conflicts that seem to arise between dual systems within the same general system.

Garen (1979) found that in districts where integration of the handicapped had not been promulgated by the principal, special teachers have had to cope with extra work. When a handicapped student was to be integrated, the special teacher was expected to approach regular teachers one by one to see who would work with the child. Regular teachers, having received no directives from their principal, felt little responsibility to cooperate. Teachers have usually responded to the directives of their principals. They have felt comfortable when the principal has informed them of procedures whereby special education personnel were able to confer with them about placement of handicapped children.

Schrag (1977), Cochrane and Westling (1977), and Davis (1980) acknowledged the importance of the principals' involvement in the administration of special education. Schrag (1977) stated that chairing the team meetings, construction of programs, and provision of services for special education children have been an important responsibility.

Cochrane and Westling (1977) agreed that a key figure in the implementation of the least restrictive environment for handicapped students has been the school principal. The principal has been the person in the best position to provide needed administrative support and to ensure the highest degree of success. However, before principals could become effective they needed to be cognizant of characteristics and educational needs of the handicapped. Davis (1980) indicated the principal as the key individual in implementing the mainstreaming process. However, principals have received limited preparation in their university programs relative to special education administration. He posed three questions that warranted further research: (1) Should principals be expected to assume a critical role when their preparation has been minimal? (2) Is the negativism frequently attributed to principals regarding special education, a product of their feelings of inadequacy? (3) Should all universities provide coursework for principals in the administration of special education?

Moore (1979) said that the principal needed to model a positive attitude for being in favor of special education programs. Thus, the principal becomes a leader of the program, responsible for seeing that the right services are provided and that the entire school should believe in those services and be committed to the success of special education. Thurman (1980, pp. 285-287) believed that the key figures in the implementation of positive directions in special education administration were the school administrators, particularly the building principals. He stated:

The recent concept of mainstreaming is causing general educators concern and consternation. General educators, charter members of our buck-passing society, have now been

mandated by Public Law 94-142 to "bite the bullet" and educate all children. Could general educators embrace the concept of mainstreaming while, at the same time, using it to better their plight? This answer could be a resounding "Yes" if general educators would view mainstreaming as a positive means to a positive end.

McCoy (1981) believed an increasing amount of responsibility has been developing toward the elementary school principal as an administrator of the mainstream school. To be effective, the principal has needed to exhibit competence and knowledge about special services for the handicapped. In addition, the principal has been required to interface the needs of the staff with the needs of the students. Turnbull and Turnbull (1979) pointed out that such responsibility has been shaped by federal legislation affecting the handicapped under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. They further stated that noncompliance of the local education agency has jeopardized all funds administered by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Marsh and Podemski (1982) agreed that principals have needed to become fully aware of services provided for the handicapped and cited some areas needing more attention by principals were diagnostic techniques, testing regulations, and definitions of handicapping conditions.

A publication by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services (1982) brought forth the idea that principals in special education settings have needed to recognize student and program success has depended upon the personal and professional commitment of themselves and their staff to continuously recommit themselves to their work. In doing so, the staff has seen themselves as agents of change, working for self and organizational renewal.

The Administrator of Special Education

Historically, the role of the special education administrator has been unique. This individual has been primarily responsible for instructional programs for the exceptional child. The role has changed, and continues to change in response to the enactment of Public Law 94-142. The changing role has heightened the need for data which can provide descriptive and behavioral statements of what directors actually do in their local, state, and federal requirements. Blockages encountered by special education administrators in their attempt to administer programs of special education have been documented by the literature.

One factor has appeared consistently in the literature relative to the administration of educational programs for the handicapped. The very nature of special education has implied the need for specialized personnel, including the administrator. The principal role in the administration of special education was cited as being in jeopardy due to the principals' lack of knowledge and competence in dealing with the legalities, handicap definitions, evaluation procedures, and provision of programs for the least restrictive placements of the handicapped. Thus, the traditional principal administrative roles have not appeared adequate for special education. Since special education services cut across various categorical programs, grade levels, facilities and needs for staff utilization, the efficient administration of special education was generally seen as originating from a central office position whether line or staff. Special education administrators appointed in name only or placed low in the administrative hierarchy were seen as less than effective. The size of a school district has also tended to prescribe

the administrative needs for special education. This may range from a specialist as a resource consultant, partial responsibility, or assignment as a co-principal, all the way to assignment as a central office administrator with authority over the principal. The obvious confusion of responsibility in the administration of special education has implied a restructuring and renewal of the entire education system in order to provide inclusiveness of regular and special administration.

Gearheart (1977) noted that the special education administrator was expected and permitted to administer the program, but admitted this was not always the case. In some settings the special administrator was administrative in name only. There was no real budgetary responsibility, no involvement in procurement of personnel, and no authority to conduct long-range planning. Some authorities have maintained there has not been a need for a special administrator in smaller schools and the superintendent must serve the role. Gearheart (1977) added that he was convinced that there has needed to be a local administrator of special education. Evidence of a local school district's commitment to programs for the handicapped has been the placement of a special director in the administrative structure of the district. Wirtz (1977) found this placement varied from those placed at the principal level all the way to an assistant superintendent. The author commented that, from his experience, the lower the directors were placed in the pecking order, the less effective they were in implementing a good program of special education. The best of professional intentions became garbled in their transmission from a low level staff member up to the ultimate policy-making group. The director of special education has ordinarily dealt with a minimum of ten percent of the school population and this has seemed to

warrant a place in the administrative structure.

According to Heidbrink (1976), many building principals have failed to recognize the seriousness of their responsibility to children who have special education needs. Heidbrink (1976, p. 15) related the story of a sign which appeared on the back of some wheel chairs of quadriplegic students which said, "Don't just stand and stare...push!" Building principals have needed to do more pushing than staring. He recommended that special education must be organized and coordinated by a designated special administrator.

Stoops, Rafferty and Johnson (1975), Meisgeier (1976), Meisgeier and King (1970), Torres (1977), and Sage (1981) believed the director or coordinator of special education has needed to be a member of the district office staff assigned to direct the program of special education. Generally, the director was selected for the position on the basis of experience and knowledge in special education, as well as his ability to administrate. The director also needed to be able to see the global picture of all aspects of special programs. The provision of teaching materials, facilities, staff, placement of pupils, and in-service training for all special teachers were added duties accomplished by the director. The director was directly connected to the office of the chief administrator and was seen as an extension of that official because the director's functions reached into practically every phase of the school program.

Faber and Shearron (1970) contended that most central office positions were in staff rather than a line relationship to the school principal. In most cases, members of the central office staff have had no authority over the principal. However, the view that a person in a staff position never had authority over the principal was misleading. Staff

officers have also served an advisory function as specialists who have supplied expert assistance upon request. In contrast, Meisgeier and King (1970) believed all special education personnel including the director should be responsible to the building principal. The principal and director had a clear understanding and acceptance of the relationship, but with the idea that the director was a representative of the chief administrator.

The Missouri Resource Guide for Special Education (1981) indicated that the determination of which staff member represented the district at the individual education program meeting was left up to the individual school district. However, the person selected to represent the district should have had enough authority to insure that whatever services were agreed upon at the individual education program meeting would actually be provided.

The authority relationship between regional and central offices has been an awkward problem. Burello and Sage (1971) stated that, if maximum articulation and coordination within special education was desired, it has been advantageous to have the regional administrator report to the administrator of central special education. The line relationship between regional and central had the possibility of encouraging a perception of special education as a separate, parallel system, apart from the mainstream.

Burello and Sage's (1971) historical review of special education administration found the circumstances under which the field of special education has developed have also predestined the leadership roles to begin with, and have retained an emphasis on the technical, the clinical, and the personal involvement with particular clients. Thus, the special

education administrators have retained their specialist identity. The degree to which the specialist image was maintained has been a question for more extensive exploration. Mayer (1982) claimed that special education administrators are usually middle management positions and are called director, coordinator, or supervisor. In large systems they might be an assistant superintendent. The position might have included both line and staff administrative responsibilities. This administrator should have had extensive background in special education. He was the technical expert upon whom others depended for assistance.

In using Peabody's formulation for the basis of administrative authority, Howe (1981) decided authority in special education administrative positions was chiefly based upon areas of legitimacy and competence with the major source having been from the specific laws governing the education of the handicapped. The four sources of authority cited were:

1. Authority based on legitimacy by laws and regulations.
2. Authority based on position as delegated by the superintendent.
3. Authority based on competency stemming from special knowledge and skills.
4. Personal authority by virtue of charisma and powers of persuasion.

Yates and Lec (1982) proposed that the co-principalship has had advantages. Partners in a co-principalship have respected each others differences in style, thinking, and background and by retaining their individual uniqueness, built greater strength into the school programs through shared decision making. Yates and Lec (1982) saw special education as needing co-principals that divided responsibilities on the basis

of the individual principal's background and strengths.

As a result of growing specialization, expertise has become increasingly important in organizations. Milstein and Belasco (1973) found that as the complexity of organizational tasks has increased and as organizations have grown in size, there was a limit to responsibility that could be efficiently exercised by one person. As delegations of responsibility occurred, experts and specialists were brought in to provide information. The higher authority became dependent upon them. Experts have had tremendous potentialities for power by withholding information, providing incorrect information, and to a great extent the probability of organizational sabotage has existed.

Del-Val and Griffin (1981) observed that the Quincy, Massachusetts, Public Schools, in order to meet the widely divergent needs of special education within a meaningful organizational framework, adopted a decentralized model for delivering services to special education students. They declared the program successful because it forced each school to accept the responsibility for evaluating and providing services to each special education student. The special education administrator was provided copies of the students' Individual Education Plans to make certain the level of services was appropriate to the students' needs. The administrator made frequent observations of all programs and guided special education teachers in the setting of instructional priorities for the students. The inherent danger of this administrative approach was the possibility the special education administrator would ultimately lose touch with the actual need of special education students.

Meisgeier (1976) said that special education has not been able to achieve the goal of individualized educational planning and placement in

the least restrictive environment until all educators have begun to share their concern for children who are failing in public schools. Many regular education leaders, with increasing awareness of the handicapped, have found their new knowledge increased their concern for many other children in need of educational alternatives. The inclusiveness of special and regular education has provided an impetus for educational renewal in the whole educational system.

Role Expectations of Special Education

Administrators

The literature regarding special-education administration has been limited to specifying the actual responsibilities of the special education administrator. Research has continued to question and examine the special education administrator's responsibilities in terms of new relationships and interactions with school personnel.

Neagley, Evans, and Lynn (1969) postulated that the behavior of an administrator was found in combination with the image of expectancy of the role by other members of the group. Bilyeu (1973) has claimed that the role of the special educator has been questioned and examined as it has undergone a transformation from an authoritative role to one of a facilitator, innovator, and implementor. As this change in roles has occurred, it put the special education administrator into new relationships and new interactions with other school personnel.

In a survey of superintendents, principals, and special education directors, Anastasio and Sage (1982) found the perceived role of the special education director among the three groups had greater consensus than expected. The facilitator-trainer role was seen as the least

important. Policy planning was viewed as most important by special education directors and principals, but second most important by superintendents, who saw the monitoring of legalities related to special education as most important. The principals' expectations of the special education director role were less clear than those of the superintendent and special education directors. Sage (1981) found that in an organizational setting such as the central office of local school systems, the relationship between title and job description has become more ambiguous. The role most often found with the title of director was by far the most frequently found role and was described as encompassing a broad range of responsibility for all aspects of a total special education program. While the description has included a greater emphasis on management functions, it was also evident the director's functions tended to overlap with many of the other roles. The coordinator, the supervisor, and the consultant roles have each tended to be more limited. Therefore, it has appeared that in smaller organizations, where a single person may need to cover many leadership functions, the title of director and the role usually associated with it has been most often used.

Holland (1980) indicated that the implementation of Public Law 94-142 has placed great demands specifically upon special educators involved in diagnosis, placement decisions, and concern for due process. Added responsibilities, role changes, and general uncertainty have caused professional and personal crises for many competent special educators, thus fostering the symptoms of burnout. Nutter, Forgnone, McBride, and Boone (1983) suspected the changing role of special education directors had heightened the need for data which provided descriptive and behavioral statements of what directors actually did in their

efforts to serve exceptional children. Their research found that the director of special education has continued to be a most difficult and demanding position. The results of the study indicated that directors of special education were involved in many policy decisions and functioned much like managers. As the position has increased in responsibility, the prediction was made that the position of director would become more administrative in its requirements and functions.

Begley (1982) conducted research related to burnout in the helping professions. Special education administrators have had a unique set of responsibilities, all of which contribute to high levels of stress and frustration. They have been faced with constant managerial pressures as well as those pressures resulting from the implementation of Public Law 94-142, fiscal reductions, serious role ambiguity, and administrative conflicts. When special education administrators have been expected to perform at high levels, but with unclear and unrealistic guidelines, they have been subject to stress burnout. Identified ambiguities were consultative aspects with staff personnel; roles with parents and advocacy groups; referrals; diagnosis and placement of students; supervision and evaluation of personnel; and direction of pupil services. Mazor (1977) emphasized the superintendent would retain the primary responsibility for some of the major special education administrative functions and delegate the rest to other administrators. Therefore, the special education administrator was merely an extension of the superintendent. The superintendent, then, became a crucial factor in the administration of special education programs. Mazor (1977) observed that it was very important that the special education administrator understands the role expectations that the superintendent holds. He found a significant dis-

agreement between superintendents and special education administrators only as to whether special administrators were actually building and maintaining staff morale. This was not in agreement with White's (1969) study which found differences of opinion and possible conflicts in the areas of facilities, finances, and decisions about the placement of pupils. However, Mazor (1977) did find significant differences between principals and special education administrators concerning the performance and importance of a number of tasks: (a) establishing special education programs, (b) establishing psychological procedures, (c) establishing communication, (d) building and maintaining morale, (e) integrating special education, (f) cooperating and communicating with school personnel, (g) selection and assignment of special education teachers, and (h) budget preparation and administration.

The foregoing review has revealed clear evidence that ambiguity of staff responsibilities has existed between the specialist and the general administrators relative to the efficient administration of special education. Further research has appeared to be needed for the resolution of the problem in order to ensure full and appropriate educational services for the handicapped as mandated under Public Law 94-142.

Professional Preparation and Certification

Tied very closely to the responsibilities and needed competencies of special education administrators has been their professional preparation. Many distinguished practitioners in the field have written about this subject. This section has provided review of the discussions and points of view regarding the professional preparation of administrators

of special education and the recommendations for necessary coursework and experiences.

According to Tudyman (1962) the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) formed a Standards Committee for Directors of Special Education in 1962. A list of competencies was included which was similar to that subsequently proposed by the Council for Exceptional Children. The report included a recommendation of a minimum of 30 semester hours in the administration and/or supervision of special education. The suggestion was made that directors should possess regular and special education teaching certification and hold a valid supervisor's certificate. An internship was recommended and a master's degree in education or educational administration was considered essential. One year teaching normal children and two years teaching exceptional children was cited as necessary experience.

The Council for Exceptional Children's Professional Standards Committee (1962) proposed 15 major areas in which leadership personnel should be trained:

1. Understanding of total educational process.
2. Knowledge of school organization and administrative processes.
3. Knowledge of various administrative provisions.
4. Knowledge of fiscal procedures.
5. Knowledge of curriculum development and methodology.
6. Knowledge of supervisory practices and theory and techniques of staff development.
7. Knowledge of psycho-educational and other diagnostic procedures.
8. Knowledge of personnel practices.
9. Knowledge and utilization of community organizations and re-

sources.

10. Ability to identify, define, and influence the power structure, both within and outside of education.

11. Knowledge of public relations.

12. Knowledge of school law and legislative processes and their implementation.

13. Knowledge of school plant planning and utilization.

14. Knowledge of research techniques and procedures.

15. Knowledge of professional responsibilities to the field.

Wyatt (1968) observed that opinions on how to prepare special education administrators were reflected from six sources: (a) professors of special education administration, (b) individuals recognized as authorities in the area, (c) surveys of existing university programs, (d) surveys of state and local personnel in the field, (e) examination of hiring standards held by districts, and (f) examination of state credential standards. Sage (1970) said that changes in the field of special education have required changes or shifts in emphasis for administration training programs in order to prepare administrators for the complex tasks that lay ahead for the field of special education. He stated that it should be the goal of such training programs to produce practitioners whose functioning in society could go beyond that of routine management of existing and growing programs. This type of personnel would become an agent of change and of significant influence on a broad spectrum of service to handicapped persons. He further suggested that appropriate training has needed to include general administrative theory and interaction in both formal coursework and field work. Curricula would focus on such areas as processes of organizational change in edu-

cation, politics in education at state and federal levels, social-emotional dynamics of groups and organizational behavior.

Spriggs (1972) found that most special education administrators first had experience as a special class teacher who received graduate training in an area of exceptionality, and then was appointed to an administrative position. This individual had little administrative training or experience. Raske (1977) reported that of the participants in his study, no administrators had majored in special education, 4.8% had minored in special education, and one special education course had been taken by 47.6%. On the other hand, Stile and Pettibone (1980) reported that over half of the states offered special education administrator certification and had at least one training program. State certification requirements and availability of training programs have not matched in several states. This has appeared to reflect a lag in institutional response to changing requirements. There has seemed to be a lack of communication between state education agencies and institutions of higher education. In a national survey conducted by Stile and Pettibone (1980) regarding requirements for administrator certification in special education, over half of the states offered separate special education administrator certification. However, Stile and Pettibone (1980) stated that it seemed more appropriate that all educational administrators become special administrators. In their view, separate administrative certification in special education was not desirable.

The professional preparation of special education administrators as recommended in this review has appeared comprehensive and extensive. The professional special education administrator was described as one who has knowledge of the principles of child growth and development;

an understanding of policies and practice of regular education as well as special education; awareness of various community resources; competencies necessary for communication with superintendents, line administrators, teachers, and parents; knowledge of state or federal regulations and proposed legislation; and skill in developing instructional programs while working directly with the special education instructional staff. This level of preparation has appeared to go beyond that of routine administration and if achieved would most certainly have significant influence upon the quality of service to handicapped students as ideally mandated by Public Law 94-142.

Summary of the Literature Reviewed

The literature review can be summarized as follows:

1. Approximately twelve percent of the nation's school populations have been found to be handicapped as defined by Public Law 94-142. This has implied that every school district has a significant number of handicapped children that require special education services, which also affects the structure of public school administration.
2. Legislation in the interest of the handicapped has moved from dealing only with the retarded, blind, and deaf, through special grants for research, training and exemplary programs to the provision of a free and appropriate education to all handicapped under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and Public Law 94-142. Emphasis upon the mandated least restrictive educational alternatives which led to the mainstreaming concept in public school services to the handicapped placed additional demands upon school administrators.
3. Principals have continued to maintain their ultimate responsi-

bility to all students in their assigned jurisdictions. Also, school principals have needed to become aware of the legalities and special needs of handicapped children. Hence, principals have needed to obtain special preparation or relinquish their leadership responsibilities to other administrative personnel knowledgeable in special education, which has tended to create a dual track administrative structure in schools

4. The highly specialized nature of providing service to handicapped children, plus the complexity of implementing the mandated requirements of Public Law 94-142 has tended to create a need for specialized administration. This has seemed to cause conflicts of administrative responsibilities between the general administrator and the special administrator.

5. Role expectations of the special administrator have been questioned and subjected to considerable change in the last decade. The responsibilities have been extended to include such activities as facilitator, trainer, policy planner, monitor of legalities, and innovator. The position has become more demanding and more inclined to be viewed as an administrative function. The special administrator has been expected to perform at high levels, but guidelines have not always been clear.

6. Certification of special education administrators from state to state has not been consistent.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this investigation was to survey the status of the role and responsibilities of special education administrators in the public schools of Missouri. The study was designed to provide descriptive data that would reveal differences that might exist between the actual and ideal administrative responsibilities of the special education administrator as viewed by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators. The study was also designed to provide information on the personal characteristics of special education administrators, professional qualifications of the special education administrators, and characteristics of the special education services offered by the school districts. The research questions specifically addressed were:

1. Do significant differences exist between the actual responsibilities of special education administrators and the perceived ideal responsibilities of special education administrators as viewed by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators?
2. Do significant differences exist among the three professional groups: superintendents, principals, and special education administrators regarding their perceptions of the ideal responsibilities of the special education administrator?

This chapter describes the population of the study, the sampling

procedure, development of the instrument, administration of the instrument, and the statistical analyses used.

Population of the Study

The Handbook for Classification and Accreditation of Public School Districts in Missouri (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1980) classified the districts according to the quality and quantity of their educational programs and services. These classifications were based on teacher qualifications, class size, instructional equipment, library resources, instructional materials, courses offered, services rendered, activities and opportunities available to students. The classifications as described were from highest to lowest; that is the triple A (AAA) districts were those that met all the classification requirements and were therefore rated the highest, next in rating were the double A (AA) districts, and the other districts were unclassified.

There are 456 school districts in the State of Missouri and these constituted the target population of the study. One hundred seventy school districts in the state of Missouri were classified as triple A districts. The sampled population consisted of all the school districts classified as triple A.

Selection of Sample

For the purpose of this study a representative sampling procedure was designed as an efficient means of identifying participants from which to collect the necessary data for studying special education administrative responsibilities in the state of Missouri. A preliminary examination of the Missouri School Directory (1984-85) indicated that

the likelihood of a school district employing a special education administrator full time to lead special education programs increased in direct proportion to the size of the district. Therefore, the districts were stratified according to size.

The stratification resulted in three strata of school districts, namely, small, medium, and large. The small districts were those school districts with less than 4,500 enrollment (137), the medium school districts consisted of those school districts with enrollment of 4,500, but less than 8,500 (20), while the large school districts consisted of those with enrollments of 8,500 or more (13). Within each stratum a simple random sample of 25% of the stratum size was chosen to be included in the study. This resulted in the following sample sizes within each stratum; small (34 school districts), medium (five school districts), and large (four school districts) for a total of 43 school districts.

From each school district randomly selected to be included in the study, the following personnel were included in the sample: the superintendent, the special education administrator, an elementary principal, and a high school principal. The middle school/junior high school principal was included in those school districts that had such administrative levels. This resulted in a selected respondent group consisting of forty-three superintendents, forty-three special education administrators, and one hundred twelve principals who received the instrument.

Development of the Instrument

A researcher-developed questionnaire was designed for this study since there was no available standardized instrument known to exist that would have been appropriate. The questionnaire was developed by incorporating

ideas from a review of the literature, Public Law 94-192 regulations, and the professional experience of the researcher (see Appendices C-E). The questionnaire included 22 items regarding the actual and ideal responsibilities of special education administrators. The first five items regarding personnel covered interviewing and selection of special education staff, supervision, evaluation, personnel development, and supervision of curriculum development. The next seventeen items were responsibilities related to Public Law 94-142. These were:

Questionnaire Item #6 - Annual Census - Each state is instructed to annually identify, locate, and evaluate all handicapped children residing in their respective jurisdictions (Sec. 121a.128).

Questionnaire Item #7 - Early Childhood - Each annual State Plan must include the policies and procedures which the State will undertake, or has undertaken, to insure a goal of providing full educational opportunity to all handicapped children aged birth through twenty-one (Sec. 121a.123). According to the Missouri State Compliance Plan (Fiscal Year 1984-86), educational services to handicapped students under age five are permitted and encouraged. The goal of all early childhood special education programs is to enhance the capability of the child for successful school achievement commensurate with their ability.

Questionnaire Item #8 - Pre-Referral - Refers to procedures that must be followed before the school personnel initiates or changes the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of a child (Sec. 121a.504).

Questionnaire Item #9 - Diagnostic Procedures - Refers to procedures which must be followed in regard to testing of a child to determine appropriate educational programming (Sec. 121a.532).

Questionnaire Item #10 - Conduct Staffings - Refers to the coming together of the diagnostic team or group of persons after the various independent testing and diagnosis has been completed for the purposes of using the multidisciplinary approach to making a placement decision regarding a handicapped child (Sec. 121a.532).

Questionnaire Item #11 - Diagnostic Summary - Refers to the written report that draws together all the information regarding a handicapped child. This summary synthesizes the information into an inclusive report for the purpose of placement and educational planning for a handicapped child.

Questionnaire Item #12 - Appoints Local Education Agency (LEA) - Refers to the necessity for school officials to insure that each handicapped child's diagnostic team includes, among others, a representative of the public agency other than the child's teacher, who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of special education (Federal Register, December 29, 1977).

Questionnaire Item #13 - Student Placements - Refers to the procedures to be followed in placement of students in special education programs. This includes interpreting evaluation data and making placement decisions, drawing upon information from a variety of sources including aptitude and achievement tests, recommendations from teacher, physical condition, social or cultural background and adaptive behavior; insuring that information is documented and insuring that placement decisions are made by a group of persons knowledgeable about the child (Sec. 121a.550 - 121a.554).

Questionnaire Item #14 - Least Restrictive Environment - Refers to the stipulation that each state educational agency must insure that to

the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children are educated with children who are not handicapped and that special classes, separate schooling or other removal of handicapped children from the regular educational 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 (Sec. 121a.550).

Questionnaire Item #15 - Reviews & Re-evaluations - Refers to the need for educational agencies to insure that the handicapped child's individualized education program is reviewed in accordance with the law and that the evaluation of the child is based on procedures which meet the requirements of the law and is conducted every three years or more frequently if conditions warrant, or if the child's parent or teacher requests an evaluation (Sec. 121a.340 - 121a.349).

Questionnaire Item #16 - Related Service - Refers to transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as required to assist a handicapped child to benefit from special education. (Sec. 121a.13).

Questionnaire Item #17 - Confidentiality - Refers to the stipulation that the State undertake steps to insure the protection of the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information collected, used, or maintained for a handicapped student.

Questionnaire Item #18 - External Agencies - Refers to schools' responsibility to take steps to provide nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities to afford handicapped children an equal opportunity for participation in those services and activities (Sec. 121a.306).

Questionnaire Item #19 - Budget - Refers to the responsibility of

each school district to control funds provided under Part B of the Act (Sec. 121a.142).

Questionnaire Item #20 - Materials and Equipment - Refers to transportation and such developmental, corrective, and other supportive services as are required to assist a handicapped child to benefit from special education.

Questionnaire Item #21 - Discipline - Monitoring the procedures and types of discipline applied to handicapped students refers to the fact that handicapped students are not exempt from the disciplinary process, nor are they entitled to participate in programs when their behavior significantly disrupts the education of other children in the program. The law provides schools with both short-term and long-term methods of dealing with handicapped children with behavioral problems.

Questionnaire Item #22 - Parent Contacts - Refers to the stipulation that schools insure that provision is made for participation of and consultation with parents or guardians of handicapped children.

The respondents were instructed to indicate whether the special education administrator actually performed the specified tasks or whether they believed the special education administrator ideally should perform the task. The last part of the questionnaire varied by type of administrator. The superintendents' questionnaire, beginning with question 23, contained items pertaining to the characteristics of the school district. The special education administrators' questionnaire, beginning with question 23, contained items pertaining to personal characteristics and professional qualifications of the special education administrator. The principals' questionnaire, beginning with question 23, contained items pertaining to their perception of professional qualifications of special

education administrators.

The questionnaire was pretested with selected school administrators in Oklahoma. The pretest group was used to establish reliability of the 22 items regarding the actual and ideal role of the special education administrator. Twenty-five school administrators consisting of five superintendents, five special education administrators, five high school principals, five middle school/junior high principals and five elementary principals took part in the pilot study. A test-retest format was used to determine reliability of the instrument.

In early January, 1985, each participant in the pilot study was mailed a questionnaire and cover letter (Appendices A, C, D, and E) explaining the purpose of the study with instructions for completing and returning the questionnaire. A self-addressed, stamped envelope was also enclosed for convenience in returning the questionnaire. In mid January, 1985, a second mailing of the questionnaire containing the first 22 items regarding the actual and ideal role of the special education administrator was sent to the 15 administrators who had returned the first questionnaire.

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the relationship between the responses to the items on the first questionnaire and those on the second. Overall, 19 of the 22 items showed a strong relationship between responses on the first mailing and the second mailing. This gave an indication of approximately 86% reliability of the 22 items on the instrument. Validity was determined by a panel composed of special education professionals and public school administrators who were considered knowledgeable in the field of educational administration.

Administration of the Instrument

In late January, 1985, the questionnaire for the actual study in Missouri was mailed to the administrators of the school districts selected in the sampling procedures. A letter (see Appendix A) explaining the purpose of the study with instructions for completion and return of the questionnaire, and a self-addressed stamped envelope was included with the questionnaire. Each participant was asked to indicate for items #1 through #22 if:

A = The special education administrator actually performs the task and should

B = The special education administrator actually performs the task, but should not

C = The special education administrator does not perform the task, but should

D = The special education administrator does not perform the task, and should not.

One hundred ninety-eight questionnaires were mailed. Of these, 133 were returned for a 67% return rate. A follow-up questionnaire was mailed to the 33% non respondents three weeks after the initial mailing. Three percent of the questionnaires returned were with letters (notes) stating that their school districts were served by a separate, umbrella district known as Special School District, and they did not feel that information they could provide would be meaningful for the purposes of this study. The special school district provides special services for 29 school districts in the St. Louis Area. Eleven percent of the returned questionnaires were not completely filled out; therefore, they

were not included in the study. The usable questionnaires represented 86% of the returned questionnaires.

The statistical analysis for this study was carried out on an IBM 3081D System at Oklahoma State University. The frequency and percentages of responses were calculated using the Statistical Analysis System (SAS) Package.

The Chi-Square (χ^2) statistical technique was used to test for differences of proportion of responses to items regarding the actual and ideal functions of special education administrators as perceived by the superintendents, principals, and special education administrators. With this technique the probability that frequencies observed in the study differ from the expected frequencies can be determined. For the purposes of this study the 0.10 level of significance was selected for use.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this investigation was to survey the status of the role and responsibilities of special education administrators in the public schools of Missouri. The study was designed to provide descriptive data that would reveal differences that might exist between the actual and ideal administrative responsibilities of the special education administrator as viewed by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators. The study was also designed to provide information on the personal characteristics of special education administrators, professional qualifications of the special education administrators, and characteristics of the special education services offered by the school districts. The research questions specifically addressed were:

1. Do significant differences exist between the actual responsibilities of special education administrators and the perceived ideal responsibilities of special education administrators as viewed by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators?

2. Do significant differences exist among the three professional groups, superintendents, principals, and special education administrators, regarding their perceptions of the ideal responsibilities of the

special education administrator?

To accomplish the above purpose, data was obtained from administrators selected randomly from school districts in Missouri. This chapter presents a discussion of the results and analysis of the data covering the following:

1. Sample of the study
2. Characteristics of the school district
3. Personal data and professional qualifications of special education administrators
4. The actual and ideal responsibilities of special education administrators
5. Special education administrator's placement in the organizational hierarchy
6. Differences in perception of superintendents, principals, and special education administrators regarding the actual and ideal responsibilities of special education administrators
7. Differences among the administrators regarding their perception of the ideal responsibilities of the special education administrator.

The Sample

The sample consisted of three types of school districts. These were: small (under 4,500), medium (4,500 but less than 8,500), large (8,500 and more). The composition is as shown in Table I.

Included in the sample returned, were 18.95% of the superintendents, 60% principals, and 21.05% special education administrators for small districts. For the medium size districts, the composition was 11.11% superintendents, 66.67% principals, 22.22% special education administra-

tors. The large districts consisted of 27.27% superintendents, 54.55% principals, and 18.88% special education administrators.

TABLE I
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF SUPERINTENDENTS, PRINCIPALS AND SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS
INDICATING ACTUAL AND IDEAL ROLES OF
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS

Size	Overall		Supt.		Prin.		Sp. Ed. Admin.		Totals	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Small	95	82.61	18	18.95	57	60.00	20	21.05	95	100
Medium	9	7.83	1	11.11	6	66.67	2	22.22	9	100
Large	<u>11</u>	9.56	<u>3</u>	27.27	<u>6</u>	54.55	<u>2</u>	18.18	<u>11</u>	100
Totals	115		22		69		24		115	

Characteristics of the School Districts

On the superintendent's questionnaire, questions 25, 26, and 27 sought to identify those special education programs which were offered within the local school districts and those offered outside the local school districts, the total number of special education staff members, and the personnel responsible for administration of special education programs, respectively.

Programs Offered by Local School Districts

In the state of Missouri, special education programs were offered within the local school district or outside the district through cooperative arrangement with another district. The programs examined in this study were educable mentally handicapped, learning disabilities, behaviorally disordered, visually impaired, speech, health, orthopedic, and hearing. The responses from the superintendents are presented in Table II.

An examination of Table II revealed that, as expected, over 90 percent of the districts offered educable mentally handicapped, learning disabilities and speech programs within the local district. Visual and orthopedic programs were offered by more than 60% of the districts through cooperative arrangements.

TABLE II
PROGRAMS PROVIDED BY SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Programs	Provided Within District		Provided Outside District	
	N	%	N	%
Educable Mentally Handicapped	21	91	2	9
Learning Disabilities	22	96	1	4
Behaviorally Disordered	19	83	4	17
Visual	8	40	12	60
Speech	23	96	1	4
Health	15	68	7	32
Orthopedic	7	35	13	65
Hearing	14	67	7	33

Note: Percentage is rounded off to whole numbers.

Special Education Staff Member

The number of special education staff members in the school districts varied from five to ninety-five. The number of special education staff members seemed to be directly related to the time spent by the special education administrator on duties directly involving administration of the special education program. Table III presents a breakdown of the number of the staff members by school districts.

TABLE- III
 NUMBER OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STAFF MEMBERS IN THE
 SCHOOL DISTRICTS AS INDICATED
 BY SUPERINTENDENTS

Number of Staff Members	Number of School Districts	%
5 - 10	8	40
11 - 21	5	25
24 - 47	5	25
48 - 95	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>
Totals	20	100

Note: Percentage is rounded off to whole numbers.

Personal Characteristics and Profes-
sional Qualifications

Gender, Salary, and Ultimate Educational Goal

The special education administrators were asked to indicate their gender in question 23, salary in question 36, and their ultimate professional goal in question 29. Sixty-seven percent of the special education administrators were male, while 33 percent were female. The modal salary range was \$20,000 - \$25,000. Twenty-four percent indicated their salary to be between \$30,000 and \$35,000. An additional 16 percent indicated their salary to be above \$40,000 a year. The scale for rating ultimate educational goal ranged from most desirable to least desirable. Table IV shows the response to question 29 on ultimate professional goal.

TABLE IV
PROFESSIONAL GOALS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
ADMINISTRATORS

Professional Goal	N	%
Special Education Administrator	13*	57
Higher Education Teaching	3	13
Superintendency	5	22
State Level Special Education	4	4
Federal Level Special Education	0	0
Other	1	4

Note: Percentage is rounded off to whole number

*READ: Thirteen special education administrators rated special education administrator as their number one professional goal.

As revealed from Table IV, 57 percent of the special education administrators indicated their ultimate professional goal in regard to their position was special education administrator. Twenty-two percent of them indicated superintendent as their ultimate position. The position as higher education teacher was indicated by thirteen percent of the special education administrators as their ultimate educational goal.

Membership in Professional Associations

Professional association membership, question 34, and length of contract, question 35, were the other two personal characteristics obtained from the special education administrator. The responses on association membership are presented in Table V.

TABLE V
MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Professional Associations	Member	
	N	%
Council for Exceptional Children (Local) (CEC)	13	50
Council for Exceptional Children (National) (CEC)	14	54
Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE)	15	58
National Association of School Administrators	9	35
Other	8	31

Note: Percentage is rounded off to whole numbers.

An examination of Table V revealed that over 50 percent of the special education administrators were members of the Council for Exceptional Children (Local), Council for Exceptional Children (National), and Council for Administrators of Special Education (CASE). Thirty-one percent indicated they belong to associations such as Association of Curriculum Directors and Phi Delta Kappa.

Length of Contract

The length of contract for special education administrators was generally from ten to twelve months. Forty percent indicated that their contracts lasted for ten months. The same percentage indicated their contracts to be for a duration of twelve months.

Degree Requirement

Sixty-nine percent of the special education administrators were holders of a master's degree in special education, question 24. Nineteen percent were holders of doctorate degrees. An additional 12 percent had a specialist in education degree.

Years of Experience

Years of experience, question 26, as special education administrator ranged from none to 32. About 63 percent indicated that they have had none to five years of experience as special education administrators. Only 8% had over 15 years of experience as a special education administrator. Table VI presents the data regarding years of experience.

TABLE VI
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS SPECIAL
EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR

Years of Experience	N	%
0 - 5	15	63
6 - 10	5	21
11 - 15	2	8
Over 15	<u>2</u>	<u>8</u>
Totals	24	100

Note: Percentage is rounded off to whole numbers.

Perceived Professional Qualifications

Items regarding perception of professional qualifications necessary for a special education administrator were included in the special education administrators' and principals' questionnaire. In the special education administrators' questionnaire, respondents were asked to (1) indicate the degree required for the position of special education administrator, (2) rate the importance of college courses in preparation of special education administration, and (3) indicate the areas of certification necessary for a special education administrator, in questions 25, 30, and 33 respectively. The principals were asked to (1) indicate the highest degree they believed should be required for the special education administrator, (2) rank the importance of college courses in

preparation for special education administration, (3) indicate areas of certification believed to be required for special education administration, and (4) rank qualifications they believed are necessary for a special education administrator in questions 23, 24, 25, and 26 respectively.

Eighty-eight percent of the special education administrators indicated that a master's degree should be required for their position. The other twelve percent indicated a specialist's degree as a required qualification for the special education administrator. Question 23 asked principals to indicate the highest degree they believed should be required for special education administrators. Forty-nine percent of the principals surveyed indicated that they believed a specialist degree should be required for the special education administrator. Forty percent indicated that a master's degree should be required. Only seven percent of the principals indicated that a doctorate should be required, and only three percent believed a bachelor's degree should be required.

Coursework Required

Both the principals and special education administrators were asked to rate the importance of college courses in the preparation of special education administration. Question 24 on the principals' questionnaire and Question 30 on the special education administrators' questionnaire asked respondents to rate (in their opinion) the importance of specific college courses in the preparation of special education administrators. Table VII presents the number and percentage of responses to these questionnaire items.

TABLE VII
 PRINCIPALS' AND SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS'
 RANKING OF IMPORTANCE OF COLLEGE COURSES IN
 PREPARATION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION
 ADMINISTRATION

Course	Principal								Special Education Administrator							
	Very Important		Somewhat Important		Little Importance		No Importance		Very Important		Somewhat Important		Little Importance		No Importance	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Child Growth and Development	49	75	16	24	1	1	0	0	15	68	6	27	1	5	0	0
Special Education Teaching Methods	52	79	11	17	3	4	0	0	13	59	8	36	1	5	0	0
Special Education Administration	46	70	18	27	2	3	0	0	17	77	2	9	3	14	0	0
General Education Administration	26	40	28	42	12	18	0	0	6	29	10	48	4	19	1	6
Special Education Instructions Materials	29	44	31	47	6	9	0	0	6	27	13	59	2	9	1	5
Methods of Behavioral Research	29	44	26	39	7	11	4	6	7	33	6	29	4	19	4	19
Legalities of Special Education	53	80	12	18	1	2	0	0	19	85	1	5	1	5	1	5
School Finance	7	11	35	53	18	27	6	9	6	27	7	32	4	18	5	23
Psychological Educational Evaluation and Report Writing	43	65	20	30	3	5	0	0	17	77	1	5	2	9	2	9

Note: Percentage is rounded off to whole numbers.

Analysis of Table VII indicates that the four areas of coursework principals declared very important for administrators of special education were: legalities of special education (80 percent), special education teaching materials (79 percent), child growth and development (75 percent), and special education administration (70 percent).

The special education administrators viewed coursework in legalities of special education (85 percent), special education administration (77 percent), psychological-educational evaluations and report writing (77 percent), child growth and development (68 percent), and special education teaching methods (59 percent) as very important. The two categories of coursework rated as somewhat important were special education instructional materials (59 percent) and general education administration (48 percent).

Certification

Question twenty-five of the principals' questionnaire asked for the areas of certification principals believed should be required for administrators of special education. Eighty-three percent of the principals who responded indicated that they believed certification as a special education administrator should be required; only six percent indicated certification as a superintendent should be required. Question thirty-three of the special education administrators' questionnaire asked them to indicate what areas of certification are necessary for administrators of special education. Forty-five percent of the special education administrators indicated certification in special education administration is necessary. An additional forty-four percent indicate certification as a principal to be necessary.

Actual and Ideal Responsibilities of Special
Education Administrators

To examine the actual and ideal responsibilities of special education administrators, twenty-two items regarding personnel responsibilities and responsibilities related to Public Law 94-142 were included on the questionnaire for all three categories of administrators. Questions one through five were related to personnel responsibilities, while questions six to twenty-two were related to Public Law 94-142.

Actual Responsibilities

Personnel Responsibilities. Actual responsibilities signifies that the special education administrator actually performs a specified task regardless of whether the respondent believed the special education administrator should perform the task. The questionnaire contained five questions (See Appendices C - E) regarding the special education administrators' responsibilities pertaining to personnel. The five questions regarding personnel covered interviewing and selection of special education staff, supervision, evaluation, personnel development, and supervision of curriculum development. The respondents were instructed to indicate whether the special education administrator actually performed the specified tasks or whether they believed the special education administrator ideally should perform the task.

Responsibilities Related to Public Law 94-142. The questionnaire contained seventeen items (questions six to twenty-two) regarding factors that are to be implemented in order to provide an appropriate education for handicapped children. These seventeen items were described on pages

TABLE VIII .

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF SUPERINTENDENTS', PRINCIPALS' AND SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF ACTUAL AND IDEAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS

Questionnaire Item Number	Superintendent						Principal						Special Education Administrator					
	Actual		Ideal		Other		Actual		Ideal		Other		Actual		Ideal		Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Interview/Select	14	67	2	10	5	23	52	75	7	10	10	15	15	63	7	29	2	8
2. Supervise	15	71	2	10	4	19	50	72	11	16	8	12	20	84	2	8	2	8
3. Evaluate	12	57	3	14	6	29	47	68	15	22	7	10	15	63	2	8	7	29
4. CSPD*	14	67	4	19	3	14	44	64	18	26	7	10	22	92	2	8	0	0
5. Curriculum	17	77	2	9	3	14	49	71	13	19	7	10	16	70	3	13	4	17
6. Annual Census	19	86	2	9	1	5	53	77	7	10	9	13	21	87	0	0	3	13
7. Early Childhood	19	86	1	5	2	9	46	67	11	16	12	17	14	59	2	8	8	33
8. Pre-referral	16	73	3	14	3	13	42	61	12	17	15	22	15	63	2	8	7	29
9. Diagnostic Procedures	16	73	4	18	2	9	50	72	9	13	10	15	15	63	2	8	7	29
10. Conduct Staffings	11	52	2	10	8	38	38	55	14	20	17	25	16	67	1	4	7	29
11. Diagnostic Summary	12	57	1	5	8	38	37	54	11	16	21	30	8	33	1	4	15	63
12. Appoint LEA**	14	64	1	5	7	33	51	74	6	9	12	17	21	88	1	4	2	8
13. Student Placements	21	95	1	5	0	0	54	78	8	12	7	10	21	88	2	8	1	4
14. Least Restrictive Environ.	18	82	2	9	2	9	56	81	9	13	4	6	21	88	1	4	2	8
15. Reviews/Re-evaluations	16	73	0	0	6	27	42	61	10	14	17	25	12	50	2	8	10	42
16. Related Services	17	77	1	5	4	18	53	77	5	7	11	16	20	83	1	4	3	13
17. Confidentiality	21	95	0	0	1	5	58	84	7	10	4	6	21	88	1	4	2	8

TABLE VIII (Continued)

Questionnaire Item Number	Superintendent						Principal						Special Education Administrator					
	Actual		Ideal		Other		Actual		Ideal		Other		Actual		Ideal		Other	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
18. External Agencies	19	86	1	5	2	9	60	87	5	7	4	6	22	92	0	0	2	8
19. Budget	19	86	1	5	2	9	59	85	4	6	6	9	22	92	0	0	2	8
20. Materials/Equipment	17	77	1	5	4	18	51	74	12	17	6	9	19	79	1	4	4	17
21. Discipline	18	82	2	9	2	9	37	54	16	23	16	23	19	79	2	8	3	13
22. Parent Contacts	16	73	1	5	5	24	46	67	13	19	10	14	18	75	1	4	5	21

Note: Percentage is rounded off to whole number.

*Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

**Local Education Agency

43 - 47. Table VIII presents the responses of the superintendents, principals, and special education administrators on the actual responsibilities.

An examination of Table VIII revealed differences in the responses from the three categories of administrators on all five of the personnel responsibilities. Special education administrators (92 percent) viewed comprehensive system of personnel development (CSPD) as an actual responsibility of the special education administrator. Eighty-four percent felt that another actual responsibility is supervision of special education instructional staff, while 70% indicate curriculum also as their actual responsibility. Seventy-five percent of the principals indicate that interviewing and selection of special education staff is an actual responsibility of the special education administrator. Regarding supervision and curriculum, approximately 70% of the principals surveyed viewed these as actual responsibilities of the special education administrator. Of the superintendents, 77% viewed curriculum as an actual responsibility of the special education administrator. Seventy-one percent of superintendents viewed supervision as another actual responsibility of the special education administrator, while 67% of the superintendents indicate that a comprehensive system of personnel development (CSPD), and interviewing and selection compromise an actual responsibility of the special education administrator.

Table VIII further revealed differences in the frequency and percentage of responses from the three subject groups regarding the actual responsibilities of the special education administrator regarding responsibilities related to Public Law 94-142. All three of the groups surveyed indicated that special education administrators actually per-

formed all nineteen of the responsibilities pertaining to Public Law 94-142. Though there were differences in the numbers and frequencies on the responses, more than 70% of the special education administrators indicate budget, external agencies, materials and equipment, discipline, parent contacts, least restrictive environment, student placement, appoints local education agency representative, and annual census as part of their actual responsibilities. Also, more than seventy percent of the principals indicated that nine of the nineteen responsibilities related to Public Law 94-142 were actually performed by the special education administrator. These responsibilities included diagnostic procedures, appointing local education agency, student placements, least restrictive environment, and annual census. Of the superintendents, more than seventy percent indicated that annual census, early childhood, pre-referral, diagnostic procedures, student placement, least restrictive environment, review and re-evaluation, related services, confidentiality, external agency, budget, material and equipment, discipline, and parent contacts were actual responsibilities of the special education administrator.

Ideal Responsibilities

Ideal responsibilities refers to the situation where the special education administrator does not perform a specified task, but the respondent believed that the special education administrator ideally should perform the task. Table VIII also presents the responses on ideal responsibilities as perceived by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators. Though the majority of administrators indicated that special education administrators were actually performing

all of the personnel responsibilities and functions related to Public Law 94-142, very few respondents indicated that some of the responsibilities were ideal responsibilities.

Personnel Responsibilities. Nineteen percent of the superintendents reported that the special education administrator should ideally be responsible for a comprehensive system of personnel development. Fourteen percent of the superintendents indicated that special education administrators should be responsible for staff evaluation.

Under ideal personnel responsibilities, a small percentage of the principals surveyed also indicated some of the personnel responsibilities as ideal responsibilities for the special education administrator. They were comprehensive system of personnel development (26 percent), evaluation (22 percent), curriculum (19 percent), and supervision (16 percent).

Special education administrators indicated two areas of responsibility that were worthy to mention as being ideal responsibilities of the special education administrator. They were interviewing and selection of special education staff (29 percent) and curriculum (13 percent).

Responsibilities Related to Public Law 94-142. The two responsibilities related to Public Law 94-142 noted as ideal responsibilities for special education administrators by the superintendents were diagnostic procedures, 18%, and pre-referral, 14%. All the rest of the responsibilities were considered ideal responsibilities by less than 10% of the superintendents surveyed.

Principals indicated discipline, 23%, and conducting staffings, 20%,

as ideal functions of the special education administrator. They also considered parent contacts, 19%, as an ideal responsibility.

Responses from the special education administrators themselves indicated that less than 10% of them perceived the responsibilities related to Public Law 94-142 as ideal responsibilities. Ninety percent indicated that they are actually being performed by them.

Placement in Organizational Hierarchy

To identify the staff member who administers special education programs and at what level this person was placed in the hierarchy of the administrative organization, items pertaining to these issues were included in question 23 and 27 of the superintendents' questionnaire and question 27 of the principals' questionnaire. Following is a discussion of who is designated as special education administrator, and where this individual is placed in the hierarchy of the school organization.

Administration of Special Education Programs

The superintendents were asked to indicate whether special education programs were administered by a special education administrator or other staff member in question 27. If other staff members administered the program, the superintendents were asked to indicate the position of such staff members. Sixty-eight percent of the superintendents indicated that special education was administered by a special education administrator. The thirty-two percent who indicated other staff member as the administrator of special education specified assistant superintendents, principals, and assistant principals as those who assumed the special education administrative position.

Hierarchy

Superintendents were asked to respond to the following in Question twenty-eight: At what equivalent level is the special education administrator placed in the hierarchy of organizational levels? Principals were asked (Question 27): At what equivalent level do you believe the special education administrator should be placed in the hierarchy of organizational levels? Table IX presents the data pertaining to answers given for those two questions.

TABLE IX

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS' PLACEMENT
IN HIERARCHY OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEVELS
ACCORDING TO SUPERINTENDENTS
AND PRINCIPALS

Administrative Level	Superintendent (Actual)		Principal (Ideal)	
	N	%	N	%
Assistant Superintendent	2	11	5	7
Administrative Assistant	7	39	15	22
Principal	3	17	8	12
Assistant Principal	3	17	10	15
Supervisor	2	11	24	36
Director of Pupil Personnel	1	5	5	7
School Psychologist	0	0	1	1

Note: Percentage is rounded off to whole number.

An examination of Table IX reveals that thirty-nine percent of the superintendents reported that special education administrators are placed at the administrative assistant level in the hierarchy of the organization. Thirty-six percent of the principals believed the special education administrator should be placed in the hierarchy of organization levels as a supervisor. Twenty-two percent believed the special education administrator should be administrative assistant.

Differences in Perceptions of Actual and Ideal
Responsibilities of Special Edu-
cation Administrators

The Chi-square test was used to determine if significant differences existed between the actual responsibilities of the special education administrator and the ideal responsibilities of the special education administrator as perceived by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators.

With the Chi-square technique, the probability that frequencies observed in the study differ from the expected theoretical frequencies can be determined. For this study, the significance level was set at 0.10. Linton and Gallo (1975) showed the formula for Chi square as:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e},$$

where f_o is the observed frequency and f_e is the expected frequency. Siegel's (1956) table of critical values of Chi-square was used to obtain the P-values for Table X. Table X presents the analyses derived

TABLE X

CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS OF SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES
IN SUPERINTENDENTS', PRINCIPALS', AND SPECIAL
EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF
ACTUAL AND IDEAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS

Questionnaire Item/Responsibility	χ^2	df	P	S/NS
1. Interview & Select	4.854	2	0.0883	S
2. Supervise	1.182	2	0.5537	NS
3. Evaluate	1.248	2	0.5358	NS
4. CSPD*	4.185	2	0.1234	NS
5. Curriculum	1.152	2	0.5622	NS
6. Annual Census	2.648	2	0.2661	NS
7. Early Childhood	2.466	2	0.2915	NS
8. Pre-referral	1.074	2	0.5845	NS
9. Diagnostic Procedures	0.489	2	0.7832	NS
10. Conduct Staffings	3.720	2	0.1557	NS
11. Diagnostic Summary	1.948	2	0.3776	NS
12. Appoint Local Education Agency	0.807	2	0.6679	NS
13. Student Placements	1.310	2	0.5196	NS
14. Least Restrictive Environment	1.464	2	0.4808	NS
15. Reviews & Re-evaluations	3.624	2	0.1634	NS
16. Related Services	0.434	2	0.8050	NS
17. Confidentiality	3.014	2	0.2216	NS
18. External Agencies	1.855	2	0.3956	NS
19. Budget	1.452	2	0.4837	NS
20. Materials & Equipment	3.775	2	0.1515	NS
21. Discipline	5.763	2	0.0560	S
22. Parent Contacts	4.568	2	0.1019	NS

Note: For those significant, $P < 0.10$

*CSPD - Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

from the Chi-square test of significant differences regarding the actual and ideal responsibilities of special education administrators.

Personnel

A significant difference was found to exist between the actual and ideal responsibilities of the special education administrator as perceived by the three administrative groups regarding interviewing and selection of special education staff ($P = .0883$). About 32% of the special education administrators perceived interviewing and selection as the ideal responsibility. This indicated disagreement among special education administrators regarding their responsibility for interviewing and selection of special education staff. Unlike the special education administrators, 12 percent of the principals indicated interviewing and selection as being ideal for the special education administrator. The principals seemed to indicate that this is the actual responsibility of the special education administrator. For the superintendents, 13 percent viewed this responsibility as an ideal responsibility of the special education administrator which also indicates that superintendents perceive this responsibility to be an actual responsibility of the special education administrator. There were no significant differences indicated for the other personnel functions.

Public Law 94-142

All the items regarding Public Law 94-142 were tested for significant differences in the actual and ideal responsibilities of the special education administrator as perceived by the three administrative groups: superintendents, principals, and special education administrators using χ^2 . The χ^2 analysis is also presented in Table X.

An examination of Table X reveals that significant differences in the actual and ideal responsibilities were found to exist in only one of the responsibilities, that is question 21, discipline, which is related to Public Law 94-142 ($p = .0560$).

About 30 percent of the principals perceived discipline as the ideal responsibility of the special education administrator. This would indicate disagreement among principals regarding their perception of whether discipline is an actual or an ideal responsibility of the special education administrator. Unlike the principals, 10 percent of the superintendents and 10 percent of the special education administrators indicated discipline as being ideal for the special education administrator. The majority of superintendents and special education administrators seemed to indicate that this is the actual responsibility of the special education administrator.

Differences in Perceptions of Administrators Regarding Ideal Responsibilities

Ideal functioning of the special education administrator refers to the situation where the special education administrator does not perform a specified task, but the respondents believe that the special education administrator ideally should perform the task. Few respondents from each of the three categories of administrators indicated the responsibilities to be ideal. A one-way Chi-square analysis was used to examine if differences exist among the three categories of administrators regarding their perceptions of the ideal functions of the special education administrator.

An examination of Table XI revealed that significant differences in

TABLE XI

CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS OF SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES
IN PERCEPTION OF IDEAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS BY
SUPERINTENDENTS, PRINCIPALS AND
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMIN-
ISTRATORS

Questionnaire Item/Responsibility	χ^2	df	S/NS
1. Interview & Select	2.788	2	NS
2. Supervise	10.8	2	S
3. Evaluate	15.763	2	S
4. CSPD*	19.0	2	S
5. Curriculum	14.997	2	S
6. Annual Census	8.6633	2	S
7. Early Childhood	12.987	2	S
8. Pre-referral	10.699	2	S
9. Diagnostic Procedures	5.2	2	S
10. Conduct Staffings	18.459	2	S
11. Diag. Summary	15.397	2	S
12. Appoint Local Education Agency	6.243	2	S
13. Student Placements	7.811	2	S
14. Least Restrictive Environment	9.5	2	S
15. Review & Re-evaluations	14.0	2	S
16. Related Services	4.578	2	NS
17. Confidentiality	10.737	2	S
18. External Agencies	7.0	2	S
19. Budget	5.19	2	S
20. Materials & Equipment	17.269	2	S
21. Discipline	19.591	2	S
22. Parent Contacts	19.2	2	S

Note: For those significant, $P < 0.10$

*CSPD - Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

perception existed among the three categories of administrators on twenty of the twenty-two responsibilities surveyed. For those responsibilities where the three categories of administrators differed in their perceptions the observed perception was significantly different from what was expected.

Table XII presents the percentages of administrators who differed significantly on ideal responsibilities of special education administrators. It appears that, overall, a higher percent of principals viewed the responsibilities as ideal responsibilities.

Interviewing and selection of staff and related services were two responsibilities where significant differences were not found in the perceptions of the three administrative categories. The observed perceptions were not significantly different from what was expected.

TABLE XII

PERCENTAGE OF ADMINISTRATORS WHO DIFFERED SIG-
NIFICANTLY ON IDEAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS

Question Number/Question	Superintendent	Principal	Special Education Administrator	Total
2. Supervise	13.33	73.33	13.33	100
3. Evaluate	15.00	75.00	10.00	100
4. CSPD*	16.67	75.00	8.33	100
5. Curriculum	11.11	72.22	16.67	100
6. Annual Census	22.22	77.78	0.00	100
7. Early Childhood	7.14	78.57	14.29	100
8. Pre-referral	17.65	70.59	11.76	100
9. Diagnostic Procedures	26.67	60.00	13.33	100
10. Conduct Staffings	11.76	82.35	5.88	100
11. Diagnostic Summary	7.69	84.61	7.69	100
12. Appoint LEA**	12.50	75.00	12.50	100
13. Student Placements	9.09	72.73	18.18	100
14. Least Restrictive Env.***	16.67	75.00	8.33	100
15. Reviews & Re-evaluations	0.00	83.33	16.67	100
17. Confidentiality	0.00	87.50	12.50	100
18. External Agencies	16.67	83.33	0.00	100
19. Budget	20.00	80.00	0.00	100
20. Materials & Equipment	7.15	85.71	7.15	100
21. Discipline	10.00	80.00	10.00	100
22. Parent Contacts	6.67	86.67	6.67	100

Note: Non-significant items not reported

*CSPD - Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

**Local Education Agency

***Least Restrictive Environment

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this investigation was to survey the status of the role and responsibilities of special education administrators in the public schools of Missouri. The study was designed to provide descriptive data that would reveal differences that might exist between the actual and ideal administrative responsibilities of the special education administrator as viewed by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators. The study was also designed to provide information on the personal characteristics of special education administrators, professional qualifications of the special education administrator, and characteristics of the special education services offered by the school districts. The research questions specifically addressed were:

1. Do significant differences exist between the actual responsibilities of special education administrators and the perceived ideal responsibilities of special education administrators as viewed by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators?

2. Do significant differences exist among the three professional groups, superintendents, principals, and special education administrators, regarding their perceptions of the ideal responsibilities of the special education administrator?

Summary of the Findings

Findings from Research Questions

The first research question was: Is there a significant difference between the actual responsibilities of special education administrators and the perceived ideal responsibilities of special education administrators as viewed by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators?

A significant difference in the actual responsibilities and the perceived ideal responsibilities was found to exist in only two areas. Those two areas were interviewing and selection of special education personnel and monitoring the procedures and types of discipline applied to handicapped students. There were no significant differences in the actual responsibilities performed and the perceived ideal responsibilities of the other twenty responsibilities.

The second research question was: Is there a significant difference among the three professional groups, superintendents, principals, and special education administrators, regarding their perceptions of the ideal role of the special education administrator?

The three categories of administrators viewed interviewing and selection of special education staff and arranging for related services as the responsibilities that were not performed by the special education administrator, but responsibilities which they believed should be part of the special education administrators' responsibilities.

Findings from Descriptive Information

A review of the means of delivering special education services to the handicapped indicated that some small school districts in the state

of Missouri often have such a low incidence of handicapped students in the various defined categories that it is not possible to provide space or staff within the limits of the school district's resources. When this is the case, districts have often provided their special education services through cooperative arrangements with other districts. Over 90 percent of the districts surveyed offered programs for educable mentally handicapped, learning disabled, and speech impaired within their districts. Over 60 percent offered programs for the visually and orthopedically handicapped through a cooperative arrangement. Programs for the behaviorally disordered students appeared to be on the increase with 83% of the districts surveyed indicating that these programs were offered within the district. Approximately 70 percent of the hearing and health impaired programs were served within the local district.

Staff sizes and other characteristics revealed by the study indicated the number of special education staff members within school districts to vary from five to ninety-five. Forty percent of the superintendents reported a staff size from five to ten special education staff members. Twenty-five percent of the superintendents reported a staff size of eleven to twenty-one members, with another twenty-five percent showing twenty-four to forty-seven staff members.

Sixty-eight percent of the superintendents indicated that the special education program was administered by a person with the title of special education administrator. This data indicated a degree of uniformity in the use of the title of special education administrator. Other staff members who were identified as administering the special education programs were assistant superintendents, principals, and assistant principals. The majority of the principals believed that the

special education administrator should be placed on the hierarchy of organizational levels as a supervisor. However, the superintendents believed they should be an administrative assistant.

Personal and professional data regarding special education administrators indicated that they were predominantly men, with approximately one-fourth of the administrators being women. The majority of the respondents reported salaries ranging from \$20,000 to \$25,000, with contracts ranging from ten to twelve months. Over half of the special education administrators considered their current position as their ultimate professional goal. Those who did not consider this position as their ultimate professional goal aspired to the superintendency position, or to teaching at a college or university. A few indicated interest in state level special education positions, and none were interested in positions at the federal level.

Fifty-eight percent of the special education administrators belonged to the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE), and fifty-four percent belonged to both the National and the local Council for Exceptional Children. Thirty-five percent hold membership in some branch of the National Association of School Administrators, with thirty-one percent in other organizations such as Association of Curriculum Directors or Phi Delta Kappa.

The majority of the special education administrators held a master's degree in special education teaching. Nineteen percent held a doctorate, while twelve percent had a specialist's degree. The years of experience as a special education administrator ranged from one to thirty-two years.

There was some difference of opinion found between special education administrators' and principals' viewpoints regarding the educational

degree they believed should be required of the special education administrator. While eighty-eight percent of the special education administrators indicated that a master's degree should be required, only twelve percent believed a specialist's degree should be required. In contrast forty-nine percent of the principals believed a specialist's degree should be required, and forty percent believed a master's degree should be required. In addition, seven percent of the principals believed a doctorate degree should be required.

Principals and special education administrators generally agreed upon the professional courses they believed should be required of special education administrators. Both principals and special education administrators rated legalities of special education as the one course of greatest importance. Child growth and development and special education administration coursework were within the top four choices of both principals and special education administrators. However, the principals added special education teaching methods as a top priority in contrast to the special education administrators who viewed psycho-educational evaluation as being important. Both groups of professionals rated school finance as the lowest in importance. While principals believed certification in special education administration was a necessary requirement for administrators of special education, special education administrators viewed both certification in special education administration and certification in general administration as necessary.

Actual and ideal responsibilities of the special education administrator surveyed among all three categories of administrators (superintendents, principals, and special education administrators) revealed the five personnel responsibilities cited in the questionnaire as actual

responsibilities performed by the special education administrators in the school districts. The groups responded with a total of approximately sixty-eight percent of the superintendents, seventy percent of the principals, and seventy-four percent of the special education administrators indicating that the special education administrator actually performed the responsibilities of interviewing and selection of special education personnel, supervision of special education staff, evaluation of special education staff members, comprehensive system of personnel development, and supervision of curriculum development.

All three categories of administrators indicated that the special education administrator actually performed all of the responsibilities related to Public Law 94-142. The groups responded with a total of approximately seventy-seven percent of the superintendents; seventy-one percent of the principals, and seventy percent of the special education administrators indicating that the special education administrator actually assumed all of the responsibilities mandated by Public Law 94-142.

Conclusions

1. This researcher concluded from an examination of the literature reviewed that there is no question regarding who has the ultimate responsibility for the education of all students within a school unit. The responsibility continues to rest with the principals, but there has been an apparent need for school principals to become knowledgeable in the provision of special education services.

2. This researcher concluded that there needs to be someone in the school districts that is going to keep up-to-date in legalities related to the provision of educational services to handicapped children, educa-

tional programs, methods, and techniques. No matter what status a person has within a school staff, there needs to be someone who will be held accountable for a school district's compliance to legal mandates.

3. It was concluded that the dual administrative system within a school building has not appeared to be efficient, and there has appeared to be a need to bring about a merger of the two systems, probably through processes of participative decision making regarding facilities, staff, and programs for handicapped children.

4. Based on the researcher's observations, it was concluded that general administration has not been brought to an awareness of the complexity of special education. This conclusion was derived from the fact that there were few journal articles in general administrators' literature which addressed the area of special education administration.

5. The most obvious conclusion was that special education, since passage of Public Law 94-142 and the various laws established among the states including Missouri's House Bill 474, has now become a permanent factor in the educational system of the United States. This is evidenced by the fact that no less than 10% of our school population is handicapped, and the various handicapping conditions cut across every geographical unit, socioeconomic level, race, and cultural circumstance.

6. Overall results allowed the researcher to conclude that there was no significant difference shown regarding administrators' perceptions of the actual and ideal responsibilities of special education administrators in the Triple A schools in the State of Missouri. Even though the literature indicated that one might expect a difference in the perceptions of superintendents, principals, and special education administrators, the researcher was able to conclude that this seemed not to be

the case in Missouri. Apparently the issues and conflicts are being resolved. How the issues and conflicts are being resolved in Missouri is that, in triple A schools, a person has been designated to administer the programs of special education.

Discussion

Data developed by this study did not, in all cases, clearly reveal certain trends in the administration of special education in Missouri. In contrast to the review of the literature which indicated that nationally there has seemed to be confusion regarding the administration of special education, the State of Missouri seemed to have resolved the confusion in most of the triple A schools. Most of the respondents to the questionnaire appeared to be in agreement regarding the actual responsibilities of the special education administrator. Only 20% or less of the respondents failed to agree upon what actually constituted the responsibilities of the special education administrator. The conflict or confusion appeared to be prevalent within the smaller school districts. Reasons for the conflict and confusion in smaller districts could possibly be insufficient numbers of staff, or the fact that due to lower incidence rates in the smaller districts, special education programs have been offered more frequently through cooperative arrangements with other small school districts. And thus, local administration of special education was not required.

Apparently, the conflict and confusion regarding administration of special education as reported in the literature on a national level is being resolved to a greater degree in Missouri than in some other states.

The reason for this may be the fact that Missouri had established its own approach to providing educational services to the handicapped students through House Bill 474. The 77th Missouri General Assembly, by enactment of House Bill 474, declared it to be the policy of the State of Missouri to provide to all handicapped and severely handicapped students special education services to meet their needs and maximize their educational capabilities. The law went into effect July, 1974, which preceeded passage of Public Law 94-142 in 1975. House Bill 474 has been claimed by many reviewers to be parallel and equal to Public Law 94-142 almost in its entirety. Perhaps because of this act of legislation, Missouri has been providing positive leadership in the provision of services to the handicapped students. There has in the past been some speculation that Public Law 94-142 may be rescinded. However, in the State of Missouri, because of House Bill 474, provision of services would not be affected and would continue to exist quite adequately under the state law.

The results of this study indicate that there does seem to be a dual system operating in educational organizations in regard to provision of special education programs. In the opinion of this researcher, this dual system tends to be inefficient, time consuming, financially unfeasible, and generally burdensome and confusing. This reviewer believes that any school organization that tends to function in this manner should try to eliminate the dualism. The dual system, while initially a positive step for education, is no longer needed. Merging of special education with general education appears to be an event that will eventually come about.

The trend has been developing toward more colleges and universities

including a course in administration of special education as a requirement for certification of general administrators. This requirement alone tends to place special education where it should be, in the same track with regular education.

There would appear to be a need for an individual designated on the school staff to be responsible for keeping the school district up-to-date regarding legal aspects of special education, programs, teaching methods, finances, et cetera. The role of this staff member would be consultant in addition to serving as line administrator. That staff member would also monitor the school district to be sure that the district was operating within the district's compliance plan as approved by the state department of education and oversee the efforts of the local district in providing sound educational programs for the handicapped. In addition, this staff member would keep abreast of innovations for program improvement.

This researcher noted that there appeared to be a lack of literature regarding special education administration in journals which are widely circulated and intended for general school administrators. Information regarding special education administration in those journals was virtually nil. The main source of information about special education administration was found only in the special education journals. There does not appear to be any explanation for this other than it is symptomatic of the fact that general administrators really have not recognized the need to provide specialized leadership for special education.

This researcher did not find one single article that addressed the issue of the quality of the product, the individual student, resulting from high quality, well administered special education programs. All of

the research reviewed dealt with areas of administration, responsibilities and the "who" of administration.

Recommendations

From the review of literature and the results of this study, the following recommendations for possible incorporation in practice in the public schools are presented:

1. A total system approach to achieving the intent of Public Law 94-142 has been recommended as opposed to the dualist approach which has tended to perpetuate the attempts of special education administrators and building principals to solve problems independently. The total system has suggested the need for collaboration between the special education administrator and principal based upon trust and open communication lines.

2. Participatory and shared decision-making under the leadership of the building principal in consultation with the specialist has been encouraged as an effective means of expanding the base of problem identification and sound decision-making relative to implementation of Public Law 94-142.

3. When a staff position has been considered as an advisory and consultation role, and line positions as delegated positions directly made by the superintendent, the line position has taken direct responsibility for serving children. Therefore, a special education administrator assigned line status has created a dual system of administration. To avoid this dichotomous dilemma, the development of the building principals' competencies in administration of special education has been recommended as the most administratively efficient manner in which quality

programs were able to be provided to the handicapped students under Public Law 94-142.

4. Published job descriptions for special education administrators should be made available to, and understood by, the entire school staff.

5. In-service for both regular and special education administrators regarding administrative procedures in special education should be provided within school districts.

6. This study suggests that individuals should be selected for administrative positions in special education who have training and experience in both special education and general administration.

The following recommendations for further research in the area of special education administration are presented:

1. Clear guidelines for the resolution of confusion between the specialist and generalist regarding their role responsibilities in special education administration throughout the nation have apparently not been established. Further research for delineating the role responsibilities has been recommended by this researcher. The functions and responsibilities of the special education director should be clarified, put into writing and circulated system wide.

2. Succeeding investigations should focus on the development of more precise instrumentation to determine more accurately the magnitude of differences existing among personnel concerning the role of the special education director. Efforts are needed to relate specific training and job activities to variations in the range and structure of services for exceptional children offered by districts. The instrumentation should correlate job activities with needed preparation, providing more detailed information regarding possible training programs for adminis-

trative personnel in special education administration.

3. Research is needed to ascertain state certification standards and to explore implementation of more consistent standards across the states.

4. Similar studies should be conducted in other states in order to determine if differences exist between the actual and ideal roles of the special education administrators in the school districts.

5. Studies of special education administrators have relied heavily on a questionnaire methodology which has sought information from special education directors, their peers, or general administrators. This method has severe limitations in the fact it does not measure the product, "the student". Therefore, surveys are secondary reports and more precise research should be conducted by direct observation of programs and students in order to determine the real impact of the effectiveness or lack of effectiveness in the administration of special education. In the opinion of this reviewer, the proof of effectiveness of administration, whether general or special, should be found in the improved quality of the student's performance. In regard to special education students, this would imply (1) more students able to function in the mainstream of regular programs, (2) student achievement levels would rise, and (3) social adaptability would improve. The ultimate test of effective administrative practices for special education would be a longitudinal study of handicapped individuals covering a period of at least five or more years to determine the levels of success they had reached in the American society as a product of quality educational programs lead by qualified administrators of special education.

Concluding Remarks

Research in this study revealed that there was fairly general agreement between the general and special administrator as to what the special education administrator should do and actually is doing. This was seen as a good indication that special education administration in Missouri is moving ahead and as colleges and universities cover special education administration in coursework required for certification in administration, it could be foreseen that eventually most of the schools would include special education under the jurisdiction of general administration. But, in larger systems, there may be a need for a specific position for special education administrator. Such a person would more than likely be directly attached to the central office. In the opinion of this researcher, the eventuality is for special and regular education to merge to the point that there would no longer be a dual system.

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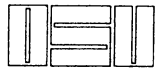
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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

PILOT STUDY COVER LETTERS



Oklahoma State University

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
AND HIGHER EDUCATION

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74078
309 GUNDERSEN HALL
(405) 624-7244

January 2, 1985

Dear School Administrator:

Your school district has been selected to participate in a pilot study regarding the responsibilities of special education administrators in public schools. The actual study will be conducted in the state of Missouri. The purpose of this study is to determine the responsibilities of special education administrators as perceived by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators. Your assistance and support toward the success of this effort is greatly appreciated.

Please fill out the enclosed researcher-developed questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope. As you complete the questionnaire, please feel free to note any mistakes, inconsistencies, items or instructions that are unclear, or suggestions you might have regarding the instrument. All comments and recommendations will be carefully considered for inclusion in the actual study.

The information contained in the questionnaire will remain completely confidential, however, it would be appreciated if you would sign your name and identify your school district on the enclosed card for purposes of follow-up activities. Data will be reported only in group statistics.

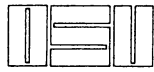
Your prompt attention to this matter is very important to the successful completion of this study.

Sincerely,

Judith A. Brown
Doctoral Student

Dr. Kenneth St. Clair
Adviser
Department of Educational Administration
and Higher Education
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078

Enc.: 2



Oklahoma State University

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
AND HIGHER EDUCATION

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74078
309 GUNDERSEN HALL
(405) 624-7244

January 18, 1985

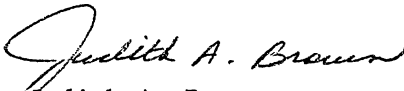
Dear School Administrator:

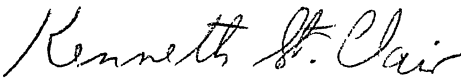
Your promptness in completing the pilot study questionnaire regarding special education administration was greatly appreciated. As you know, a retest with the same instrument is needed in order to determine the instrument's reliability. Your assistance is once again being requested to complete a small portion of the original questionnaire. This will be the final administration of the instrument in this pilot study.

Please fill out the questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope. Please be reminded that the information in the questionnaire will remain completely confidential. It would, however, be appreciated if, for follow-up purposes, you would sign your name and address on the enclosed card. Data will be reported only in group statistics.

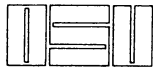
Thank you again for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,


Judith A. Brown
Doctoral Student


Dr. Kenneth St. Clair
Adviser
Department of Educational Administration
and Higher Education
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078

Enc.: 2



Oklahoma State University

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
AND HIGHER EDUCATION

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74078
309 GUNDERSEN HALL
(405) 624-7244

January 25, 1985

Dear School Administrator:

I am employed by the Neosho, Missouri School District and am currently completing my doctoral program at Oklahoma State University. As a part of my university program, I am conducting research regarding the responsibilities of special education administrators as perceived by superintendents, principals, and special education administrators in the public schools of Missouri. Your district has been selected to participate in the study. Your assistance and support toward the success of this effort is greatly appreciated.

Please fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope. The information contained in the questionnaire will remain completely confidential, however, it would be appreciated if you would sign your name and identify your school district on the enclosed card for purposes of follow-up activities. Data will be reported only in group statistics. Also, if you would like to know the results of the study, please indicate that desire on the bottom portion of the 3 x 5 card.

Your prompt attention to this matter is very important to the successful completion of this study. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Judith A. Brown

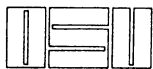
Dr. Kenneth St. Clair, Adviser
Department of Educational Administration
and Higher Education
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078

Enc.: 3

JB/pc

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTERS



Oklahoma State University

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
AND HIGHER EDUCATION

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74078
309 GUNDERSEN HALL
(405) 624-7244

February 15, 1985

Dear School Administrator:

Recently you should have received a letter and questionnaire similar to this one requesting your assistance in providing information for a research study regarding the responsibilities of the person in your school district designated as the administrator of special education.

You may have received a questionnaire and returned it without including the follow-up card that was enclosed. If this was true in your case, please disregard this correspondence and destroy this questionnaire. Otherwise, if you have not yet completed the questionnaire, I would appreciate your attention to the matter at the earliest possible date.

Please fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope. The information contained in the questionnaire will remain completely confidential, however, it would be appreciated if you would sign your name and identify your school district on the enclosed card for purposes of follow-up activities. Data will be reported only in group statistics. Also, if you would like to know the results of the study, please indicate that desire on the bottom portion of the 3 x 5 card.

Your prompt attention to this matter is very important to the successful completion of this study. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judith A. Brown".

Judith A. Brown

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kenneth St. Clair".

Dr. Kenneth St. Clair, Adviser
Department of Educational Administration
and Higher Education
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078

Enc.: 2

APPENDIX C

SUPERINTENDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR AN INVESTIGATIVE REPORT ON
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION IN MISSOURI

(Superintendent)

DIRECTIONS: Check one response for each item according to the key.

Column A - Special education administrator actually performs the task, and should perform the task.

Column B - Special education administrator actually performs the task, but should not perform the task.

Column C - Special education administrator does not perform the task, but should perform the task.

Column D - Special education administrator does not perform the task, and should not perform the task

PERSONNEL

<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	
___	___	___	___	1. Interview and select special education personnel
___	___	___	___	2. Supervise the special education instructional staff
___	___	___	___	3. Evaluate special education instructional personnel
___	___	___	___	4. Develop the comprehensive system of personnel development
___	___	___	___	5. Supervises development of special education curriculum

RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO PUBLIC LAW 94-142

<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	
___	___	___	___	6. Conduct the annual census to locate district handicapped
___	___	___	___	7. Supervise early childhood screening
___	___	___	___	8. Supervise collection of referred students pre-referral data
___	___	___	___	9. Determine diagnostic procedures and designate appropriate evaluation staff
___	___	___	___	10. Organize and conduct diagnostic staffings

- | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> | <u>C</u> | <u>D</u> | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|--|
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 11. Compile the diagnostic summary report |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 12. Appoint Local Education Agency Representative (LEA) to conduct the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 13. Monitor appropriateness of student placements and services |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 14. Insure that each handicapped students educational program is provided in the least restrictive environment |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 15. Schedule IEP annual reviews and mandated three year re-evaluations |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 16. Arrange for related services such as transportation, health, etcetera |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 17. Insure confidentiality of handicapped student records |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 18. Secure external agency services |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 19. Prepare budget and entitlement applications for the local special education program |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 20. Establish and supervise acquisition of special education instructional material and equipment |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 21. Monitor the procedures and types of discipline applied to handicapped students |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 22. Serve as main liaison for parent contacts regarding evaluation procedures, placement, and major changes in a student's program |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Please place a check mark or fill in the appropriate blank for each of the following questions:

23. What is the total enrollment of your school district? _____
24. Number of handicapped students served under Public Law 94-142: _____

25. Please indicate whether the following special education programs are offered within the school district or through a different arrangement such as through a cooperative agreement with another district, etcetera. (W= Within local district, O= Other type of arrangement (Please specify)).

Educable Mentally Handicapped _____
 Learning Disabilities _____
 Behaviorally Disordered _____
 Visual _____
 Speech _____
 Health _____
 Orthopedic _____
 Hearing _____

26. Total Number of special education staff members: _____

27. Special education is administered by:

Special Education Administrator
 Other Staff Member (Position): _____

28. At what equivalent level is the special education administrator placed in the hierarch of organizational levels? (Check one)

Assistant Superintendent Supervisor
 Administrative Assistant Director of Pupil Personnel
 Principal School Psychologist
 Assistant Principal Other (Specify): _____

29. Please rank the qualifications you believe are necessary for a person filling the position as special education administrator (1= Most Important, 2= Next Most Important, etcetera)

Coursework in special education
 Coursework in educational administration
 Experience in special education
 Experience in educational administration
 Background in psychological testing

30. Approximately how much time is spent by the special education administrator on duties directly involved with administering the special education program?

Full time
 Half time
 One-fourth time
 Less than one-fourth time

31. Please describe important issues in your awareness that were omitted in this survey regarding the responsibilities of the special education administrator.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE!

APPENDIX D
PRINCIPAL'S QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR AN INVESTIGATIVE REPORT ON
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION IN MISSOURI

(Principal)

DIRECTIONS: Check one response for each item according to the key.

Column A - Special education administrator actually performs the task, and should perform the task

Column B - Special education administrator actually performs the task, but should not perform the task

Column C - Special education administrator does not perform the task, but should perform the task.

Column D - Special education administrator does not perform the task, and should not perform the task

PERSONNEL

- | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> | <u>C</u> | <u>D</u> | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|--|
| — | — | — | — | 1. Interview and select special education personnel |
| — | — | — | — | 2. Supervise the special education instructional staff |
| — | — | — | — | 3. Evaluate special education instructional personnel |
| — | — | — | — | 4. Develop the comprehensive system of personnel development |
| — | — | — | — | 5. Supervises development of special education curriculum |

RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO PUBLIC LAW 94-142

- | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> | <u>C</u> | <u>D</u> | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|---|
| — | — | — | — | 6. Conduct the annual census to locate district handicapped |
| — | — | — | — | 7. Supervise early childhood screening |
| — | — | — | — | 8. Supervise collection of referred students pre-referral data |
| — | — | — | — | 9. Determine diagnostic procedures and designate appropriate evaluation staff |
| — | — | — | — | 10. Organize and conduct diagnostic staffings |

- | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> | <u>C</u> | <u>D</u> | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|---|
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 11. Compile the diagnostic summary report |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 12. Appoint Local Education Agency Representative (LEA) to conduct the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 13. Monitor appropriateness of student placements and services |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 14. Insure that each handicapped student's educational program is provided in the least restrictive environment |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 15. Schedule IEP annual reviews and mandated three year re-evaluations |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 16. Arrange for related services such as transportation, health, etcetera |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 17. Insure confidentiality of handicapped student records |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 18. Secure external agency services |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 19. Prepare budget and entitlement applications for the local special education program |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 20. Establish and supervise acquisition of special education instructional material and equipment |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 21. Monitor the procedures and types of discipline applied to handicapped students |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 22. Serve as main liaison for parent contacts regarding evaluation procedures, placement, and major changes in a student's program. |

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR POSITION AS PERCEIVED BY PRINCIPALS

23. What is the highest degree you believe should be required for the special education administrator position?

___ Bachelors
___ Masters

___ Specialist
___ Doctorate

24. Please rate (in your opinion) the importance of the following college courses in preparation for special education administration (Use 1 = Very Important, 2 = Somewhat Important, 3 = Little Importance, 4 = No Importance)

<input type="checkbox"/> Child growth and development	<input type="checkbox"/> Methods of behavioral re- search
<input type="checkbox"/> Special education teaching methods	<input type="checkbox"/> Legalities of special edu- cation
<input type="checkbox"/> Special education administration	<input type="checkbox"/> School finance
<input type="checkbox"/> General educational administration	<input type="checkbox"/> Psycho-educational evalu- ation and reports
<input type="checkbox"/> Internship in special education	<input type="checkbox"/> Categories of Exceptional Children
<input type="checkbox"/> Special education instructional materials	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (_____)

25. What areas of certification do you believe should be required for administrators of special education:

<input type="checkbox"/> Special education administrator	<input type="checkbox"/> Principal (Elementary)
<input type="checkbox"/> Superintendency	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (_____)
<input type="checkbox"/> Principal (Secondary)	

26. Please rank (in your opinion) the qualifications you believe are necessary for a person filling the position as special education administrator (1 = Most Important, 2 = Next Most Important, etcetera)

<input type="checkbox"/> Coursework in special education
<input type="checkbox"/> Coursework in educational administration
<input type="checkbox"/> Experience in special education
<input type="checkbox"/> Experience in educational administration
<input type="checkbox"/> Psychological testing
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____

27. At what equivalent level do you believe the special education administrator should be placed in the hierarch of organizational levels (Check one)

<input type="checkbox"/> Assistant Superintendent	<input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor
<input type="checkbox"/> Administrative Assistant	<input type="checkbox"/> Director of Pupil Personnel
<input type="checkbox"/> Principal	<input type="checkbox"/> School Psychologist
<input type="checkbox"/> Assistant Principal	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (_____)

28. Please describe important issues in your awareness that were omitted in this survey regarding the responsibilities of the special education administrator.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE!

APPENDIX E

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR'S QUESTIONNAIRE

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR AN INVESTIGATIVE REPORT ON
SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION IN MISSOURI

(Special Education Administrator)

DIRECTIONS: Check one response for each item according to the key

Column A - Special education administrator actually performs the task, and should perform the task

Column B - Special education administrator actually performs the task, but should not perform the task

Column C - Special education administrator does not perform the task, but should perform the task

Column D - Special education administrator does not perform the task, and should not perform the task

PERSONNEL

A B C D

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| — | — | — | — | 1. Interview and select special education personnel |
| — | — | — | — | 2. Supervise the special education instructional staff |
| — | — | — | — | 3. Evaluate special education instructional personnel |
| — | — | — | — | 4. Develop the comprehensive system of personnel development |
| — | — | — | — | 5. Supervises development of special education curriculum |

RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO PUBLIC LAW 94-142

A B C D

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| — | — | — | — | 6. Conduct the annual census to locate district handicapped |
| — | — | — | — | 7. Supervise early childhood screening |
| — | — | — | — | 8. Supervise collection of referred students pre-referral data |
| — | — | — | — | 9. Determine diagnostic procedures and designate appropriate evaluation staff |
| — | — | — | — | 10. Organize and conduct diagnostic staffings |

- | <u>A</u> | <u>B</u> | <u>C</u> | <u>D</u> | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|--|
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 11. Compile the diagnostic summary report |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 12. Appoint Local Education Agency Representative (LEA) to conduct the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 13. Monitor appropriateness of student placements and services |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 14. Insure that each handicapped students educational program is provided in the least restrictive environment |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 15. Schedule IEP annual reviews and mandated three year re-evaluations |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 16. Arrange for related services such as transportation, health, et cetera |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 17. Insure confidentiality of handicapped student records |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 18. Secure external agency services |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 19. Prepare budget and entitlement applications for the local special education program |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 20. Establish and supervise acquisition of special education instructional material and equipment |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 21. Monitor the procedures and types of discipline applied to handicapped students |
| ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | 22. Serve as main liaison for parent contacts regarding evaluation procedures, placement, and major changes in a student's program |

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS BY CHECKING OR FILLING IN THE APPROPRIATE BLANK:

23. Gender: ___ Male ___ Female

24. Present degree held (Please check):

___	Bachelors (Area: _____)	___	Specialist (Area: _____)
___	Masters (Area: _____)	___	_____)
___	_____)	___	Doctorate (Area: _____)
		___	_____)

APPENDIX F

FOLLOW-UP COVER LETTER



Oklahoma State University

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION
AND HIGHER EDUCATION

STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74078
309 GUNDERSEN HALL
(405) 624-7244

February 15, 1985

Dear School Administrator:

Recently you should have received a letter and questionnaire similar to this one requesting your assistance in providing information for a research study regarding the responsibilities of the person in your school district designated as the administrator of special education.

You may have received a questionnaire and returned it without including the follow-up card that was enclosed. If this was true in your case, please disregard this correspondence and destroy this questionnaire. Otherwise, if you have not yet completed the questionnaire, I would appreciate your attention to the matter at the earliest possible date.

Please fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope. The information contained in the questionnaire will remain completely confidential, however, it would be appreciated if you would sign your name and identify your school district on the enclosed card for purposes of follow-up activities. Data will be reported only in group statistics. Also, if you would like to know the results of the study, please indicate that desire on the bottom portion of the 3 x 5 card.

Your prompt attention to this matter is very important to the successful completion of this study. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Judith A. Brown

Dr. Kenneth St. Clair, Adviser
Department of Educational Administration
and Higher Education
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078

Enc.: 2

VITA ²

Judith Anne Brown

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION IN THE TRIPLE A SCHOOLS
OF MISSOURI

Major Field: Educational Administration

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Carthage, Missouri, August 11, 1946.

Education: Graduated from Alba High School, Alba, Missouri, in May, 1964; received the Bachelor of Arts in Business and Psychology degree from Southwest Baptist University in 1968; received the Master of Science degree in Education from Central Missouri State University in 1977; received the Specialist in Education degree from Central Missouri State University in 1983; completed requirements for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University in July, 1985.

Professional Experience: Social worker, Jasper County Division of Family Services, Joplin, Missouri, 1968-71; business education teacher, Jasper, Missouri, 1971-74; vocational business education teacher, State Fair Community College, Sedalia, Missouri, 1974-75; special education teacher, Carthage, Missouri, 1975-76; special education teacher, Neosho, Missouri, 1976-present.

Professional Organizations:

Missouri State Teachers Association
Council for Exceptional Children
Delta Kappa Gamma
Phi Delta Kappa