

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY  
LEARNING DISABLED STUDENTS

By

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## CHAPTER I

### THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

#### Introduction

There is a growing concern about the successful academic achievement of learning disabled (LD) students who are 14 to 16 years old. Many of these adolescents are failing or dropping out of school during these transitional years (Wells and Stuart, 1981).

Most high school aged students either successfully adapt to the changes life brings around the age of 16, continue to experience failure in the educational system, or drop out of school. Many factors effect a child's development during the ages of 14 to 16. They are changing from middle school or junior high to high school, going through puberty or early adolescence, and are under a great deal of peer pressure to fit in. This is the age group in which adolescents are prone to rebel against the adults in their lives who have authority over them, causing problems with their relationships with parents and teachers. Children and adolescents are often much more concerned about what their peers think than what the adults in their lives think. All of this taken together results in a very complex situation which can easily make or break the adolescent trying to deal with it.

Add to this difficult stage of life a problem with learning the information and concepts being taught at school. The problems the LD adolescent has at school are multiplied by the frustrations and

embarrassment they may experience as a result of their learning problem.

Some typical characteristics have been noted about the learning disabled adolescent. The characteristics include, (1) being passive learners, (2) having poor self-concept, (3) exhibiting inept social skills, and (4) having attentional deficits (Lerner, 1985). The correlation between success at school and the learning disabled students' drop out rate can be seen by examining some of these problems.

Public Law 94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act, defines a learning disability as:

'Specific learning disability' means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor handicaps of mental retardation, of emotional disturbances, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage (Federal Register, 1977, p. 7).

The federal definition also operationalizes this definition in a separate set of regulations. These regulations state that a student has a specific learning disability if, (1) the student does not achieve at the proper grade and ability levels in one or more of several specific areas when provided with appropriate learning experiences, and (2) the student has a severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual ability in one or more of the following areas: (a) oral expression, (b) listening comprehension, (c) written expression, (d) basic reading skills, (e) reading comprehension, (f) mathematics calculations, and (g) mathematics reasoning (Lerner, 1985).



The number of children being identified and served in public schools as learning disabled has changed since the passing of Public Law 94-142. There are many more children being placed in LD classes than ever before. During the 1977-78 school year, 1.89 percent of the total school population was being served in LD classrooms. This percentage increased to 4.63 percent of the total school population during the 1983-84 school year (Lerner, 1985). The United States General Accounting Office (Lerner, 1985) reports that about 72 percent of these children are boys and 28 percent are girls.

The National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDE) offers the following reasons for the increase in the number of children classified under learning disabilities.

1. Improvement in procedures for identifying and assessing learning disabilities.
2. Liberal eligibility criteria for learning disabilities.
3. Social acceptance/preference for the learning disabled classification.
4. Cutbacks in other programs and lack of general education alternatives for children who experience problems in the regular class.
5. Court orders to reclassify some minority children on the basis of discrimination (Lerner, 1985, p. 18).

Along with the increase in identification of LD children, research is indicating some of the problems these children and adolescents are encountering in trying to fit in to society (Lerner, 1985; Cruickshank, Morse, and Johns, 1980; Wells and Stuart, 1981). These LD children are vulnerable to difficulties in adjustment and achievement at school, suicide attempts, drug abuse, running away, or delinquency. These problems reflect failures in their attempts to deal with or avoid their difficulties in coping with life.

## Statement of the Problem

The failure rate among high school aged learning disabled students is increasing (Cruickshank, et. al, 1980). Although the prevalence of the LD student has increased over the past few years, it is not indicative of the failure rate. Technological advances, economic pressures, societal changes, the drug culture, peer pressures, and the current changes in family structures all play a part in the development of today's youth. There are many factors to be considered when trying to determine the causes of dramatic declines of achievement in these LD students.

The study will try to determine if there are differences between regular and LD high school students' perceptions of themselves and their academic performance over the four year period of high school. It will also use a comparison of grades earned in the four basic subjects of math, English, history, and science to determine if there is a grade pattern which correlates with the student's academic achievement and their self-perception pattern. If differences are found, this information can then be further researched and if found to be replicated, could assist educators who deal with these children to cope with the difficulties of these years in a more positive and supportive way.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine if differences exist among the perceptions and academic grades of learning disabled and regular students, grades nine through 12, and the perceptions of LD and regular teachers, grades nine through 12. As previously stated, there

are many factors which affect a person's performance at a given time. This study will attempt to identify some of these factors.

### Research Questions

#### Research Question 1

Are there differences in the grades attained in English, math, history, and science among ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade LD students?

#### Research Question 2

Are there differences in the grades attained in English, math, history, and science between LD and regular ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students?

### Limitations

1. The study was limited to one large midwestern high school with an average enrollment of approximately 1,850 students.
2. The students surveyed were not randomly selected. Intact English classes at each grade level were surveyed.
3. The results of the survey completed by the teachers and students are dependent upon the honesty with which the subjects responded.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Characteristics of Adolescence

Students with learning disabilities must expend much more energy than other students to deal with the demands of their sexual and physical development, peers, parents, teachers, and academic responsibilities (Cruickshank, et al., 1980). Surviving childhood and adolescence is hard enough for a regular child let alone an LD child.

There are many different influences which affect an LD child's life. Achievement, family, and friends are all affected greatly by this type of handicapping condition, and all of these aspects have a definite impact on the child's self concept. A review of some of the aspects of normal adolescent development serves as a basis for comparison.

Lerner and Spanier (1980) view normal adolescent development as a period within the life span when most of the person's processes are in a state of transition from what typically is considered childhood to what typically is considered adulthood. Different opinions exist about the actual time frame in which adolescence occurs, but adolescence is generally seen as an age range of 13 to 21, or as a time of physical change from puberty to adulthood.

Most researchers tend to agree that the most obvious changes during adolescence are physical and emotional (Cruickshank, et al., 1980; Kronick, 1981; Gordon, 1970). As the body matures physically the emotions change to try to cope with the new physical changes and feelings which take place in each individual. As these adolescents mature sexually they are faced with new peer pressures, social pressures, and feelings toward the opposite sex not experienced before.

Lerner and Spanier (1980) suggested that all of the physical, emotional, and psychological changes taking place within adolescents are complicated by the fact that these people also undergo cognitive changes during this age. They are able to progress from the basic concrete thought patterns into hypothetical and abstract aspects of reality.

Some developmental psychologists point out that during adolescence, the main focus tends to be on self (Cruickshank, et al., 1980; Wells and Stuart, 1981). With so many changes taking place, changes that effect how one sees the world around them, adolescents tend to refocus on themselves to try and make sense of their dramatically changing world.

#### Social Factors

Society also reacts differently toward the adolescent as compared to the child. Adolescents are expected to be more responsible, start making decisions about their futures, and to generally become grown up. The dilemma of adolescence has been labeled the identity crisis. A time in which each person seeks answers to the question of self-definition and self-identification.

Many adolescents go through a time of role playing (Cruickshank, et al, 1980). They try on new identities and form new perceptions of themselves. They may discover new ideas and beliefs which fit into their developing personalities. It is usually a continual time of change and discovery.

Most will agree that adolescence is a difficult time of life (Wells and Stuart, 1981; Cruickshank, et al., 1980). The rapid changes in identity, physical stature, psychological foundations, and cognitive functions can unbalance feelings. Many adolescents go through a time of rebellion against or detachment from the family unit. This rebellion or detachment can generalize into the adolescent's school situation, with temporary or permanent changes in the levels of performance occurring. Many teachers agree that the ninth grade (ages 14 to 15) seems to be the most difficult time of adjustment for many students (Garrett, 1986).

#### Effects of LD

Regular high school students must deal with all of the developmental changes of adolescence and continue to meet their responsibilities at home and school. If you combine these normal responsibilities and developmental changes with a deficit in learning ability, it can be expected that some aspects of this will result in additional hardships.

One of the first major differences that occur between a regular student and an LD student at this age occurs in cognitive processing abilities (Wells and Stuart, 1981). Many LD students have great difficulties or fail to comprehend abstract reasoning or concepts

beyond the concrete level (Kronick, 1981). There are some students who may excel in math but have difficulty in all areas which require reading and vice versa. There are students who learn primarily through the auditory channels and by hands-on experience due to visual reading difficulties (Wells and Stuart, 1981). There are almost as many kinds of learning styles as there are LD students.

These differences in learning abilities and developmental stages become more noticeable and dramatic for the students at the adolescent or high school levels (Cruickshank, et al., 1980). LD adolescents are left behind as their peers go on to more complex and challenging educational situations. Even though we have been mainstreaming special education students for a decade in our public school systems, there is still a stigma attached to being in a special education class when it comes to peers (Cruickshank, et al., 1980).

#### Effects of Attitudes

The attitudes of family and friends toward a person who has a handicapping condition have a profound and lasting affect upon that person (Wells and Stuart, 1981). If we always received the message that we are good and worthwhile, we usually grow up and develop good feelings about ourselves. If the message from those who are most important to us are continually negative and failure prone, then we may grow up feeling worthless and dumb developing the self-defeating attitude that "I can't do it anyway, why try?". These are some of the types of roadblocks that many of our LD students face. Society looks down on them as failing, stupid, and lazy (Wells and Stuart, 1981). As a child reaches adolescence, failure is even more

difficult to accept due to peer pressure and all of the other changes which are taking place in mind and body. Often during these times denial, hiding the academic problems, devaluation of self, and shame occur (Cruickshank, et al., 1980).

These poor self-concepts which are usually well developed by the teen years, effect dating practices. As the adolescent matures sexually, acceptance from the opposite sex becomes increasingly important. In an adolescent who is battling with a poor self-concept and academic difficulty, questions are raised about their attractiveness and appeal to members of the opposite sex (Cruickshank, et al., 1980). Adolescents with learning disabilities tend to be even less sure of themselves and have a more difficult time dealing with these normal doubts of adequacy.

Gordon (1970) indicated some reasons behind the LD adolescents' difficulty in finding and keeping close friends: (1) a general insecurity of oneself, (2) sensitivity of oneself, (3) lack of knowledge of subtle social cues, (4) awareness of the risks involved in forming friendships, and (5) inability to label or recognize emotions accurately. Having friends is important to everyone, especially during the teen years. Most of the peers an LD adolescent comes in contact with are not LD. Many children compare themselves unfavorably with their peers. Their academic performance and social mannerisms usually point out that they are somehow different. Gordon (1970) did a survey of regular students to see what their reactions and perceptions of LD kids were. These regular students viewed the LD students as different. Some reactions were that the LD students were strange, mean to others, hostile, friendless, retarded, hard to understand, and not able to



remember or understand what is going on in the classroom. Some regular students felt sorry for their LD peers. Jessor and Jessor (1977) conducted a survey of LD students and found many of these adolescents judged themselves to be outside of the achieving group, so they look for friends where they can find understanding and support. One solution was to gravitate toward other alienated peers (Gordon, 1970). This in turn, tends to group together the students who are social outcasts and educational failures. Even though the goal of special education is to afford these special students with the opportunity to interact with nonhandicapped students, more are rejected because they are different.

#### Types of LD Problems

There are many characteristics of learning disabilities which result in problems in all aspects of life. Kronick (1981) listed these: an LD child may, (1) only process part of the information presented due to an uncertainty of important stimuli, (2) have inaccurate storage in long and short-term memory, (3) have illogical thought processes, (4) have distortions of judgment, (5) use skewed responses, (6) be unaware that all behaviors fall into predictable patterns, i.e. no notion of predictability, and (7) not appreciate the meaning and importance of noting others' behavior. Kronick (1981) also noted that LD children with conceptual disorders often exhibit behaviors which frequently disrupt the classroom. These behaviors may include being inattentive, withdrawn, having little initiative to make classroom contributions, tending to quit or give up easily, having poor comprehension, having low creative initiative, having difficulty in acquiring positive peer relationships, and having poor generalization skills.

If you add the cognitive difficulty an LD adolescent has to the demands of the school curriculum, you often come up with some or all of these behaviors. Many LD students develop anti-school coping techniques to hide their learning problems and frustrations in trying to deal with them.

Kronick (1981) found that many LD adolescents behaved inappropriately in the classroom. They may intentionally work slowly, create disturbances, have poor impulse control, or blame others for their actions. He (Kronick, 1981) also noted various conceptual difficulties LD students may experience which lead to disruptive behaviors. These include difficulty in planning and social judgment, whether in choosing friends or appropriate comments or in devising alternate courses of action. These difficulties may be manifest in gaps in knowledge, persistence of misconceptions which are unusual for the age group, and concepts applied in contexts where not applicable. Literal interpretations of language can cause LD students to draw erroneous inferences and such conceptual distortions contribute to uncertainty, rigidity, and social misperception.

#### Summary

When these types of LD difficulties are taken into account, along with all of the usual changes and feelings that adolescents go through, the resulting problems exhibited by adolescent LD students can be better understood. As educators, we still expect them to perform academically and conform to the rules and regulations of acceptable school behavior. Most educators have come to understand that their

students need more than reading, writing, and arithmetic to develop into healthy, happy, productive citizens.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Subjects

The subjects for this study included 85 students, 52 males and 33 females, attending LD classes and 292 students, 134 males and 158 females, attending regular classes in a large midwestern high school. Table I shows the number of subjects represented in each grade level, ninth through twelfth, and each classification.

Thirty-one of the 47 teachers surveyed, served as subjects in this study, representing a response rate of 63 percent. These were teachers of the four basic subjects: math, science, history, and English, in six LD and 25 regular classes. The surveys were circulated to these teachers through the regular mail service provided to teachers in the main office of the school building. The teachers were asked to complete the surveys and return them to the researcher's mailbox. Sixty-three percent (25) of the regular and 87 percent (6) of the LD teachers responded to the survey. Table II shows the number of teachers by subject and classification who responded to the survey.

#### Procedures

##### Permission to Conduct Research

Permission was requested from the principal of this high school to

TABLE I  
SUBJECTS IN EACH GRADE LEVEL, 9-12

Grade	9	10	11	12
Regular	64	79	68	81
LD	20	24	25	16

TABLE II  
NUMBER OF TEACHERS BY SUBJECT  
AND CLASSIFICATION

Grade	English			Math			History			Science			Total		
	S*	R**	%R***	S*	R**	%R***	S*	R**	%R***	S*	R**	%R***	S*	R**	%R***
Regular	12	7	28	10	7	28	10	7	28	8	5	20	40	25	63
LD	4	4	67	3	3	50	3	3	50	1	1	17	7	6	86

\* - Surveyed  
 \*\* - Response  
 \*\*\* - Percent Response

administer a survey to the students and teachers of the school. The principal reviewed the surveys designed for teachers and students along with the cover letters for each (See Appendix A). Permission was also requested to anonymously acquire the grades attained by students at this high school in math, science, history, and English in grades nine, ten, eleven, and twelve, through the school records.

### Selection of Subjects

The students were surveyed through their English teachers. English teachers were chosen in order to obtain as many completed surveys as possible from the students, since all students are required to attend English classes during all four years of high school. One English teacher in each grade, both regular and LD, was asked to distribute the surveys to the students in their classes and then recover them as the students completed them. The teachers were asked to encourage the students to answer the survey seriously and honestly and to limit discussion between students during the survey to insure non-bias to individual responses.

Grades were collected from a random selection of subjects (Gay, 1981). The total number of students enrolled in LD or regular classes at each of the four grade levels was obtained from the registrar in charge of student records at the high school. The Isaac and Michael (1983) text was utilized in order to assess how many subjects were required to obtain a sufficient amount of data to represent the population within the 95 percent confidence interval. Table III shows the total number of students enrolled in LD and regular classes at the end of the first semester of 1986. The grades collected from this population were attained by these

students at the close of the first semester during the 1986-87 school year. The first semester at this school covers the first 18 weeks of the school year.

## Instruments

### Student Survey

The survey questions were written by the researcher. The questions on the student survey were chosen by two basic criteria: (1) to acquire basic information about each student, such as age, family structure, and if student was employed and (2) to assess the students' perceptions on school related topics, such as favorite class, what classes, if any, were failed, and why and how friends effect school performance. The intent of this survey was to assess the students' perceptions of school, their performance, and factors which affected their performance.

### Teacher Survey

The questions on the teachers' survey were developed by the researcher in order to: (1) acquire basic professional status and subject taught and (2) assess the teachers' perceptions of their students' success or failure and the factors which effect performance of those students.

## Data Analysis

The data will be analyzed by figuring what percentage of the subjects responded in what manner to the survey questions. The grades attained by the students in the four basic subject areas will be computed on a percentage basis by subject (eg. English), class (eg. ninth), and clasification (LD or regular).

TABLE III  
TOTAL POPULATION AND SAMPLE SIZES UTILIZED  
TO OBTAIN COURSE GRADES

Grade	Total Enrolled	Total Used
<u>Regular</u>		
9	490	217
10	370	191
11	301	170
12	333	181
<u>LD</u>		
9	80	56
10	45	40
11	43	40
12	30	28



## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Introduction

Data were collected from ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade learning disabled and regular students and the teachers of these students to assess the perceptions of these subjects on the reasons for the students' academic performance. The data were also analyzed to determine if there was a difference between LD and regular students at the four basic grade levels in terms of academic achievement and self-perceptions.

#### Results of Data Analysis

Research questions 1 and 2 presented in Chapter I were tested with the data obtained from this research.

##### Research Question 1

Tables IV, V, VI, and VII reflect the grades attained by the cross-sectional sample of LD students at the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade levels in the four subject areas and all subjects. Thirty-three percent (21) of the ninth grade students, 24 percent (9) of the tenth grade students, 20 percent (2) of the eleventh grade students, and seven percent (1) of the twelfth grade students made a failing grade (F)

TABLE IV  
 GRADES ATTAINED BY NINTH GRADE  
 LD STUDENTS

Grade	English		Math		History		Science		All Subjects	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	1	2	3	5	1	2	2	4	7	3
B	7	13	4	7	5	9	6	11	22	10
C	19	34	12	21	13	23	10	18	54	24
D	15	27	20	36	15	27	17	30	67	30
F	16	29	16	29	21	38	21	38	74	33

N=Number

TABLE V  
 GRADES ATTAINED BY TENTH  
 GRADE LD STUDENTS

Grade	English		Math		History		Science		All Subjects	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	0	0	1	3	1	3	6	15	8	7
B	6	15	1	3	4	10	7	18	18	15
C	8	20	13	33	11	28	4	10	36	30
D	18	45	6	15	14	33	9	23	47	39
F	6	15	6	15	5	33	9	23	26	24

N=Number

TABLE VI  
GRADES ATTAINED BY ELEVENTH  
GRADE LD STUDENTS

Grade	English		Math		History		Science		All Subjects	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
B	5	13	5	13	5	13	2	5	17	14
C	15	38	10	25	11	28	4	10	40	33
D	12	30	7	18	14	35	5	13	38	32
F	8	20	6	15	8	20	2	5	24	20

N=Number

TABLE VII  
GRADES ATTAINED BY TWELFTH  
GRADE LD STUDENTS

Grade	English		Math		History		Science		All Subjects	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	3	8	2	7	1	4	0	0	6	14
B	7	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	17
C	3	8	3	8	2	7	3	8	11	26
D	5	18	5	18	1	4	2	7	13	31
F	1	4	0	0	1	4	1	4	3	7

N=Number

in all four subject area. These data show a difference in the overall performance of these students at different grade levels, with a decrease in the number of F's attained and an increase in the number of A's attained as the grade level of the student increased.

### Research Question 2

Tables VIII, IX, X, and XI reflect the grades attained by the cross-sectional sample of LD and regular students at the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade levels in the four subject areas and all subjects.

The difference between the grades attained by the ninth grade LD and regular students showed minimal difference. Thirty-three percent (21) of the LD students attained an F in all subjects and 32 percent (64) of the regular students attained an F in all four subjects (See Table VIII). The ninth grade LD students attained more F's in all subject areas except math. The regular students attained 42 percent (92) F's in math as compared to 29 percent (16) F's attained by the LD students.

The difference between grades attained by tenth grade LD and regular students was slightly larger than those attained by the ninth graders (See Table IX). Both classifications of students attained A's at the seven percent level. There was a five percent difference in the attainment level of B's and C's by these tenth grade students with the regular student attaining five percent more B's and C's than the LD students. The LD students attained 39 percent (47) and the regular students attained two percent more F's than the LD students.

The grades attained by eleventh grade LD and regular students showed more variance between the grades attained in all subjects (see

TABLE VIII  
GRADES ATTAINED BY NINTH GRADE  
LD AND REGULAR STUDENTS

Grade	Class	English		Math		History		Science		All Subjects	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	LD	1	2	3	5	1	2	2	4	7	3
	Reg	12	6	7	3	9	4	10	5	38	4
B	LD	7	13	4	7	5	9	6	11	22	10
	Reg	36	17	20	9	34	16	31	14	121	14
C	LD	19	34	12	21	13	23	10	18	54	24
	Reg	47	22	46	21	42	19	47	22	182	21
D	LD	15	27	20	36	15	27	17	30	67	30
	Reg	77	35	46	21	58	27	65	30	246	32
F	LD	16	29	16	29	21	38	21	38	74	33
	Reg	46	21	92	42	76	35	64	29	278	32

N=Number

TABLE IX  
GRADES ATTAINED BY TENTH GRADE  
LD AND REGULAR STUDENTS

Grade	Class	English		Math		History		Science		All Subjects	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	LD	0	0	1	3	1	3	6	15	8	7
	Reg	7	4	11	6	15	8	9	5	42	7
B	LD	6	15	1	3	4	10	7	18	18	15
	Reg	35	18	21	11	35	18	22	12	113	20
C	LD	8	20	13	33	11	28	4	10	36	30
	Reg	55	29	22	12	65	34	59	31	201	35
D	LD	18	45	6	15	14	33	9	23	47	39
	Reg	62	32	32	17	55	29	51	27	200	35
F	LD	6	15	6	15	5	33	9	23	26	22
	Reg	32	17	47	25	23	12	34	18	136	24

N=Number

TABLE X  
GRADES ATTAINED BY ELEVENTH GRADE  
LD AND REGULAR STUDENTS

Grade	Class	English		Math		History		Science		All Subjects	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	LD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Reg	17	10	12	7	19	11	3	2	51	10
B	LD	5	13	5	13	5	13	2	5	17	14
	Reg	39	23	27	16	36	21	10	6	112	22
C	LD	15	38	10	25	11	28	4	10	40	33
	Reg	52	31	29	17	34	20	23	14	138	27
D	LD	12	30	7	18	14	35	5	13	38	32
	Reg	41	24	43	25	33	19	19	11	136	27
F	LD	8	20	6	15	8	20	2	5	24	20
	Reg	19	11	37	22	32	19	13	8	101	20

N=Number

TABLE XI  
GRADES ATTAINED BY TWELFTH GRADE  
LD AND REGULAR STUDENTS

Grade	Class	English		Math		History		Science		All Subjects	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
A	LD	3	8	2	7	1	4	0	0	6	14
	Reg	8	7	25	14	5	3	11	6	49	14
B	LD	7	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	17
	Reg	35	19	17	9	10	6	6	3	68	19
C	LD	3	8	3	8	2	7	3	8	11	26
	Reg	60	33	36	17	9	5	12	7	117	32
D	LD	5	18	5	18	1	4	2	7	13	31
	Reg	60	33	18	10	13	7	2	1	93	26
F	LD	1	4	0	0	1	4	1	4	3	7
	Reg	9	5	12	7	0	0	6	3	27	7

N=Number

Table X). Zero percent (0) of the LD students and ten percent (51) of the regular students attained A's in all subjects. Fourteen percent (17) of the LD students and 22 percent (112) of the regular students attained B's in all subjects. Thirty-three percent (4) of the LD students and 27 percent (138) of the regular students attained C's in all subjects. Thirty-two percent (38) of the LD students and 27 percent (136) of the regular students attained D's in all subjects. Both LD and regular student groups attained 20 percent F's in all subjects (24 LD and 101 regular students).

The area which indicates the largest area of difference in grades attained by LD and regular twelfth grade students is in the attainment of C's and D's, with 26 percent (11) LD and 32 percent (117) regular students making C's and 31 percent (13) LD and 26 percent (93) regular students making D's. They attained the same percentage of A's and F's with both LD (6) and regular (49) students achieving 14 percent A's and both LD (3) and regular (27) students achieving seven percent F's.

The significance of the difference in achievement levels of LD and regular students is inconclusive. These data do not show a significant difference in the performance level of LD and regular students.

## Survey Results

### Students

The results of the student surveys are listed in Appendixes B, C, D, and E which contains the results for the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade LD and regular students, respectively.

The student surveys indicate that the LD population has more males

than females, whereas the regular population is more equally divided. More than 50 percent (220) of all students surveyed indicated that they lived in a two-parent household. In both regular and LD populations the eleventh and twelfth grade students tend to be employed more frequently than the ninth and tenth grade students, with fewer of the ninth graders being employed than at any other grade level.

When the students were asked which grade they enjoyed the most, all grade levels of LD and regular students indicated that they enjoyed their current grade the most (see Appendixes B, C, D, and F).

When the students were asked why they made an F in a class the responses were varied. A comparison of the responses is presented in Table XII. Six out of the eight categories, the number one response was that the reason for making an F was because they did not do the work.

When the students were asked in what ways their friends keep them from doing their best at school, the majority of the responses were one of the following: (1) talking too much in class, or (2) friends do not keep me from doing my best. This pattern was expressed at all four grade levels by both LD and regular students (see Appendixes B, C, D, and E).

The last question on the student survey was to rank what was hardest for them to deal with this year. The number one choice of each grade level and classification is represented in Table XIII. Six out of eight groups chose parents as the number one response.

### Teachers

Of the teachers who responded to the teachers' survey, 96 percent



TABLE XII  
STUDENT RESPONSE TO SURVEY QUESTION:  
REASON FOR MAKING AN F

Grade	Class	Number	Percent	Response
9	LD	7	35	I did not like the class
	Reg	19	30	I did not do the work
10	LD	6	20	I did not do the work
	Reg	16	25	I did not do the work
11	LD	7	28	I did not do the work
	Reg	14	21	I did not like the teacher
12	LD	4	40	I did not do the work
	Reg	15	19	I did not do the work

TABLE XIII  
STUDENT RESPONSE TO SURVEY QUESTION: WHAT IS THE  
HARDEST THING FOR YOU TO DEAL WITH THIS YEAR:

Grade	Class	Number	Percent	Response
9	LD	7	35	Parents
	Reg	18	28	Parents
10	LD	7	28	Parents
	Reg	19	22	School
11	LD	10	40	Parents
	Reg	21	31	Parents
12	LD	3	19	Assignments in class boy/girl friend
	Reg	25	31	Parents

(24) of the regular teachers and 50 percent (3) of the LD teachers have had nine or more years of teaching experience (see Appendixes F and G).

Fifty-two percent (13) of the regular teachers reported an average class size of 30 to 39 students. Sixty-seven percent (4) of the LD teachers reported an average class size of ten to 19 students.

Eight percent (20) of the regular teachers reported that they knew of zero to ten percent of their students who were classified as learning disabled. These students were presumed to be mainstreamed. When asked to estimate the percent of current students reading two or more years below grade level, 48 percent (12) of the regular teachers reported 25 percent to 49 percent of their students and 50 percent (3) of the LD teachers reported over 75 percent of their students.

When asked what they thought contributed most to the difficulties at a given grade level for any student, 83 percent (5) of the LD and 68 percent (17) of the regular teachers chose maturity level. Sixty-seven percent (4) of the LD teachers and 92 percent (23) of the regular teachers also agreed that ninth grade is the most difficult year for students regardless of their classification. Both classifications of teachers agreed that the ninth grade is the most critical grade for a student's continued success or failure academically (see Appendixes F and G).

The teachers were asked to identify four reasons why they thought students fail. The number one reason among LD teachers fell into two categories: (1) the student does not care about their performance and (2) the students exhibited an attendance problem. The number one reason reported by regular teachers was lack of effort.

The teachers were asked to choose one major difference between

regular and LD students. The LD teachers unanimously chose maturity level, while 44 percent (11) of the regular teachers chose ability level.

The teachers were asked, "How much does a student's ability to express themselves in written form effect their performance in your class?". Fifty percent (3) of the LD and 40 percent (10) of the regular teachers responded "a great deal." The teachers were also asked, "How much does a student's ability to express themselves verbally effect their performance in your class." Eighty-three percent (5) of the LD teachers and 64 percent (16) of the regular teachers responded "some."

#### Summary

The population used in this study consisted of 377 ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students. The LD population consisted of 85 students. The regular population consisted of 292 students. The population also included 31 teachers; six LD and 25 regular teachers.

The data collected indicated a difference in the performance level of ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade LD students. The students' academic performance increased as their grade level increased. There were no indications of a significant difference between grades attained by LD and regular students at the same grade levels.

The perceptions of the LD and regular students about the reasons for their academic performance and the environmental factors they deal with were shown to be relatively similar through the survey questions.

The perceptions of the LD and regular teachers surveyed were very similar in most aspects. The survey indicated that the ninth grade students are most at risk in achieving academic success. The major

point that the LD and regular teachers differed on was the difference between LD and regular students. The regular teachers perceived the LD students as having a lower academic ability level than the regular students. The LD teachers saw maturity level as the difference between the students' behavior, not the academic ability level. The teachers agreed that a student's ability to express themselves in written form effected their performance in class more than their ability to perform verbally.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS, SUMMARY, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Conclusions

When considering the results of this study as a whole, the data indicated that ninth grade students, both LD and regular, are the group that is most at risk in the achievement of academic success. The total number of students enrolled in the high school studied shows a marked difference in the number of ninth and tenth graders (See Table III). This could be attributed to the level of physical, psychological, and emotional maturity of these adolescents as well as the possibility that ninth grade is a critical year for dropping out of school.

There were few indicators of any major difference between LD and regular students in terms of academic performance or perceptions of that performance. The regular students as a whole tended to achieve slightly higher grades than the LD students with the exception of math. This could be an indication of common reading problems among LD students. English, history, and science all require adequate reading skills, especially at the secondary level. Also, LD students are typically working in math areas that are below grade level.

The LD teachers indicated an average class size of ten to 19 students. This could be one of the factors which have an impact on the academic achievement of the ninth grade students, considering there are almost twice as many ninth grade students as in any other grade level.

The cause of the ninth grade students' performance, both LD and regular, is unknown. The results of this study indicate a need for further research to determine the underlying causes for the lower academic achievement of ninth grade students and lower enrollment for tenth grade students. The issue of dropout rates after or during the ninth grade year also needs to be researched. This study did not investigate the differences in the population of ninth and tenth grade students, or accumulate data as to why these students left school, where they went, and what they are doing now. Research has shown (Wells and Stuart, 1981) that, of the adolescents who run away, attempt suicide, or become involved with drugs, many have been classified as LD or have had a history of difficulty at school.

Both LD and regular teachers recognized students with reading deficits. This could also be considered as a factor which influences a student's academic behavior at any grade level. Many students responded that not completing assigned work was a reason for failure and while the teachers are aware of these deficits, they still respond that written ability greatly affects classroom performance.

Both classifications of teachers indicated an apathy on the part of the students. Regular teachers need to pay more attention to how they can motivate and personalize the high school experience to encourage greater achievement. Based upon the previously identified research questions, the following conclusions were made:

Research Question 1: there is a significant difference in the academic achievement of ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade LD students. The data indicated that the ninth grade students show a greater risk of academic failure and of not completing a high school education.

Research Question 2: there is no significant difference in the academic achievement of secondary LD and regular students. The data indicates that regular ninth grade students exhibit the same at-risk characteristics as do the LD students.

It is concluded that this study raises several areas in which further research is needed. Until this study can be replicated utilizing several different schools and/or school systems, it is unknown whether this data is conclusive. A study in which the student and teacher surveys are administered in a random manner may also determine different results. Any study which relies on the honesty with which the respondents reply will always be limited by that factor.

It is recommended that a study involving the underlying causes for the differences in the academic achievement of secondary students be conducted. The information revealed in this type of study would allow educators to adapt their curriculum and teaching methods to insure a greater level of academic success among secondary students in general, and ninth grade students in particular.

#### Summary

The academic performance of secondary LD and regular students was examined in this study. A survey was administered by regular and LD English teachers at the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade levels in intact English classes. A survey was circulated to all teachers of English, math, history, and science through the school mail, in the large midwestern high school studied. The grades attained by the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students, both LD and regular, were obtained in a random manner from the school records for

the first semester (1986-87 school year).

The grade level of students to be identified as at-risk for successful academic achievement was the ninth grade in both LD and regular classes. The data gathered on grades attained indicated that more ninth grade students fail the four basic academic subjects than at any other grade level. Improvement in academic achievement rises with each grade level for both LD and regular students.

#### Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. Similar research be conducted in this area using more than one high school and randomly selected subjects.
2. Surveys of this nature be conducted to insure as valid a response as possible.
3. Research be conducted over a period of several years to determine the longitudinal academic success of secondary LD students.
4. Additional research be conducted to determine the causes or environmental factors which effect the academic achievement of ninth grade LD and regular students.
5. The outcome of such studies be relayed to secondary LD and regular teachers for use in their curricula and methodologies.
6. A curriculum be developed based on the information collected which could be used by secondary teachers to improve the academic achievement of their students including a reanalysis of what ability level is and a reassessment of the teachers' role in facilitating academic achievement and personal confidence.



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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

COVER LETTERS FOR TEACHERS' AND  
STUDENTS' SURVEYS

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA  
DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED BEHAVIORAL STUDIES

Dear Teachers,

I am presently conducting a survey to obtain information concerning the academic patterns of students enrolled in learning disabled classes as well as of students who are the same grade and age level and are in regular classes. This survey is a part of the requirements for my Masters thesis; however, I feel that the information gained from this document will prove to be helpful to not only those of us who plan and deliver instruction, but to the students who will receive it as well.

Your responses to this survey will be anonymous, therefore the data will be summarized as a group and not on an individual basis. It should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete it. If you would like a summary of this information, please place your name at the bottom of this cover letter and place it in my mailbox detached from the survey.

Your cooperation in participating in this survey is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely

Carla Garrett

CG/kp

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY  
STILLWATER, OK  
DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED BEHAVIORAL STUDIES

Teachers,

I am requesting that you distribute this questionnaire to your classes. This research is for my Masters degree thesis.

The purpose of this survey is to determine the students' perceptions of their success/failure rate in high school.

For students with average reading ability, this survey should take ten to 15 minutes. Please stress to the students that this is an anonymous survey. I would like for discussion among the students to be limited to insure that each response is individual.

Your participation in administering this survey is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions or problems with this request, please contact me.

Sincerely,

Carla Garrett  
Room 306

CJG/kp

Note: LD Teachers: please explain Number 14 to your students.

APPENDIX B

SURVEY RESULTS FOR NINTH GRADE LD  
AND REGULAR STUDENTS

## STUDENT'S SURVEY - Ninth Grade LD

Total Subjects - 20

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS PAPER!

Please answer each question honestly. Put an "X" by your answer or fill in the blank.

1. Age at your last birthday 14=15% 15=65% 16=15% 17=5%
2. Sex: Male 60% Female 40%
3. Grade: 9
4. Do you live with:
 

<u>65%</u> Mom and Dad	<u>0%</u> Husband/wife
<u>20%</u> Mom	<u>0%</u> Alone
<u>5%</u> Dad	<u>0%</u> Other (explain)
<u>5%</u> Other family members (brother, aunt, etc.)	_____
<u>0%</u> Friends	_____
5. I have (including step brothers and sisters)
 

<u>15%</u> Brothers	<u>20%</u> Sisters	<u>50%</u> Brothers & Sisters	<u>15%</u> No Siblings
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6. Do you work?
 

<u>30%</u> Yes	<u>7%</u> No
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7. Have you ever repeated a grade?
 

<u>65%</u> Yes	<u>35%</u> No
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If yes, which one(s)?

<u>35%</u> 1st	<u>15%</u> 2nd	<u>5%</u> 3rd	<u>0%</u> 4th
<u>0%</u> 5th	<u>5%</u> 6th	<u>5%</u> 7th	<u>5%</u> 8th
<u>5%</u> 9th	<u>0%</u> 10th	<u>0%</u> 11th	<u>0%</u> 12th
8. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the most?
 

<u>40%</u> Math	<u>10%</u> History	<u>25%</u> English	<u>20%</u> Science
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9. Which grade did you enjoy the most?
 

<u>70%</u> 9th	<u>0%</u> 11th
<u>0%</u> 10th	<u>0%</u> 12th

10. In which of the following courses have you ever made an "F"?

40% Math  
20% English  
40% History  
30% Science  
30% None of these

11. Of all the reasons listed below, check the one that describes why you think you failed (choose only one).

15% I had problems with the kids in class  
20% I did not do the work  
15% I missed a lot of school  
25% I did not like the class  
15% I did not like the teacher  
0% I did not care if I passed or failed  
10% I do not understand the material

Or write your own reason \_\_\_\_\_

12. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the least?

20% Math      45% History      25% English      25% Science

13. In which of the following ways do your friends most often keep you from doing your best at school (choose only one).

35% We talk too much in class  
0% We skip class  
5% My friends do not do their work, so I don't either  
0% My friends think its cool to cause problems in class  
0% My friends won't like me if I make good grades  
0% My friends don't care about making good grades  
45% My friends don't keep me from doing my best

14. Rank the following in order. Which one is hardest for you to deal with this year? (example, put a 1 by parents if they are the hardest to deal with, a 2 by school if it is next hardest, etc.).

20% School  
35% Parents  
0% Teachers  
15% My assignments in class  
15% Friends  
0% Boyfriends/girlfriends  
0% Pressure to do drugs  
10% Pressure to have sex  
0% My job  
0% Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_



## STUDENT'S SURVEY - Ninth Grade Regular

Total Subjects - 64

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS PAPER!

Please answer each question honestly. Put an "X" by your answer or fill in the blank.

1. Age at your last birthday 13=2% 14=31% 15=56% 16=11%2. Sex: Male 45% Female 55%3. Grade: 9

4. Do you live with:

<u>58%</u> Mom and Dad	<u>0%</u> Husband/wife
<u>31%</u> Mom	<u>0%</u> Alone
<u>8%</u> Dad	<u>0%</u> Other (explain)
<u>2%</u> Other family members (brother, aunt, etc.)	_____
<u>0%</u> Friends	_____

5. I have (including step brothers and sisters)

<u>3%</u> Brothers	<u>23%</u> Sisters	<u>52%</u> Brothers & Sisters
		<u>2%</u> No Siblings

6. Do you work?

<u>22%</u> Yes	<u>78%</u> No
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7. Have you ever repeated a grade?

<u>30%</u> Yes	<u>70%</u> No
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If yes, which one(s)?

<u>8%</u> 1st	<u>5%</u> 2nd	<u>3%</u> 3rd	<u>0%</u> 4th
<u>2%</u> 5th	<u>4%</u> 6th	<u>3%</u> 7th	<u>2%</u> 8th
<u>8%</u> 9th	<u>0%</u> 10th	<u>0%</u> 11th	<u>0%</u> 12th

8. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the most?

<u>20%</u> Math	<u>21%</u> History	<u>19%</u> English	<u>28%</u> Science
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9. Which grade did you enjoy the most?

<u>92%</u> 9th	<u>0%</u> 11th
<u>0%</u> 10th	<u>0%</u> 12th

10. In which of the following courses have you ever made an "F"?

52% Math  
39% English  
33% History  
34% Science  
17% None of these

11. Of all the reasons listed below, check the one that describes why you think you failed (choose only one).

5% I had problems with the kids in class  
30% I did not do the work  
8% I missed a lot of school  
9% I did not like the class  
16% I did not like the teacher  
3% I did not care if I passed or failed  
11% I did not understand

Or write your own reason 3% failed tests

12. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the least?

38% Math      22% History      19% English      22% Science

13. In which of the following ways do your friends most often keep you from doing your best at school (choose only one).

34% We talk too much in class  
6% We skip class  
2% My friends do not do their work, so I don't either  
2% My friends think its cool to cause problems in class  
0% My friends won't like me if I make good grades  
2% My friends don't care about making good grades  
53% My friends don't keep me from doing my best

14. Rank the following in order. Which one is hardest for you to deal with this year? (example, put a 1 by parents if they are the hardest to deal with, a 2 by school if it is next hardest, etc.).

33% School  
28% Parents  
27% Teachers  
19% My assignments in class  
0% Friends  
0% Boyfriends/girlfriends  
0% Pressure to do drugs  
0% Pressure to have sex  
0% My job  
0% Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX C

SURVEY RESULTS FOR TENTH GRADE LD  
AND REGULAR STUDENTS

## STUDENT'S SURVEY - Tenth Grade LD

Total Subjects - 24

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS PAPER!

Please answer each question honestly. Put an "X" by your answer or fill in the blank.

1. Age at your last birthday 15=33% 16=46% 17=21%2. Sex: Male 75% Female 25%3. Grade: 10

4. Do you live with:

<u>67%</u> Mom and Dad	<u>4%</u> Husband/wife
<u>17%</u> Mom	<u>0%</u> Alone
<u>0%</u> Dad	<u>0%</u> Other (explain)
<u>8%</u> Other family members (brother, aunt, etc.)	_____
<u>0%</u> Friends	_____

5. I have (including step brothers and sisters)

<u>13%</u> Brothers	<u>25%</u> Sisters	<u>46%</u> Brothers & Sisters
		<u>17%</u> No Siblings

6. Do you work?

<u>21%</u> Yes	<u>79%</u> No
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7. Have you ever repeated a grade?

<u>29%</u> Yes	<u>7%</u> No
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If yes, which one(s)?

<u>8%</u> 1st	<u>8%</u> 2nd	<u>4%</u> 3rd	<u>0%</u> 4th
<u>0%</u> 5th	<u>4%</u> 6th	<u>0%</u> 7th	<u>4%</u> 8th
<u>4%</u> 9th	<u>0%</u> 10th	<u>0%</u> 11th	<u>0%</u> 12th

8. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the most?

<u>17%</u> Math	<u>13%</u> History	<u>8%</u> English	<u>50%</u> Science
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9. Which grade did you enjoy the most?

<u>25%</u> 9th	<u>0%</u> 11th
<u>67%</u> 10th	<u>0%</u> 12th

10. In which of the following courses have you ever made an "F"?

17% Math  
17% English  
17% History  
38% Science  
38% None of these

11. Of all the reasons listed below, check the one that describes why you think you failed (choose only one).

13% I had problems with the kids in class  
25% I did not do the work  
21% I missed a lot of school  
4% I did not like the class  
8% I did not like the teacher  
0% I did not care if I passed or failed  
4% I did not understand the material

Or write your own reason \_\_\_\_\_

12. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the least?

17% Math      55% History      17% English      8% Science

13. In which of the following ways do your friends most often keep you from doing your best at school (choose only one).

54% We talk too much in class  
13% We skip class  
0% My friends do not do their work, so I don't either  
0% My friends think its cool to cause problems in class  
0% My friends won't like me if I make good grades  
0% My friends don't care about making good grades  
29% My friends don't keep me from doing my best

14. Rank the following in order. Which one is hardest for you to deal with this year? (example, put a 1 by parents if they are the hardest to deal with, a 2 by school if it is next hardest, etc.).

33% School  
28% Parents  
24% Teachers  
32% My assignments in class  
0% Friends  
0% Boyfriends/girlfriends  
0% Pressure to do drugs  
0% Pressure to have sex  
0% My job  
0% Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT'S SURVEY - Tenth Grade Regular  
Total Subjects - 79

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS PAPER!

Please answer each question honestly. Put an "X" by your answer or fill in the blank.

1. Age at your last birthday 14=1% 15=46% 16=46% 17=8% 18=1%

2. Sex: Male 44% Female 56%

3. Grade: 10

4. Do you live with:

<u>57%</u> Mom and Dad	<u>1%</u> Husband/wife
<u>42%</u> Mom	<u>0%</u> Alone
<u>5%</u> Dad	<u>0%</u> Other (explain)
<u>4%</u> Other family members (brother, aunt, etc.)	<u>1%</u> Foster parents
<u>3%</u> Friends	

5. I have (including step brothers and sisters)

<u>14%</u> Brothers	<u>29%</u> Sisters	<u>61%</u> Brothers & Sisters
		<u>3%</u> No Siblings

6. Do you work?

35% Yes 65% No

7. Have you ever repeated a grade?

28% Yes 72% No

If yes, which one(s)?

<u>5%</u> 1st	<u>5%</u> 2nd	<u>1%</u> 3rd	<u>3%</u> 4th
<u>0%</u> 5th	<u>0%</u> 6th	<u>3%</u> 7th	<u>3%</u> 8th
<u>10%</u> 9th	<u>1%</u> 10th	<u>0%</u> 11th	<u>0%</u> 12th

8. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the most?

27% Math 39% History 15% English 22% Science

9. Which grade did you enjoy the most?

<u>34%</u> 9th	<u>0%</u> 11th
<u>62%</u> 10th	<u>0%</u> 12th

10. In which of the following courses have you ever made an "F"?

41% Math  
43% English  
13% History  
25% Science  
27% None of these

11. Of all the reasons listed below, check the one that describes why you think you failed (choose only one).

<u>3%</u> I had problems with the kids in class	<u>3%</u> Honors class
<u>20%</u> I did not do the work	<u>6%</u> Personal Problems
<u>14%</u> I missed a lot of school	<u>6%</u> Problems in
<u>4%</u> I did not like the class	understanding
<u>18%</u> I did not like the teacher	work
<u>3%</u> I did not care if I passed or failed	<u>3%</u> Suspension

Or write your own reason \_\_\_\_\_

12. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the least?

24% Math      14% History      19% English      30% Science

13. In which of the following ways do your friends most often keep you from doing your best at school (choose only one).

42% We talk too much in class  
0% We skip class  
3% My friends do not do their work, so I don't either  
3% My friends think its cool to cause problems in class  
0% My friends won't like me if I make good grades  
1% My friends don't care about making good grades  
49% My friends don't keep me from doing my best

14. Rank the following in order. Which one is hardest for you to deal with this year? (example, put a 1 by parents if they are the hardest to deal with, a 2 by school if it is next hardest, etc.).

22% School  
0% Parents  
18% Teachers  
28% My assignments in class  
10% Friends  
0% Boyfriends/girlfriends  
0% Pressure to do drugs  
0% Pressure to have sex  
0% My job  
0% Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX D

SURVEY RESULTS FOR ELEVENTH GRADE LD  
AND REGULAR STUDENTS



STUDENT'S SURVEY - Eleventh Grade LD  
Total Subjects - 25

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS PAPER!

Please answer each question honestly. Put an "X" by your answer or fill in the blank.

1. Age at your last birthday 15=4% 16=35% 17=40% 18=12% 19=4% 20=4%

2. Sex: Male 52% Female 48%

3. Grade: 11

4. Do you live with:

<u>60%</u> Mom and Dad	<u>0%</u> Husband/wife
<u>32%</u> Mom	<u>0%</u> Alone
<u>0%</u> Dad	<u>4%</u> Other (explain)
<u>8%</u> Other family members (brother, aunt, etc.)	_____
<u>0%</u> Friends	_____

5. I have (including step brothers and sisters)

24% Brothers      16% Sisters      52% Brothers & Sisters  
12% No Siblings

6. Do you work?

48% Yes      56% No

7. Have you ever repeated a grade?

44% Yes      56% No

If yes, which one(s)?

<u>4%</u> 1st	<u>8%</u> 2nd	<u>4%</u> 3rd	<u>4%</u> 4th
<u>0%</u> 5th	<u>4%</u> 6th	<u>0%</u> 7th	<u>0%</u> 8th
<u>0%</u> 9th	<u>16%</u> 10th	<u>12%</u> 11th	<u>0%</u> 12th

8. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the most?

20% Math      12% History      56% English      20% Science

9. Which grade did you enjoy the most?

32% 9th      52% 11th  
28% 10th      0% 12th

10. In which of the following courses have you ever made an "F"?

16% Math  
28% English  
44% History  
40% Science  
40% None of these

11. Of all the reasons listed below, check the one that describes why you think you failed (choose only one).

4% I had problems with the kids in class  
28% I did not do the work  
12% I missed a lot of school  
20% I did not like the class  
8% I did not like the teacher  
12% I did not care if I passed or failed  
4% I did not understand the material

Or write your own reason \_\_\_\_\_

12. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the least?

20% Math      36% History      8% English      48% Science

13. In which of the following ways do your friends most often keep you from doing your best at school (choose only one).

24% We talk too much in class  
4% We skip class  
4% My friends do not do their work, so I don't either  
0% My friends think its cool to cause problems in class  
0% My friends won't like me if I make good grades  
8% My friends don't care about making good grades  
60% My friends don't keep me from doing my best

14. Rank the following in order. Which one is hardest for you to deal with this year? (example, put a 1 by parents if they are the hardest to deal with, a 2 by school if it is next hardest, etc.).

28% School  
40% Parents  
24% Teachers  
28% My assignments in class  
0% Friends  
0% Boyfriends/girlfriends  
0% Pressure to do drugs  
0% Pressure to have sex  
0% My job  
0% Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT'S SURVEY - Eleventh Grade Regular  
Total Subjects - 68

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS PAPER!

Please answer each question honestly. Put an "X" by your answer or fill in the blank.

1. Age at your last birthday 15=1% 16=15% 17=49% 18=3% 19=1%

2. Sex: Male 49% Female 51%

3. Grade: 11

4. Do you live with:

<u>66%</u> Mom and Dad	<u>1%</u> Husband/wife
<u>22%</u> Mom	<u>1%</u> Alone
<u>1%</u> Dad	<u>0%</u> Other (explain)
<u>1%</u> Other family members (brother, aunt, etc.)	_____
<u>3%</u> Friends	_____

5. I have (including step brothers and sisters)

<u>29%</u> Brothers	<u>22%</u> Sisters	<u>40%</u> Brothers & Sisters
		<u>9%</u> No Siblings

6. Do you work?

<u>51%</u> Yes	<u>49%</u> No
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7. Have you ever repeated a grade?

<u>6%</u> Yes	<u>94%</u> No
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If yes, which one(s)?

<u>3%</u> 1st	<u>0%</u> 2nd	<u>0%</u> 3rd	<u>0%</u> 4th
<u>0%</u> 5th	<u>0%</u> 6th	<u>1%</u> 7th	<u>0%</u> 8th
<u>1%</u> 9th	<u>3%</u> 10th	<u>1%</u> 11th	<u>0%</u> 12th

8. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the most?

<u>38%</u> Math	<u>35%</u> History	<u>15%</u> English	<u>16%</u> Science
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9. Which grade did you enjoy the most?

<u>18%</u> 9th	<u>65%</u> 11th
<u>15%</u> 10th	<u>0%</u> 12th

10. In which of the following courses have you ever made an "F"?

40% Math  
30% English  
18% History  
26% Science  
40% None of these

11. Of all the reasons listed below, check the one that describes why you think you failed (choose only one).

<u>0%</u> I had problems with the kids in class	<u>15%</u> Personal Problems
<u>18%</u> I did not do the work	<u>1%</u> Did not understand the material
<u>6%</u> I missed a lot of school	
<u>10%</u> I did not like the class	
<u>21%</u> I did not like the teacher	
<u>7%</u> I did not care if I passed or failed	

Or write your own reason \_\_\_\_\_

12. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the least?

35% Math      18% History      22% English      24% Science

13. In which of the following ways do your friends most often keep you from doing your best at school (choose only one).

32% We talk too much in class  
7% We skip class  
1% My friends do not do their work, so I don't either  
1% My friends think its cool to cause problems in class  
1% My friends won't like me if I make good grades  
4% My friends don't care about making good grades  
50% My friends don't keep me from doing my best

14. Rank the following in order. Which one is hardest for you to deal with this year? (example, put a 1 by parents if they are the hardest to deal with, a 2 by school if it is next hardest, etc.).

34% School  
31% Parents  
39% Teachers  
26% My assignments in class  
0% Friends  
0% Boyfriends/girlfriends  
0% Pressure to do drugs  
0% Pressure to have sex  
0% My job  
0% Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX E

SURVEY RESULTS FOR TWELFTH GRADE LD  
AND REGULAR STUDENTS

## STUDENT'S SURVEY - Twelfth Grade LD

Total Subjects - 16

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS PAPER!

Please answer each question honestly. Put an "X" by your answer or fill in the blank.

1. Age at your last birthday 17=63% 18=37%
2. Sex: Male 56% Female 44%
3. Grade: 12
4. Do you live with:
 

<u>56%</u> Mom and Dad	<u>0%</u> Husband/wife
<u>19%</u> Mom	<u>0%</u> Alone
<u>0%</u> Dad	<u>6%</u> Other (explain)
<u>13%</u> Other family members (brother, aunt, etc.)	_____
<u>6%</u> Friends	_____
5. I have (including step brothers and sisters)
 

<u>13%</u> Brothers	<u>25%</u> Sisters	<u>50%</u> Brothers & Sisters
		<u>6%</u> No Siblings
6. Do you work?
 

<u>69%</u> Yes	<u>31%</u> No
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7. Have you ever repeated a grade?
 

<u>38%</u> Yes	<u>63%</u> No
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If yes, which one(s)?

<u>6%</u> 1st	<u>19%</u> 2nd	<u>0%</u> 3rd	<u>0%</u> 4th
<u>0%</u> 5th	<u>6%</u> 6th	<u>6%</u> 7th	<u>0%</u> 8th
<u>6%</u> 9th	<u>0%</u> 10th	<u>6%</u> 11th	<u>0%</u> 12th
8. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the most?
 

<u>19%</u> Math	<u>6%</u> History	<u>50%</u> English	<u>38%</u> Science
-----------------	-------------------	--------------------	--------------------
9. Which grade did you enjoy the most?
 

<u>19%</u> 9th	<u>6%</u> 11th
<u>6%</u> 10th	<u>56%</u> 12th

10. In which of the following courses have you ever made an "F"?

38% Math  
50% English  
56% History  
13% Science  
25% None of these

11. Of all the reasons listed below, check the one that describes why you think you failed (choose only one).

13% I had problems with the kids in class      6% Drugs  
40% I did not do the work      19% Did not understand material  
6% I missed a lot of school  
0% I did not like the class  
0% I did not like the teacher  
6% I did not care if I passed or failed

Or write your own reason \_\_\_\_\_

12. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the least?

50% Math      56% History      6% English      13% Science

13. In which of the following ways do your friends most often keep you from doing your best at school (choose only one).

44% We talk too much in class  
13% We skip class  
0% My friends do not do their work, so I don't either  
0% My friends think its cool to cause problems in class  
0% My friends won't like me if I make good grades  
6% My friends don't care about making good grades  
44% My friends don't keep me from doing my best

14. Rank the following in order. Which one is hardest for you to deal with this year? (example, put a 1 by parents if they are the hardest to deal with, a 2 by school if it is next hardest, etc.).

19% School  
19% Parents  
19% Teachers  
19% My assignments in class  
0% Friends  
19% Boyfriends/girlfriends  
0% Pressure to do drugs  
19% Pressure to have sex  
19% My job  
0% Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT'S SURVEY - Twelfth Grade Regular  
Total Subjects - 81

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THIS PAPER!

Please answer each question honestly. Put an "X" by your answer or fill in the blank.

1. Age at your last birthday 17=47% 18=49% 19=4%

2. Sex: Male 46% Female 54%

3. Grade: 12

4. Do you live with:

<u>51%</u> Mom and Dad	<u>2%</u> Husband/wife
<u>21%</u> Mom	<u>0%</u> Alone
<u>6%</u> Dad	<u>0%</u> Other (explain)
<u>11%</u> Other family members (brother, aunt, etc.)	<u>1%</u> <u>boy/girl friend</u>
<u>0%</u> Friends	<u>1%</u> <u>exchange student</u>

5. I have (including step brothers and sisters)

19% Brothers      15% Sisters      53% Brothres & Sisters  
11% No Siblings

6. Do you work?

55% Yes      45% No

7. Have you ever repeated a grade?

11% Yes      89% No

If yes, which one(s)?

<u>1%</u> 1st	<u>2%</u> 2nd	<u>2%</u> 3rd	<u>0%</u> 4th
<u>1%</u> 5th	<u>0%</u> 6th	<u>0%</u> 7th	<u>2%</u> 8th
<u>0%</u> 9th	<u>0%</u> 10th	<u>0%</u> 11th	<u>0%</u> 12th

8. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the most?

42% Math      30% History      16% English      15% Science

9. Which grade did you enjoy the most?

21% 9th      25% 11th  
14% 10th      43% 12th



10. In which of the following courses have you ever made an "F"?

32% Math  
31% English  
14% History  
25% Science  
44% None of these

11. Of all the reasons listed below, check the one that describes why you think you failed (choose only one).

<u>5%</u> I had problems with the kids in class	<u>1%</u> Cheating
<u>19%</u> I did not do the work	<u>6%</u> Did not understand material
<u>12%</u> I missed a lot of school	
<u>14%</u> I did not like the class	<u>4%</u> Personal Problem
<u>11%</u> I did not like the teacher	<u>1%</u> Test scores
<u>1%</u> I did not care if I passed or failed	

Or write your own reason \_\_\_\_\_

12. Of all the classes you have taken, which subject did you like the least?

25% Math      12% History      30% English      32% Science

13. In which of the following ways do your friends most often keep you from doing your best at school (choose only one).

31% We talk too much in class  
7% We skip class  
1% My friends do not do their work, so I don't either  
0% My friends think its cool to cause problems in class  
0% My friends won't like me if I make good grades  
1% My friends don't care about making good grades  
57% My friends don't keep me from doing my best

14. Rank the following in order. Which one is hardest for you to deal with this year? (example, put a 1 by parents if they are the hardest to deal with, a 2 by school if it is next hardest, etc.).

25% School  
31% Parents  
20% Teachers  
17% My assignments in class  
0% Friends  
0% Boyfriends/girlfriends  
0% Pressure to do drugs  
0% Pressure to have sex  
0% My job  
0% Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX F

SURVEY RESULTS FOR LD TEACHERS

LD TEACHER'S SURVEY  
Total Subjects - 6

This is an anonymous survey. Please answer each question as honestly as possible.

DIRECTIONS. For each of the following questions, place a check (✓) beside the response(s) that BEST describes your situation or follow specific instructions where indicated.

1. How many years have you been teaching?

<u>0%</u>	0-2	<u>17%</u>	6-8
<u>33%</u>	3-5	<u>50%</u>	9 and above

2. What is the highest degree you hold?

<u>33%</u>	B.S.
<u>67%</u>	M.S.
<u>0%</u>	Ed.D.

3. In how many areas do you hold a certificate?

<u>17%</u>	0-1	<u>0%</u>	4-5
<u>83%</u>	2-3	<u>0%</u>	5 and above

4. Check the following areas in which you hold a certificate.

<u>0%</u>	Math (all areas)
<u>0%</u>	Science (all areas)
<u>0%</u>	English (all areas)
<u>17%</u>	History (all areas)
<u>100%</u>	Other <u>LD</u>
<u>17%</u>	Reading

5. Which of the following subjects are you teaching at present?

<u>50%</u>	Math
<u>17%</u>	Science
<u>67%</u>	English
<u>50%</u>	History

6. Which of the following best describes the classification of the students you teach?

<u>0%</u>	Regular education
<u>100%</u>	Learning disabilities

7. What is the average number of students you have per class?

<u>0%</u>	40-50	<u>67%</u>	10-19
<u>0%</u>	30-39	<u>17%</u>	less than 10
<u>17%</u>	20-29		

8. If you are a regular education teacher, what percentage of your students are classified as learning disabilities (that you know of).

<u>NA</u>	0-10%	<u>NA</u>	31-40%
<u>NA</u>	11-20%	<u>NA</u>	41-50%
<u>NA</u>	21-30%	<u>NA</u>	more than 50%

9. What grade level do you think is most difficult for students (regardless of classification)?

<u>67%</u>	9th	<u>17%</u>	12th
<u>0%</u>	10th	<u>33%</u>	they are equally difficult
<u>0%</u>	11th		

10. Which of the following do you think contributes most to the difficulties at a given grade level for any student?

<u>83%</u>	Maturity level
<u>0%</u>	Difficulty of content in some subjects
<u>0%</u>	Inappropriate teachers expectations
<u>67%</u>	Transitional age from middle school to senior high school
<u>0%</u>	Other _____

11. At what grade level are most of the students you have failed?

<u>67%</u>	9th	<u>0%</u>	12th
<u>33%</u>	10th	<u>0%</u>	I have not failed any students
<u>17%</u>	11th		

12. Identify the four major reasons you think students fail and rank order them from 1 (most common reason) to 4 (least common reason).

	1	2	3	4
<u>      </u> Lack of effort	17%	33%	33%	0%
<u>      </u> Student does not care about performance	33%	33%	0%	0%
<u>      </u> Problems at home	0%	0%	17%	33%
<u>      </u> Lack of ability	0%	0%	0%	33%
<u>      </u> Problems in reading	0%	0%	0%	0%
<u>      </u> Attendance problem	33%	17%	33%	17%
<u>      </u> Developmentally unprepared	17%	17%	17%	17%
<u>      </u> Peer pressure	0%	0%	0%	0%
<u>      </u> Other _____	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. What grade level do you consider the most critical for a students continued success or failure academically?

<u>67%</u>	9th	<u>17%</u>	11th
<u>17%</u>	10th	<u>0%</u>	12th

14. Rank order the following types of developmental problems that high school students experience that most often interferes with their academic performance (1 most interfering, 4 least interfering).

	1	2	3	4
<u>      </u> Emotional/psychological maturity	33%	50%	17%	0%
<u>      </u> Adjustment to physical maturity	0%	0%	33%	50%
<u>      </u> Cognitive maturity	33%	17%	17%	33%
<u>      </u> Accepting responsibility for self	33%	33%	33%	0%
<u>      </u> Other <u>Importance of Knowledge</u>	0%	0%	0%	17%

15. Which of the following represents the major difference you see between regular students and students who have been diagnosed as learning disabled?

100% Maturity level  
17% Level of social development  
33% Academic ability  
0% Other \_\_\_\_\_

16. Estimate the number of students in your current classes who are reading two or more years below grade level.

50% Over 75%  
33% 50% - 75%  
17% 25% - 49%  
0% Less than 25%

17. What effect does a student's reading level have on his/her ability to succeed in your class?

33% A great deal  
33% Some  
0% A little  
33% None

18. Do you give extra help to those students who are failing your class?

50% Yes  
0% No  
50% Depending on reason for failure  
0% Other \_\_\_\_\_

19. What grade do you consider failing?

0% A-            33% D  
0% B             0% D-  
0% B-            67% F  
0% C  
0% C-

20. How much does a student's ability to express themselves in written form effect their performance in your class?

50% A great deal  
33% Some  
0% A Little  
17% None

21. How much does the student's attitude and classroom behavior effect their performance in your class?

83% A great deal  
17% Some  
0% A Little  
0% None

22. How much does a student's ability to express themselves verbally effect their performance in your class?

0% A great deal  
83% Some  
0% A little  
17% None

APPENDIX G

SURVEY RESULTS FOR REGULAR TEACHERS

TEACHER'S SURVEY - Regular Teachers  
Total Subjects - 25

This is an anonymous survey. Please answer each question as honestly as possible.

DIRECTIONS. For each of the following questions, place a check ( ) beside the response(s) that BEST describes your situation or follow specific instructions where indicated.

1. How many years have you been teaching?

<u>0%</u> 0-2	<u>0%</u> 6-8
<u>0%</u> 3-5	<u>96%</u> 9 and above

2. What is the highest degree you hold?

<u>36%</u> B.S.	
<u>56%</u> M.S.	<u>8%</u> M.A.
<u>9%</u> Ed.D.	

3. In how many areas do you hold a certificate?

<u>16%</u> 0-1	<u>4%</u> 4-5
<u>56%</u> 2-3	<u>24%</u> 5 and above

4. Check the following areas in which you hold a certificate.

<u>42%</u> Math (all areas)	<u>8%</u> Speech
<u>20%</u> Science (all areas)	<u>8%</u> Business
<u>42%</u> English (all areas)	<u>4%</u> P.E.
<u>44%</u> History (all areas)	<u>4%</u> Psychology
<u>      </u> Other _____	

5. Which of the following subjects are you teaching at present?

<u>28%</u> Math
<u>20%</u> Science
<u>28%</u> English
<u>28%</u> History
<u>4%</u> P.E.

6. Which of the following best describes the classification of the students you teach?

<u>100%</u> Regular education
<u>0%</u> Learning disabilities

7. What is the average number of students you have per class?

<u>4%</u> 40-50	<u>0%</u> 10-19
<u>52%</u> 30-39	<u>0%</u> less than 10
<u>44%</u> 20-29	



14. Rank order the following types of developmental problems that high school students experience that most often interferes with their academic performance (1 most interfering, 4 least interfering).

	1	2	3	4
<u>        </u> Emotional/psychological maturity	24%	40%	32%	40%
<u>        </u> Adjustment to physical maturity	0%	4%	40%	60%
<u>        </u> Cognitive maturity	0%	32%	28%	36%
<u>        </u> Accepting responsibility for self	76%	24%	0%	0%
<u>        </u> Other	0%	0%	0%	0%

15. Which of the following represents the major difference you see between regular students and students who have been diagnosed as learning disabled?

<u>24%</u>	Maturity level
<u>20%</u>	Level of social development
<u>44%</u>	Academic ability
<u>4%</u>	Other <u>        </u> All Three

16. Estimate the number of students in your current classes who are reading two or more years below grade level.

<u>4%</u>	Over 75%	
<u>36%</u>	50% - 75%	
<u>48%</u>	25% - 49%	
<u>12%</u>	Less than 25%	<u>4%</u> Do Not Know

17. What effect does a student's reading level have on his/her ability to succeed in your class?

<u>60%</u>	A great deal
<u>32%</u>	Some
<u>12%</u>	A little
<u>0%</u>	None

18. Do you give extra help to those students who are failing your class?

<u>44%</u>	Yes
<u>8%</u>	No
<u>48%</u>	Depending on reason for failure
<u>0%</u>	Other <u>        </u>

19. What grade do you consider failing?

<u>0%</u>	A-	<u>16%</u>	D
<u>0%</u>	B	<u>20%</u>	D-
<u>0%</u>	B-	<u>84%</u>	F
<u>0%</u>	C		
<u>0%</u>	C-		

8. If you are a regular education teacher, what percentage of your students are classified as learning disabilities (that you know of).

<u>80%</u>	0-10%	<u>0%</u>	31-40%
<u>12%</u>	11-20%	<u>0%</u>	41-50%
<u>4%</u>	21-30%	<u>0%</u>	more than 50%

9. What grade level do you think is most difficult for students (regardless of classification)?

<u>92%</u>	9th	<u>0%</u>	12th
<u>4%</u>	10th	<u>12%</u>	they are equally different
<u>0%</u>	11th		

10. Which of the following do you think contributes most to the difficulties at a given grade level for any student?

<u>68%</u>	Maturity Level	<u>4%</u>	Absenteeism
<u>4%</u>	Difficulty of content in some subjects	<u>8%</u>	Lack of support from home
<u>0%</u>	Inappropriate teachers' expectations	<u>4%</u>	Motivation
<u>32%</u>	Transitional age from middle school to senior high school	<u>4%</u>	Lack of prerequisite skills
<u>0%</u>	Other		

11. At what grade level are most of the students you have failed?

<u>52%</u>	9th	<u>8%</u>	12th
<u>16%</u>	10th	<u>4%</u>	I have not failed any students
<u>4%</u>	11th		

12. Identify the four major reasons you think students fail and rank order them from 1 (most common reason) to 4 (least common reason).

	1	2	3	4
<u>      </u> Lack of effort	4%	40%	8%	8%
<u>      </u> Student does not care about performance	12%	32%	20%	8%
<u>      </u> Problems at home	4%	8%	20%	4%
<u>      </u> Lack of ability	4%	0%	12%	24%
<u>      </u> Problems in reading	4%	0%	8%	16%
<u>      </u> Attendance problem	32%	4%	20%	16%
<u>      </u> Developmentally unprepared	0%	8%	8%	4%
<u>      </u> Peer pressure	0%	4%	0%	8%
<u>      </u> Other <u>Lack of Goals</u>	4%	0%	0%	4%

13. What grade level do you consider the most critical for a students continued success or failure academically?

<u>80%</u>	9th	<u>4%</u>	11th
<u>16%</u>	10th	<u>0%</u>	12th
<u>4%</u>	7th		

20. How much does a student's ability to express themselves in written form effect their performance in your class?

<u>40%</u>	A great deal
<u>24%</u>	Some
<u>28%</u>	A Little
<u>8%</u>	None

21. How much does the student's attitude and classroom behavior effect their performance in your class?

<u>48%</u>	A great deal
<u>44%</u>	Some
<u>8%</u>	A Little
<u>0%</u>	None

22. How much does a student's ability to express themselves verbally effect their performance in your class?

<u>16%</u>	A great deal
<u>64%</u>	Some
<u>16%</u>	A little
<u>4%</u>	None

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VITA

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Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY LEARNING DISABLED STUDENTS

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Personal Data: Born in Pampa, Texas, August 19, 1959, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Carl Patchin, Jr.

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