

**IMPLEMENTING INCLUSION IN AN ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL: A CASE STUDY OF WHO
CREATES CHANGE**

By

RICHARD PAUL BISHOP

**Bachelor of Science
Northeastern State University
Tahlequah, Oklahoma
1991**

**Master of Education
Northeastern State University
Tahlequah, Oklahoma
1992**

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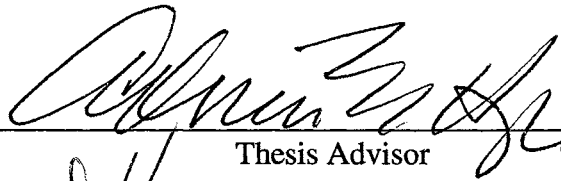
By

Richard Paul Bishop

May, 2002

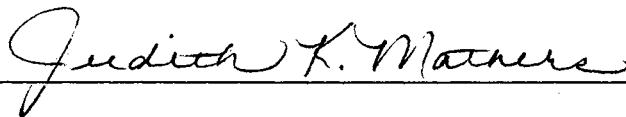
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Thesis Approved:


Thesis Advisor






Judith K. Manners



Dean of the Graduate College

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The greatest menace to the blind is the short-sightedness of the seeing.

Winifred Holt Mather, quoting a French commanding officer addressing soldiers blinded in battle in WWI

CHAPTER I

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Mandatory mainstreaming of all children with disabilities in public schools has presented educators with unprecedented change and challenges in redefining the traditional scope of public education. This revolutionary change, based upon 20 years of civil rights reform, has transformed how society both views and deals with disabled persons, particularly in the arenas of education and work. The historical social paradigm of exclusion has lost its foundation and can no longer be legally or morally legitimized. An excerpt from the landmark decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) summarizes the legal and social nullification of educational exclusion:

In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms. *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 US 483 (1954)

Writing in 1979, authors Leonard C. Burrello and Daniel D. Sage described the expanding social and legal evolution of the framework of inclusion during the 1960s and 1970s:

It appears that the schools have increasingly become an arena in which major societal issues are confronted and the conflict between individual human rights and social imperatives is thrashed out....The 1960s and 1970s have seen an

increasing involvement of the U.S. Supreme Court in educational matters, with questions narrowing from basic human rights to a specific focus on education. Specific aspects of the right to education issue have involved such varied major social concerns as racial desegregation, methods of financing schools, discriminatory classification and exclusion. (Burrello & Sage, 1979, pp. 36, 37)

In practice, however, change does not occur overnight or in a vacuum.

Parallel developments in the theoretical foundations of education overall have moved from the traditional view that lines of authority are hierarchical, with leadership occurring from the “top down” to a more dynamic, constructivist interpretation (Lambert, Walker, Zimmerman, Cooper, Lambert, Gardner & Slack, 1995). This new paradigm of change, and who is responsible for the path it takes, identifies principals and teachers, parents and students as important agents and implementers of the change process and its ultimate culmination as the realized future - whether or not the future arrived at is the one that was intended. Meaning and knowledge are “constructed” through new experiences which are influenced by reflection upon those experiences and by patterns of social interaction. Thus, a “constructivist” definition of educational leadership is the “reciprocal processes that enable participants in an educational community to construct meanings that lead toward a common purpose about schooling” (Lambert, et al., 1995, p. 29).

Students as leaders; teachers as leaders; parents as leaders; administrators as leaders. Crusty old paradigms might warn us that ‘too many cooks spoil the stew’; new paradigms are making a different stew. The patterns of relationships in this new ‘stew’ connect in synergistic ways that are rich in possibilities and

exist outside traditional lines of authority, roles, established norms, rules and policies. (Lambert et al., 1995, p. 50)

A central question in examining the process of change as it relates to the implementation of inclusion is how “top down” and “bottom up” forces act upon each other to define specific goals and establish individual responsibility for initiating and implementing the changes necessary for a successful outcome. It has become apparent that in implementing any type of fundamental organizational change, there are inherent problems to be found in taking an either/or position on the direction from which change is to occur because of the multi-faceted, complex nature of change itself. Fundamental flaws in the “top down” approach have been recognized as being related to organizational unpredictability, complexity and group interactions; change is not linear - it is full of paradoxes and contradictions, and creativity arises under conditions of diversity and instability (Fullan, 1999). The idea that someone “up there” is in control is based more on fantasy than on fact, since it is unrealistic to think that anyone could master an organization’s complex dynamics from the top (Senge, 1990).

“Bottom up” up directives appear to be equally untenable for different reasons. A succinct explanation of why this is so is summarized by Stacey (1992):

The whole point of flexible structures and dispersed power is to enable those below the top level in the management hierarchy to detect and take action to deal with a large number of changes affecting an organization that operates in a turbulent environment. This is supposed to enable the organization to learn about its environment and so adapt to that environment faster than its rivals do.

However, studies have shown that widening participation and empowering people

by no means guarantees that organizational learning will improve (p.175).

A shift in mind-set from this either/or proposition appears to present the best alternative approach - that of a dynamic interaction between the two. A study of the turnaround problem at the Ford Motor Company in the 1980s concluded that "...change flourishes in a 'sandwich.' "When there is consensus above, and pressure below, things happen" (Pascale, 1990, p. 126).

Statement of the Problem

According to Fullan (1991, 2001), meaningful change is created by a simultaneous effort from the top down and bottom up. However, with regard to principals and their leadership functions, he assumed a position more characteristic of a hierarchical "top down" perspective, stating that the "main agents (or blockers) of change are the principals.... The principal is the person most likely to be in a position to shape the organizational conditions necessary for change" (Fullan, 1991, p. 76) through engagement in six activities that directly impact change:

1. Vision building
2. Evolutionary planning
3. Initiative-taking and empowerment
4. Staff development and assistance
5. Monitoring, problem-coping
6. Restructuring

Unlike Fullan (1991, 2001), Lambert et al.'s (1995) constructivist approach assumes a framework that is dynamic and organic, with leadership roles and initiatives being assumed by those connected to the educational process, inclusive of teachers,

principals, parents and students; leadership transcends individual roles and behaviors.

According to this view,

...anyone in the educational community - teachers, administrators, parents and students - can engage in leadership actions.... Leadership, like energy, is not finite, not restricted by formal authority and power; it permeates a healthy school culture and is undertaken by whoever sees a need or an opportunity (pp. 29-33).

Four central tenets are essential to this constructivist approach to change:

1. Leadership
2. Patterns of relationships
3. Inquiry and the role of information
4. Breaking with old assumptions

Both Fullan and Lambert, et al. confronted the central issue of systemic reform, fundamentally challenging the traditional approach which focused on the management and implementation of single innovations. This shift in focus represents a changing paradigm which has emerged in the last 20 years toward the problem of implementing any type of educational reform - that of developing a *systemic* capacity for change. But, each offers different strategies for success.

The existence and propriety of both Fullan and Lambert, et al. perspectives can best be explained in terms of multiple realities. Both exist yet are defined and described by different participants in the change process. The different participants experience different realities during change; some views support Lambert et al. while others support Fullan.

Purpose of the Study

What constitutes “successful” inclusion is the subject of ongoing debate, but Coutinho and Repp (1999) agree with others that the establishment of an inclusive vision, collaborative teaching practices and flexible, differentiated instructional approaches are some of the defining characteristics of successful inclusion programs. Most American schools are still at some point along a continuum of the process. As recently as 1997, Assistant Secretary of Education Judith E. Heumann expressed the view that even 20 years after IDEA, educators often resist the idea that disability is a legitimate and acceptable form of being and functioning in the world, and that educators tend to measure a disabled student’s success by the degree to which the student is assimilated, rather than desegregated or integrated (Fleischer & Zames, 2001). An essential characteristic of what may be considered successful inclusion may be the attitude on the part of educators that disabled students are worthy and acceptable as they are, encouraging these students to take pride in their identity as disabled individuals.

Given that the work of implementing systemic change requires considerable resources in both human and financial terms, this study was undertaken to examine specific aspects relating to change and perceptions of change in an elementary school environment as it applied to the implementation of inclusion. An elementary school site will be studied to determine what factors facilitated the inclusion change process. Qualitative methods employed allowed for a thick, contextual description of the relationship between the vision of inclusion, its actual implementation at the study site, and how understandings, assumptions and perceptions of teachers and others may act to affect that relationship. The specific aspects examined were correlated to Fullan’s view

of six themes that directly impact change and Lambert's four perspectives on a constructivist approach to change.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study:

1. What are the perceptions of who creates change and what are their roles in the change process?
2. In what ways do these perceptions support the strategies for change postulated by Fullan and/or Lambert, et al.?
3. What other realities were revealed?

Orienting Theoretical Frameworks

Two related frameworks guided this study. The first is Fullan (1991) and the second is Lambert, et al. (1995).

Fullan

According to Fullan, (1991), six primary activities work together in a synergistic way to produce substantive systemic change.

Vision building. New perspectives on change require that those involved in the educational process have a vision of the goals of inclusion, as well as how to achieve them through the day-to-day process of implementation. A genuine vision of inclusion must be infused with the egalitarian values upon which it is based and for it to be realized, that vision must be shared by those who are accountable for achieving its goals. According to Fullan (1993) "...shared vision, which is essential for success, must evolve through the dynamic interaction of organizational members and leaders" (p. 28). Each professional involved in educating students, particularly teachers, are key players in the development of the changes to be made in furtherance of the new agenda - an

educational environment that fosters the development of all students. Teachers' perceptions of that vision, and the degree to which it is both personal and shared, is expected to have a substantial effect on the way in which (or whether) it becomes an integral, rather than superficial cultural change.

Evolutionary planning. Changing the traditional school culture, which has functioned to marginalize and exclude students with disabilities, is a long-term process, requiring educators to engage and support each other in the developing vision of what inclusion is all about, while recognizing that implementation of new objectives must be allowed to evolve in a more or less natural way.

Once implementation was underway toward a desirable direction, the most successful schools adapted their plans as they went along to improve the fit between the change and conditions in the school to take advantage of unexpected developments and opportunities. (Louis & Miles, 1990, p. 83).

Adaptability to changing conditions and roles appears to be one of the tenets of successful transformation from "what is" to "what will be." In terms of inclusion, this adaptability may be viewed as an opportunity to achieve the fundamental aims of education - to produce individuals who not only have the ability to utilize that education to achieve independence as adults, but to produce a society that accepts and values all its members.

Initiative-taking and empowerment. Those who are asked to implement changes must be allowed to facilitate the process themselves through initiative-taking and empowerment. "Initiative can come from different sources, but when it comes to implementation, power sharing is crucial" (Louis & Miles, 1990, p. 83). To a large

extent, successful inclusion programs are characterized by positive collaboration between principals and teachers - principals who are willing and able to rely on the initiative of teachers and others. These principals empower teachers, students and parents by recognizing their legitimate role as full participants in the process of change, while keeping the “vision” of inclusion and its ultimate goals as a central focus. Recognizing that the exercise of power takes place within the context of social relations, principals must examine these social relations closely and be willing to share power with those able to significantly contribute to the vision and goals of inclusion. It is assumed that teachers’ perceptions of the extent to which they will be supported in their initiatives is a determining factor in whether, and to what degree they will initiate changes which further the goals of inclusion.

Staff development and assistance. A key facet of the successful implementation of inclusion is providing the supports necessary to enable teachers to become familiar and comfortable with the requirements of implementing inclusion - such as training, continuous education and opportunities for professional development. Teachers become confident of new skills when they are supported in autonomous decision making based on successful strategies, requiring receptivity on the part of principals to teacher-identified needs and a willingness to provide or obtain necessary resources in order to meet them. Teachers’ beliefs about the degree to which they are able to identify and voice their professional needs and have them met will be reflected in their commitment to the change process and its goals.

Monitoring and problem-coping. The purpose of monitoring is two-fold. First, it provides access to good ideas by shedding light on innovative practices and it provides a

means of scrutinizing new ideas, weeding out mistakes and identifying promising practices for further development (Fullan, 1991). The goals of implementation are enhanced when principals and teachers share information about what is working, while information shared about what is not working helps to identify problems and point the way to possible solutions. Principals who monitor progress through interaction with teachers, and teachers who contribute to the monitoring process have prepared themselves for the next step - problem solving, which might be considered the “brick and mortar” of change implementation.

Restructuring. Restructuring represents the ultimate goal of the process - that of a new organizational structure which visibly reflects the vision of inclusion and has in place the policies and other supports that allow change to continue as an organic, ongoing process. Ideally, the end result is transformative, leading to overall changes in the educational environment and newly-defined and evolving roles of all participants as collaborators in the process of change toward a common goal. With regard to inclusion, restructuring can only be seen as an unprecedented redefinition of the value of disabled students and attitudes toward them.

Lambert, Walker, Zimmerman, Cooper, Lambert, Gardner and Slack

The constructivist approach to change is based upon a view of intelligence that focuses on subjective aspects of learning, stemming from complex interactions between socially derived communications and experiences, reflection upon those experiences, engagement with “big” ideas and by recognizing and forming new patterns. For educators seeking to implement a new “inclusive” vision, the traditional structure of education, which relies upon rules, schedules, policies and hierarchical roles, may serve

to impede, rather than promote progress.

Leadership. Reciprocity may be considered to be the key feature of Lambert's view of leadership - a view that in any endeavor, all participants have, contribute and develop knowledge. Through this interactive, contributory process, the participants tend to develop a common purpose.

This perspective acknowledges teachers as both leaders and agents of change, in contrast to the traditional view that they are passive players on a bigger stage, where the administrators to whom they report are the only real innovators. It also incorporates the recognition that students and parents have a vested interest in educational outcomes and make valuable contributions which involve assuming a leadership role.

Patterns of Relationships. Constructivism assumes that individuals construct meaning, interpret information and attain knowledge through patterns of relationships and that these patterns serve to integrate identity, emotion and cognition. It follows from this assumption that different patterns of relationships can be created and sustained which facilitate the goals of inclusion and help to maintain the vision necessary to achieve those goals.

An example of how patterns of relationships impact the implementation of inclusion is the mandated participation of general education teachers in the development of a special needs student's IEP. The degree of successful collaboration between special and general education teachers may be a function of established patterns which have tended to segregate teachers as well as students along the lines of "special" vs. "general" functions and orientation. To the extent that these established patterns remain undisturbed, there is a tendency on the part of general education teachers to passively

oppose the process and goals of inclusion, i.e., their focus is on teaching groups rather than individuals, they may believe modifications are not feasible or that they do not have the skills necessary to deal with modifications. Changing the pattern of relationships between special and general education teachers requires full, rather than token participation on the part of general education teachers. Interactions that impact the degree of their engagement in the vision and goals of inclusion may serve to foster the construction of new meanings which lead to the attainment of knowledge and a new way to interpret information, leading to further changes in the traditional patterns of relationships between special and general education teachers.

Inquiry and the role of information. Information that creates disequilibrium in ways of viewing inclusion and its implementation provides a foundation for changing patterns of relationships and the construction of new meanings. “Information” includes standard forms of written communication such as letters, memos, directives and professional literature, as well as verbal communications, such as conversations with peers, students and parents. According to Lambert et al. (1995), the most vital forms of information to the creation of a structure that facilitates the construction of meaning, the acquisition of knowledge and new patterns of relationships are generated, gathered and interpreted from within as well as from outside the educational environment and involve input from peers, students and parents, as well as information obtained from observation, reflection, critical inquiry and research.

Though information is frequently obtained through more or less passive means, inquiry is an active process with the goal of achieving greater understanding, requiring initiative on the part of the inquirer. Thus, with regard to the role of information and

inquiry, initiative must be viewed as a significant factor in the degree to which information will be obtained and utilized and the taking of initiative must be examined within the context of power sharing - a function of established patterns of relationships.

Breaking set with old assumptions. For change to occur, old assumptions about educational needs and outcomes must be examined and challenged; systemic barriers to change must be removed. With regard to inclusion, some primary old assumptions are:

Schools cannot accommodate the special needs of disabled students except through physical and social segregation;

Students should be grouped according to ability;

All students are passive receptacles of the teacher's "knowledge";

Students with disabilities view themselves the same way they are viewed by others.

Certain approaches are most useful in the attempt to "break set" with old assumptions. Genuine attempts to understand another's perspective will lead to greater understanding of the issues being dealt with, as well as a greater appreciation of the diversity of human experience. This approach contrasts with the perhaps natural tendency for human beings to explain and defend their own positions, but since modes of interaction are largely learned, it is possible to develop communication strategies that lead to greater understanding of alternative viewpoints.

The role of inquiry is linked to initiative, which implies a certain level of commitment to discoveries made, but should also be associated with critical thinking - a willingness to challenge the status quo and adapt previously held assumptions in light of new information. Creative acts are characterized by originality, innovation and the

ability to imagine what is possible, whether or not what is imagined currently exists. Only those who think critically can be creative in the truest sense of the word; these are the individuals who have the least difficulty in “breaking set” with old assumptions.

According to Lambert, et al. (1995) certain approaches, including literature/ storytelling, liminality and humor, are particularly useful for “breaking set” without assumptions.

Literature represents the embodiment of human experience and allows an individual to access the thoughts, feelings and experiences of another. It refines and clarifies feelings, relations and concepts - it exposes individuals to new ideas and ways of thinking which serve to challenge long standing assumptions. Borrowing from anthropology, liminality focuses on the transformative nature of certain cultural rituals, which function to alter the status or identity of an individual within a specific culture. In the context of “breaking set with old assumptions,” liminality enables individuals to distance themselves from their usual roles, environment or patterns of relationships and transcend boundaries that serve to limit their experiences and perceptions of those experiences.

Though the functions of humor are diverse, it may function to create a sense of recognition about elements which are normally incongruous, creating a shared social or intellectual experience - but can also serve to challenge established ideas, perceptions and values.

Procedures

The case study method of inquiry will be employed, which will allow for a detailed description of the “how” and “why” of the purpose of the study – to examine

change and perceptions of change relating to inclusion in an elementary school. Data collection will incorporate interviews and document reviews.

Researcher

My experience as Director of Special Services in a medium-sized public school district serving kindergarten through twelfth grade emphasized the need to understand the implementation of initiatives mandated by federal and state educational agencies. As a school administrator at the district level, I formed biases about the change process that may prejudice this case study. The possible biases formed and procedures used to eliminate those biases will be discussed in this section.

As a Director of Special Services, I was vitally interested in the successful implementation of change in public schools. I had been a Director of Special Services for approximately one year. My prior experience includes three years as a Special Services Coordinator for a large urban school district and seven years as a special education teacher. In my role as a school administrator during the last five years, I observed many attempts at implementing change and reform initiatives with varying degrees of success.

I began my career as a special education teacher of emotionally disturbed students and served in that capacity for seven years at the middle school and high school levels in a large, urban school district. Subsequently, I was selected to fill the position of Special Services Coordinator in the same school district; a position I held for three years before becoming Director of Special Services in a suburban school district located near the school district where I began my career.

In my administrative roles as both Coordinator and Director of Special Services, I had been responsible for initiating change at the district level to ensure compliance with

federal, state and local mandates. My responsibilities have included the facilitation and implementation of changes, as well as the initiating of change objectives. My experience as an administrator and as a special education teacher as well as personal observation of previous attempts to initiate, implement and sustain change may have created bias. Potential bias will be ameliorated through sustained attention to established research criteria related to a qualitative case study method.

Case Study Method and Criteria

The qualitative case study method was chosen as the preferred research approach to the subject and will rely on the generalization of a particular set of results to a broader theory. Case studies have been identified as the most appropriate tool to understand complex social phenomena (Yin, 1994). The implementation of inclusion is a socially complex and important real-life event, which can be studied to explore why this fundamental educational change is successful in some schools and not in others.

Criteria related to this method will be used to establish trustworthiness, which are:

Credibility. Credibility will be established by an examination of points of convergence and divergence between the respondents and the researcher's interpretation of the responses generated. In addition, peer debriefing and member checks will be conducted to further identify or eliminate potential bias in interpretation and ensure a credible analysis of responses and data.

Transferability. Transferability refers to the degree to which a study's findings can be applied to other contexts or group of respondents (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Contextual data generated will incorporate observations that may be relevant to others seeking to research other applicable contexts or scenarios. Individuals will be selected to

fit the purpose of the study, based on their ability to provide insights and understanding of the questions under investigation, and provide typical and divergent data (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen, 1993).

Dependability. Sustained attention will be paid to methodological changes and shifts in construction which may affect consistency with regard to interpretation, observations and data. To ensure consistency to the highest possible degree, records will be kept which document the process of the study - incorporating facts and observations generated, as well as my subjective reactions to these facts and observations as the study evolves.

Confirmability. Conclusions, interpretations and recommendations will be related to their sources and supported by the study (Erlandson, et al., 1993). Interview transcripts, tapes, notes, analysis, journals and other documents will be maintained to provide an audit trail, which will allow others to examine and confirm the process and observations made.

Site Selection

The elementary school site selected was chosen on the basis of purposive sampling. Because the implementation of inclusion which has occurred at this site has encompassed different special education classroom categories and has been in process over a significant period of time, it is expected that both typical and divergent data will emerge. "Purposive sampling is governed by emerging insights about what is relevant to the study and purposively seeks both the typical and the divergent data that these insights suggest" (Erlandson, et al., 1993, p. 33). Both the special education and general education teachers employed at this site have experienced the implementation of the

inclusion process, from initiation to its current developmental stage.

The elementary school site chosen served children in grades pre-kindergarten through fourth grade. The school has 646 students and a staff of 36 general education teachers and 4 special education teachers. The school had had two principals since 1987. The previous principal was principal from July 1, 1987 until June 30, 1998. The current principal had been principal since July 1, 1998. Both principals will be interviewed as part of this study. The inclusion process was initiated in 1995 by including the learning disabled in general education classes. Since 1995, the school had included additional students with special education categories in general education classes and activities, as well as extracurricular activities.

Data Sources

In my role as a public school administrator, I observed examples of both success and failure in implementing meaningful change. Since perceptions of change play a significant role in the relative success or failure of implementing change, and such perceptions cannot be directly observed, the primary source of data used will be the principal and both special and regular education teachers at the site selected.

Data Collection

The purpose of this case study is to document perceptions of who creates change at an elementary school site. The long interview method will be utilized as the primary source for gathering information about interviewee perceptions - something which cannot be directly observed. "The long interview method gives us the opportunity to step into the mind of another person, to see and experience the world as they do themselves" (McCracken, 1988, p. 9). It is expected that the long interview method will facilitate

understanding and “...put into a larger context the interpersonal, social and cultural aspects of the environment” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 85). Interviews will be based on an open-ended format, allowing for interaction and dialogue, and the primary instrument for data collection and analysis will be me as the researcher. The interview protocol is attached as Appendix A.

Data Analysis

The analytical approach to this study was based upon two propositions underlying the theoretical framework. First, Fullan’s (1991) assertion that six organizational themes represent activities necessary for positive, substantive change to occur. Second, the focus of Lambert et al. (1995), that leadership roles may be assumed by anyone involved in the educational process, including teachers, students and parents. The data presented will be compared to the theoretical frames of Fullan’s six organizational activities and be analyzed through the lens of Lambert’s four perspectives about the change process. The reported findings will explore explanations and perceptions of who creates change and/or facilitates change in the process of implementing inclusion. Other realities revealed will be sorted into categories and presented along with those reflective of Fullan and Lambert et al.

Significance of the Study

It is expected that the research findings will add to the body of knowledge in the areas of existing theory, research and practice related to implementing the inclusion goals of IDEA, by examining inclusion within frameworks of processes and perceptions associated with substantive change. A constructivist lens which incorporates the idea that meanings are socially constructed appears to be particularly valid and useful when

exploring issues related to disabled individuals - members of a minority group whose experience with the oppressive consequences of negative, socially constructed perceptions is both long and profound.

Theory

Constructivist leadership should incorporate elements that engage adults in both learning and leading, as well as create a culture conducive to dynamic interaction in which personal and professional growth can flourish (Lambert, et al., 1995). Fullan (1991) presents an overview of six organizational activities that may advance the exploration of fundamental questions about perceptions of who initiates and is responsible for substantive organizational change. The significance of the study is expected to be in its discovery of potential new insights into the relationship between teachers' perceptions, leadership roles in creating systemic change and who creates change in the context of implementing inclusion.

Research

Research shows that teachers are crucial, but not always well understood instruments of change efforts (Fullan, 1996). The findings of this case study should add to the knowledge base with regard to change and teachers' perceptions of change as it relates to the implementation of inclusion. Teachers' perceptions of their own and principals' activities will be explored in relation to leadership roles and the taking of initiative.

Practice

It is expected that the information obtained through this case study will be useful to administrators' understanding of how change is viewed and implemented by teachers

at the elementary school level and will aid in evaluating the change process as it relates to furthering the goals of achieving schools in which disabled students are full and valued participants. It is also expected that the results of the study will enable administrators to more effectively implement changes mandated by federal, state and local agencies.

Summary

Inclusion is both a mandated and socially desirable educational change effort, requiring significant resources, collaboration and effort. Educators have been presented with unprecedented challenges in its implementation - not the least of which is identifying the impetus and processes most likely to produce a successful outcome. It is expected that insights into leadership roles and activities that effect systemic change will evolve from this study which may aid administrators, principals and teachers in identifying successful strategies for implementing change, particularly as it relates to inclusion. The results of this study are expected to add to the work of others and shed light on perceptions about who initiates and assumes leadership roles in a systemic change process; perceptions which may distinguish a successful implementation process from one that has failed to achieve the vision and goals of inclusion. Qualitative methods employed will incorporate realistic descriptions of the relationship between how the vision of inclusion developed at the study site, its actual implementation, and how understandings, assumptions and perceptions of teachers and others may act to affect that relationship.

Reporting

The literature reviewed will be reported in Chapter II. The data gained from interviews, observations and document reviews will be presented in Chapter III. Chapter

IV will present an analysis of the data collected. The final chapter, Chapter V, will present a summary, conclusions, implications and recommendations for further research, and a commentary about the findings of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Relevant literature which helped direct this study includes an overview of the historical context of inclusion. The review is organized into five sections: (1) the historical context of inclusion within the social framework of the disabilities civil rights movement, (2) systemic reform, (3) change and resistance, (4) roles and perceptions of principals, (5) roles and perceptions of teachers.

Inclusion of Special Needs Children in Public School: The Context

Public schools, as representative of society at large, have tended to reinforce the segregation of disabled individuals through mechanisms of sorting, labeling and classifying individual students (Burrello & Sage, 1979). "With such classification, delivery of educational services on the basis of labeled categories has fostered the belief that 'normal' children are the responsibility of the schools and that certain 'other' children are not, and therefore belong to the special education system" (Burrello & Sage, 1979, p. 14). An understanding of the background of inclusion is essential to identifying processes and perceptions relating to the change to inclusive schooling.

History or Current Event? The Medical Model

Entrenched, pervasive exclusion from the mainstream is the defining characteristic of the social history of individuals with disabilities. Indeed, the disabled fall into a minority group whose history can hardly be said to exist, since it is a history with little recorded evidence of the subjective experiences of members of this group prior to the modern disabilities civil rights movement. Because traditional historians have viewed the experience of disability from a medical perspective, the predominant

contextual framework has focused on individual, rather than collective experience - whether a particular individual or specific disability. However, “when devaluation and discrimination happen to one person, it is biography, but when, in all probability, similar experiences happen to millions, it is social history” (Longmore, 1985, p. 586).

The medical perspective on disability underlies most modern policymaking and social structures for the disabled - as well as professional practice by those whose functions encompass interaction with them - including teachers, principals and school administrators. According to Longmore and Umansky (2001), the medical perspective “defines disability as caused primarily by any of a series of pathologies located in the bodies or minds of individuals” (p. 7).

From this perspective, physiological characteristics impair the personal ability to perform “major life activities” ordinarily “expected” of people in particular age groups, such as attending school and engaging in play, holding jobs, keeping house or caring for themselves. This approach personalizes disability, casting it as a deficit located in the bodies or minds of individuals that requires rehabilitation to correct the physiological defect or amend the social deficiency....

Simi Linton notes, [the deficit paradigms remain, and the focus is on the individual as deviant subject, rather than on the social structures that label difference as deviance and pathology]. (Longmore & Umansky, 2001, p. 7)

In referring to the exceptional educational experience of the early twentieth century disabled writer and social critic, Randolph Bourne, authors Fleischer and Zames (2001) provide an example illustrative of the typical experience of the few disabled children who attempted attendance at public school during that period.

Bourne's opportunity to get an education was unusual, for most children with disabilities were treated more like the boy with cerebral palsy, who, in 1919, was expelled from public school in Wisconsin, despite his ability to keep up with the class academically, because [the teachers and other children found him depressing and nauseating]. (Fleischer & Zames, 2001, p. 12)

Supernaturalism and the Scientific Approach: The Rehabilitation Movement

As American society began to move away from Protestant ideology as the primary framework for explaining social phenomena and toward one based more on scientific, secular philosophy around the turn of the twentieth century, views of disabled individuals began to become more complex. The "rehabilitation movement" was born and two schools of thought emerged. "Social" rehabilitationists sought to examine and change the social and cultural context and limitations within which disabled individuals were forced to function. In contrast, "medical" rehabilitationists "...viewed the individual as the central problem of disability and focused their efforts on orthopedic surgery, moral education, and other solutions centering on repair of the individual." (Longmore & Umansky, 2001, p. 134). It is interesting to note that this debate is so little changed after a century of advances in civil rights reform and scientific discovery.

Objects of Pity and Vehicle for Alienation: The Poster Child

Though most advocacy organizations for the disabled functioning today were initiated by parents of disabled children and focus on specific disabilities, a notable early exception is the National Easter Seal Society, formed by Edgar F. Allen in 1922, after his son and a number of others were killed in a streetcar accident. After founding a hospital, Allen became interested in the plight of disabled children, who often were deprived of the

medical and educational services they needed, because according to "...his own survey...many children with mobility impairments were hidden away by their parents, who feared detection could result in their children's institutionalization" (Fleischer & Zames, 2001, p. 9). The National Easter Seal Society, the March of Dimes and the Muscular Dystrophy Association discovered early on that fund raising efforts were greatly enhanced by presenting an agreeable, attractive child to the public as an integral part of annual telethon fundraising events. Though undoubtedly well-intentioned, the fund-raising uses of these children served to support the status quo in terms of social perspectives on disabled individuals, and to perpetuate the traditional alienation existing between disabled and non-disabled individuals. Fleischer and Zames note:

The public images put forth by the poster children and the telethons negated the reality of adults with disabilities. It is almost amusing to record both the Pollyannaish and macabre assumptions of disabled youngsters who had little awareness of the existence of adults with disabilities. Some thought that all children with disabilities were cured as adults; others thought that they all died before reaching adulthood. Later, adults with disabilities took on the task of questioning their absence from all these public relations strategies. How could children with disabilities mature into productive adults if they had no models? How could adults with disabilities participate in society if they were invisible? Was the money acquired by means of telethons worth the damaging misconceptions? In response to these questions, these adults determined that the principal need of children with disabilities is not the services to which the

telethons contribute, but rather a civil rights movement diminishing “society’s role in handicapping disabled people.” (Fleischer & Zames, 2001, p. 11)

Disability Civil Rights: The Silent Speak, the Lame Demand Public Accommodations and the Blind See Obstacles Clearly

The 1950s and early 1960s trend toward deinstitutionalization presented those leaving them with pervasive obstacles to accessing the benefits enjoyed by mainstream society - such as education, employment and basic mobility. Physical and social barriers to integrating the disabled into society at large were massive and well established. Early leaders of what may be considered the modern disability rights movement were strongly influenced by the civil rights movement of the 1960s, which produced vocal activists determined to bring down barriers of race and gender inequality. Disability civil rights leaders were as determined to see barriers to education, employment and independent living for the disabled permanently removed. The result of persistent effort on the part of various disabilities groups and their advocates was yet another major step forward in terms of focus; from socioeconomic and vocational rehabilitation programs designed to support independent living, to the persistent sociopolitical realities of discrimination, marginalization and inequality.

Federal laws enacted in the 1970s were designed to provide broader protection to the disabled from discriminatory practices in employment and education, including Title V of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1974, later renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), providing for the free and appropriate public education and related services, regardless of the cost. These acts provided the foundation for the most comprehensive legislation to guarantee

nondiscrimination against the disabled thus far - the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

Has the enactment of federal legislation eliminated discrimination against disabled individuals? Hardly. Richard K. Scotch summarizes the current reality by noting that “Even antidiscrimination policies that seek to reduce such exclusion appear to have limited impact on long-established assumptions and institutional arrangements that promote segregation” (Longmore and Umansky, 2001, p. 389). Without question, American public schools prominently figure in these “institutional arrangements” and “long-established assumptions.”

The disability civil rights campaigns of the last twenty years have made mainstreaming of children with disabilities in public school mandatory, changing the life prospects of students with disabilities, and challenging the attitudes of educators and others whose values, perceptions and beliefs impact fundamental changes related to inclusive schooling.

Systemic Reform: Is Special Education “In” or “Out” of the Loop?

Much has been written on the issue of systemic reform in the wake of what has come to be regarded as the inadequacy of public schools to successfully adapt to the challenges of a changing, rapidly evolving world by preparing students to meet the demands of such a world. Although there is widespread feeling that public schools have failed to meet these challenges, views of *how* and *why* they have failed varies considerably. Obviously, the divergence in perspectives on these questions has significant implications for proposed solutions. While traditionalists primarily view the problem in terms of inadequate preparation to meet the requirements of a changing

workforce, there are those critical of schools being “increasingly seen as input-output machines in which children are working units that can service the technology of society, helping it to make a profit.” (Ainscow, 1988, p. 11). However, there is little question about which of these perspectives continues to dominate the educational landscape: Fullan (1993) observed:

On the one hand, we have the constant and ever expanding presence of educational innovation and reform. It is no exaggeration to say that dealing with change is endemic to post-modern society. On the other hand, however, we have an educational system which is fundamentally conservative. The way that teachers are trained, the way that schools are organized, the way the educational hierarchy operates, and the way that education is treated by political decision-makers results in a system that is more likely to retain the status quo than to change. (p. 3)

If Fullan and others are correct, there is a "lag," or significant discrepancy, between the goals of education and how public schools function, and societal expectations and attitudes about what the goals and functioning of the educational system *should* be.

Much of what has actually been implemented with regard to educational reform may be characterized as piecemeal change - modifying part of something, while systemic change involves challenging traditional assumptions and replacing the *entire* system. Systemic change is comprehensive and must address all levels of the educational system - from the federal government down to the classroom. The idea that radical, systemic change in education is necessary in order for the educational system to keep pace with major paradigm shifts which have occurred (and are occurring) in society as a whole and

in its component systems - particularly the family and the workplace - is gaining more proponents as traditional solutions fail to address new issues related to the "information age", (Reigeluth & Garfinkle, 1994).

While perspectives on the dilemmas described represent a fundamental level of the debate regarding systemic reform, it must be noted that *special education* has continued to function primarily as a separate, parallel system:

Special education is not a rationally conceived and carefully planned and coordinated system of services. Rather, it evolved through the combined efforts of advocates, parents and professionals with mutual interests in serving students with disabilities. The general system of education left special educators and parents with little alternative but to create a parallel system with its own rules and regulations (Burrello & Sage, 1994, p. 9).

As applied to special education, piecemeal reform might be considered to be "mainstreaming" - the participation of special needs students in some regular education classes for which they are believed to be prepared to participate, while "inclusion" implies systemic reform - the inclusion of special needs students in all facets of school life, including extracurricular activities. Berres, Ferguson, Knoblock and Woods (1996) defined inclusion as "...the full participation of students with special learning needs and disabilities in the daily life, curriculum and learning activities of same-age peers in general classrooms" (p. 2).

With regard to the implications of systemic reform for special education and the meaning of "inclusion," it is useful to examine the work of Skrtic, et al. (1995) in their landmark collaborative work "Disability and Democracy." This critical discourse

represents a significant contribution to paradigmatic and theoretical problems in special education and their implications for implementing inclusion, or any other type of educational reform. "Disability and Democracy" was designed to be an "immanent critique of special education, and, by implication, of education itself" (p. 47).

Skrtic, et al.(1995) explain much of the current difficulty in implementing educational reform (including inclusion) in terms of multiple, competing paradigms in the social sciences, and provides a critique of the tradition upon which both the general and special education professional's training, view of knowledge and social legitimacy is grounded. Though a comprehensive discussion of the concepts contained in their work is considerably beyond the scope of this review, Skrtic, et al.(1995) call upon educators (and special educators in particular) to be critically pragmatic and to question their knowledge tradition, based upon a functionalist paradigm which utilizes positivist methodologies. However, most relevant to the study at hand is the assertion that

What is so troubling today is that the inclusion debate is largely following the same pattern as the mainstreaming debate. It, too, is a form of naive pragmatism that criticizes current special education models, practices and tools without explicitly criticizing the theories and assumptions that stand behind them (p. 80).

In addition to casting a critical eye toward the explicit presuppositions and implicit social norms upon which professional knowledge is grounded, Skrtic, et al. (1995) reject a functionalist view of human pathology and the idea that those who are "different" interfere with the normal functioning of what would otherwise be an optimally functioning, rational system, because of "pathologies" such as physical handicap or mental retardation.

Three approaches to the schooling of disabled children have resulted from the view that "certain children are perceived as having things wrong with them that make it difficult for them to participate in the normal curriculum of schools" (Ainscow, et al., 1991, p. 2).

1. Withdrawal. Students are withdrawn from the mainstream to a special class or school, where (it is believed) they are provided learning experiences appropriate to their limitations.
2. Remedial. Though strategies may vary, this approach aims to "provide forms of intervention that will overcome or compensate deficits within children."
3. Mainstreaming. The thrust is to modify the curriculum to allow its access by exceptional children.

It is important to note that despite the differences between these three approaches, they each continue to perceive the problem as being the child's. (Ainscow, et al., 1991, p. 2)

Further study is needed to examine how assumptions inherent in the conservative agenda described by Fullan may operate to keep regular and special education functioning as parallel systems, and how systemic reform efforts might address the divergence of regular and special education agendas.

Inclusion: A Process of Change

The change process itself has been extensively examined, yielding numerous models, theories and perspectives which combine to create a mass of conflicting information to individuals or organizations wishing to implement change, whether piecemeal or systemic. Regardless of the perspective advanced, "fear" and "resistance" to change are two recurring themes. This review will be limited to an examination of change and resistance specifically in terms of *systemic* change and inclusion.

As a component of systemic change, inclusion is both dynamic and complex.

Sage (1997) noted:

Inclusive schooling cannot spontaneously or readily occur, regardless of what any one individual does. Changes involve multiple levels of the administrative system, including the central district structure, individual building organization, and classroom instruction.... The changes required to create and sustain inclusive school communities are no different from what people have to do to support other types of changes (such as responding to high teen pregnancy rates or to gangs), so creating inclusive schools will involve complex issues (p. 375).

Though the change to inclusive schooling is both mandatory and complex, according to Fullan (1993), complex change *cannot* be mandated in such a way as to effect permanent, substantial change:

When complex change is involved, people do not and cannot change by being told to do so. Effective change agents neither embrace nor ignore mandates. They use them as catalysts to re-examine what they are doing (p. 24).

It is evident that systemic inclusion has not been achieved in spite of mandates. However, in acknowledging the difficulties inherent in mandating change as pointed out by Fullan, it must also be recognized that without the intervention of legal mandates it is unlikely that the limited progress which has been made thus far would have ever occurred. It would be difficult indeed to find a single example in the history of civil rights and human emancipation which did not utilize *mandated* equality as fundamental to achieving a widespread change in social consciousness. In fact, Stakes and Hornby (1997) concluded that in the United Kingdom, educational provisions for children with special needs has been impeded by the lack of clear mandates and by the nature of relevant legislation, which has allowed recommendations to be diluted or ignored altogether. Though progress has been made, implementation of inclusive programs for SEN (Special Educational Needs) in the UK remains largely local, "slow, piecemeal and ineffective" (p. 158); a description that characterizes the history of inclusion efforts made by many American public schools.

The Role of Vision

Like the change process, the role of "vision" in creating change has been extensively examined and debated. According to Fullan (1993) "vision emerges from, more than it precedes, action", but "shared vision is essential to success, and must evolve through the dynamic interaction of organizational members and their leaders" (Fullan, 1993, p. 28).

Widely drawn upon by other theorists, Fullan has consistently drawn attention to the idea of the importance of individual and organizational moral purpose in the context

of "personal" and "shared" vision, and has also consistently expressed the view that, though vision is necessary, it should not be premature or superficial in nature:

Vision is not something someone happens to have; it is a much more fluid process and does not have to be - indeed it must not be - confined to a privileged few. In a real sense, implementation of any policy will be superficial unless all implementers come to have a deeply held version of the meaning and the importance of the change for them. (Fullan, 1997, p. 34)

The mandated change to inclusive schooling began with a vision: that of a more egalitarian future for individuals defined as disabled. In the broadest sense, a true "vision" of inclusion is one that acknowledges the strengths and weaknesses inherent in being human, and redefines the meaning of both in emancipatory terms. Relative to schools, it means fostering an environment that will help lead to a new generation of Americans with views toward "disability" that significantly diverge from those of their predecessors.

The Role of Leadership

Fullan (1993) makes the distinction between traditional, formal leadership and a postmodern paradigm in which leaders are those individuals committed to the educational change process, referring to these individuals as "change agents." An interesting and perhaps unexpected facet of leadership with regard to inclusion may be its negation on the part of special educators in terms of assuming full responsibility for disabled students. According to Sage and Burrello (1994)

Special educators should never accept sole responsibility for the education of a student with a disability, independent of the regular staff of the school. Services

must be provided without labels and resources drawn from all currently identified categorical programs as much as possible within inclusive programs (p. 256).

Lambert, et al. (1995) emphasize the importance of an interactive professional culture in the development of leadership, which they view as "a concept transcending individuals, roles, and behaviors" (p. 29). From this perspective, leadership is redefined as a reciprocal process, engaging both adults and students in a dynamic learning environment which fosters the development of opportunities for new learning experiences and interpretations. This view transcends the traditional division of "leader" and "follower" and reinterprets leadership as a process rather than centering on an individual. Since the stakeholders in special education are many (not the least of which are the students themselves), this view appears particularly useful in examining the role of leadership in creating an inclusive school culture. In addition, this constructivist orientation toward leadership is compatible with a democratic framework which supports a degree of self-determination for all participants in processes characterized by reciprocity - making the process itself an inclusive one.

In addition to the importance of leadership, Sage (1997) concluded that an examination of a sampling of schools considered to have successfully implemented inclusion indicates that both a conscious agenda to break with traditional structure and a general focus on building community were important aspects of their success. Effective schools are those which are characterized by a shared and conscious commitment to achieving common goals on the part of principals, teachers, parents and students.

Resistance

Like other aspects of moving disabled individuals from the margin to the mainstream of society, inclusive schooling has been met with a fair share of resistance. Reasons for this resistance include the fear of change itself, conflicting educator beliefs about where and how disabled students should be served, and what Fullan (1993), describes as a reactionary response to an overload of innovations. According to Fullan (2001), though every type and level of social organization must cope with the turbulent change endemic to post-modern society, "...only schools are suffering the additional burden of having a torrent of unwanted, uncoordinated policies and innovations raining down on them from hierarchical bureaucracies" (p. 22).

Without question, many general educators who function in a school culture that does not actively support inclusion view it either as irrelevant to them, or as an unwanted innovation. Bauwens and Mueller (2000) observed that an unsupportive school culture may limit the effort to provide all students with opportunities to learn, in spite of the fact that teachers know how to do so:

This difficulty is clearly evidenced when educators state that certain students 'don't fit in' in their classrooms. In essence, educators continue to try to 'place a round peg in a square hole' rather than envision a learning environment that celebrates diversity and provides multiple pathways for all students to learn. This dilemma may stem from educators' deep-seated beliefs about which students public education should serve and where students who 'don't fit in' should be served (p. 331).

Ainscow, et al. (1991) also address this common theme regarding resistance to integrating students with disabilities; that of a perception on the part of general education teachers that they cannot teach children with special needs without specific, further training in special education or the intensive assistance of someone specially trained to deal with disabled children. According to these authors, teacher education should be reformed to address questions about "inclusive teaching rather than managing individual problems through exclusive teaching practices" (p. 62).

With regard to inclusion and its mandates, the issue of "resistance" is complex. According to Fullan (1993), resistance is not the primary obstacle to substantive change in public education, but the uncritical, fragmented adoption of too many innovations. He further notes that "problems need to be taken seriously, not attributed to 'resistance,' or the ignorance or wrong-headedness of others" (p. 26).

According to Skrtic, et al. (1995) a primary obstacle to change in education is a general resistance to letting go of an outdated mechanistic paradigm which generates practices based on the idea of progress as being "sequential, additive and controllable," and ignores the use of "personal, somatic, social and cultural meaning and context as starting points for learning and teaching" (pp. 171-172). From this view, resistance arises primarily from conflicts between the traditional assumptions of education and the adoption of new assumptions which would enable systemic change to occur.

Resistance may represent an unwillingness to accept the disabled into the mainstream, or - it may represent a force for positive change in the context of confronting legitimate problems. As pointed out by Fullan (1993), success is fostered by treating problems as an expected, looked-for phenomenon, and may be a source of learning

(Fullan, 2001). Resistance to change must be viewed critically and a distinction made between legitimate reasons for resistance and that based simply on discrimination against the disabled.

Roles and Perceptions of Principals

Leaders whose personal values accord with the egalitarian vision of inclusion are critical to the creation of an inclusive school culture. Sage and Burrello (1994) summarized the findings and conclusions of two parallel research projects by DeClue (1990) and VanHorn (1989) that focused on the leadership roles of principals considered to have substantially achieved successful implementation. With regard to "beliefs and experiences" they concluded:

The beliefs and attitudes of the principals toward special education were the key factors influencing their behavior toward and acceptance of students with disabilities. Principals in these case studies consistently saw students with disabilities as being more similar to than different from typical students. They also came to understand that they had come to know each disabled student as an individual and believed that these students had to be educated with their age-appropriate peers or they would not develop meaningful social relationships in school, in the community, or on the job. These principals' belief systems appear to be more rigid early in life and to slowly evolve later.(p. 235)

DeClue (1990) and VanHorn's (1989) studies emphasize the critical value of a positive attitude on the part of principals toward disabled students. Both found that an inclusive culture could *only* be established if principals made educating students with disabilities a priority *and* they fostered a positive relationship between general and special educators.

Fullan (1997) suggests that the day-to-day functioning of principals has become increasingly characterized by overload and decreasing effectiveness. Though Fullan's view of "change agents" appears to be more inclusive in terms of who is primarily responsible for creating and sustaining change, he has expressed the view that the "main agents (or blockers) of change are the principals.... The principal is the person most likely to be in a position to shape the organizational conditions necessary for change" (Fullan, 1991, p. 76). This might best be explained in terms of perspectives on the realities experienced by different participants in the change process. However, according to Fullan (1991, 2001), the reality experienced by most principals is best described in terms of the inherent dilemmas associated with being a middle manager; having to respond to (often contradictory) pressures from both above and below the hierarchy. Since it is clear that principals play a critical role in the change to inclusive schooling, the realities experienced by principals described by Fullan may go a long way toward explaining why many have failed to evolve into the *inclusion conscious* leaders described by DeClue (1990) and VanHorn (1989).

Roles and Perceptions of Teachers

Like principals, many teachers are beleaguered with what they feel to be ever increasing demands from a system that fails to provide them with the supports needed to meet them. Fullan (2001) describes the subjective daily reality of many teachers:

Teachers are uncertain about how to influence students, and even about whether they are having an influence; they experience students as individuals in specific circumstances who are being influenced by multiple and differing forces for which generalizations are not possible; teaching decisions are often made on

pragmatic trial-and-error grounds with little chance for reflection or thinking through the rationale; teachers must deal with constant daily disruptions, both within the classroom such as managing discipline and interpersonal conflicts, and from outside the classroom such as collecting money for school events, making announcements, dealing with the principal, parents, and central office staff; they must get through the daily grind; the rewards are having a few good days, covering the curriculum, getting a lesson across, having an impact on one or two individual students (success stories); and they constantly feel the critical shortage of time (p. 33).

Special education teachers often deal with not only all of the foregoing difficulties, but others that are specific to the devaluation of their disabled students in a segregated school culture.

The Problem of Isolation

To a large extent, the roles of teachers may be conceptualized in terms of being on the "front line" of the educational process. However, as a military analogy, the similarity diverges abruptly when one considers the traditional isolation in which teachers have carried out their work, compared to the coordinated physical and psychological teamwork characteristic of any military endeavor. Though all teachers experience a high degree of isolation, special education teachers tend to experience it to a larger degree by virtue of the organizational structure of special education as a parallel system. In physical terms alone, special education teachers are much more likely to have their classrooms located away from the mainstream, in prefabs or other geographically out-of-the-way locations. It is apparent that teacher isolation runs counter to any type of systemic reform effort,

particularly the inclusion of disabled students, and that such isolation reinforces the segregation of disabled students and their non-disabled peers.

Berres, Ferguson, Knoblock & Woods (1996) described their work with a group of special education teachers, who reported feelings that both they and their students were devalued by their general education counterparts:

Over time, the group of teachers shared all the various strategies they had tried to become part of the life of the school. Most reported constructive efforts to reach out to others. When rebuffed, however, some resorted to a grown-up version of acting out - including expressions of alienation and anger toward students and staff.... Our conclusion was that it was the processes of exclusion and isolation that created the negative images of those excluded (p. 180).

The author's conclusions demonstrate that negative attitudes toward disabled students affect not only the students, but their teachers as well, creating a climate of segregation, discrimination and hostility.

Documentation of the effect of teacher beliefs and expectations on student internalization of those beliefs is extensive (Smey-Richman, 1989; Raffini, 1993; Good & Brophy, 1999). As expressed in both overt and subtle ways, these beliefs form the foundation of what both students and teachers experience in their daily life. In a discussion of the legal mandates of school district administrators to serve disabled children in an equal way, Burrello and Sage (1979) make the significant point that this does not mean administrators equally *value* the disabled child, which may also have implications for feelings about the sense of support (or lack thereof) special educators may experience.

Rossi, et al. (1994) provide an insightful description of the dynamics of exclusion. In human organization, when one's characteristics are at variance in significant ways from the modal characteristics of the social group that has achieved hegemony, one is likely to find little correspondence between the developmental supports provided by the dominant group and the developmental needs of the persons whose characteristics are different. This is a function of the operation of a principle of social economy whereby social orders design and allocate resources in accordance with the modal or otherwise valued characteristics of the social order. Thus, we have schools, public facilities, media, and so on that are designed and allocated to fit the needs of persons whose vision and hearing are intact rather than to serve the needs of persons with sensory impairments (p. 51).

The isolation experienced by special education teachers appears to be exacerbated by perceptions their students are devalued, both by administrators and other teachers.

Toward A Collaborative, Inclusive School Culture

An effective collaborative approach to teaching is essential to building a feeling of community and furthering the goals of inclusion. "Schools that embrace the principle of collaboration for students and faculty increase exponentially the resources and expertise to meet the needs of a more diverse student population that includes students with disabilities" (Villa & Thousand, 2000, p. 191).

However, according to Skrtic, et al. (1995), in order to accomplish systemic inclusion and develop a collaborative school culture, the traditional bureaucratic organizational structure of education must be transformed into an adhocratic one, allowing for the fluid exchange of ideas and a decentralization of power. The idea that

traditional bureaucratic structures and collaborative cultures are fundamentally incompatible is echoed by Reigeluth and Garfinkle (1994).

Burrello and Sage (1979) noted that the problems to educational reform presented by a bureaucratic organizational structure extend to the parallel system of special education, creating conditions which make special educators themselves resistant to change to a collaborative culture.

For the special educator, 'empires' have been built on the foundation of an interest in and willingness to serve those who manifest exceptional characteristics. This has occurred with the enthusiastic support of the remainder of educators, who are only too happy to be relieved of the problem.... a restraint on forces of change can be seen in the attitudes of professionals confronted with the possibility that any particular change might encroach upon the privileges that professional identity provides. Persons whose status depends on a highly specialized domain may be threatened by the changes that a normalization movement might entail (pp. 61-62).

It is clear that 1) a collaborative teaching culture is a necessary prerequisite to the development of an inclusive school culture and 2) resistance to a collaborative model may come from either general or special educators.

Conclusion

The review examined areas of literature relating to 1) inclusion in the context of the disabilities civil rights movement, 2) how inclusion relates to the broader issue of systemic reform, 3) aspects of change and resistance relevant to the transition to an

inclusive school culture, 4) roles and perceptions of principals in the development of an inclusive school environment, 5) roles and perceptions of teachers.

The literature reveals that the change to inclusion is an extremely complex process. As stated by Fullan and Hargreaves (2001), "Intrinsic dilemmas in the change process, coupled with the intractability of some factors and the uniqueness of individual settings, make successful change a highly complex and subtle social process" (p. 71).

As currently conceived, inclusion must be understood within the framework of the disabilities civil rights movement which began in the 1960's, representing a radical change in consciousness about where individuals with disabilities "fit" into society at large. It is clear that the mandatory nature of inclusion has presented educators with unprecedented challenges and has created difficulties which arise specifically from problems inherent in *mandated* change. However, it is believed that without the intervention of authoritative law, the prospects for disabled individuals ever achieving social equity would be both less likely and even more difficult to achieve. In spite of mandates, it is clear that comprehensive inclusive schooling has not been achieved.

Underlying the difficulties of defining and implementing educational inclusion is the historical development of special education as a system which parallels, rather than is an integral part of, public education. It is clear that this parallelism is a reflection of society as a whole and that the educational system mirrors the continued social segregation of disabled individuals - as well as society's general resistance to viewing disability as something other than a less valuable, pathological form of human existence.

Skrtic, et al. (1995) have provided an insightful critique of the training and functionalist tradition upon which the professional culture of teaching is based. Since

teachers serve on the "front line" of education, this critique is particularly important and worthy of in-depth examination in terms of how that professional culture may serve to perpetuate special education as a parallel system and reinforce the segregation of special needs students from their peers.

Further study of the broader societal dynamics involving the maintenance of parallel systems for disabled and nondisabled individuals would be useful for understanding how the educational system mirrors these dynamics, and may identify ways in which it might cease to simply mirror, and instead become consciously generative of a new, creative dynamic that fosters the change to inclusion.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

The purpose of this study was to examine who and what facilitated the change to inclusion for students with disabilities in a public elementary school. An explanatory case study method of inquiry was used to research the problem (Yin, 1984). A single public elementary school site was chosen to assess who and what facilitated meaningful change.

The elementary site studied was located in the school district where I was employed as the Director of Special Services. During the time that I was employed by the school district, I had occasions to interact formally and informally with the principal, special education teachers, and general education teachers. The administration and staff at the elementary school believed that the inclusion program had been successful in including special education students in the general education classrooms and activities, programs and performances at the school.

Case Study Procedures

The case study included interviews of administrators, special education teachers, general education teachers and parents of students with disabilities who had been involved in the inclusion program at the school. In addition, observations were made of the students with disabilities in general education classes and special education resource classes. Reviews of the special education students' Individual Education Programs (I.E.P.) and inservice agendas documenting staff development meetings about the inclusion process were included in the case study.

Observations

When the inclusion initiative was mandated by the Oklahoma State Department of

Education in 1995, special education students in the Learning Disabilities category were placed in general education classes at the elementary school. When inclusion was initiated, the students to be included in general education classes were placed in one classroom in each of the four grade levels at the school. At the beginning of the next school year, the special education students were placed in approximately equal numbers in every general education class at the school. This relatively equal distribution of special education students in general education classes was the manner in which special education students accessed the educational program when the study was conducted. Informal observations of general education teachers and special education teachers in general education settings at the school site were made to confirm the perspectives reported by each respondent and to corroborate the participants' perceptions of what was happening in the classrooms.

Document Review

The documentation reviewed in the study included agendas of inservice and professional development meetings regarding inclusion issues. The respondents reported that professional development meetings were provided when inclusion was initiated at the school site. The inservice sessions included training by the special services staff and guest speakers. Some of the special education teachers and general education teachers made visits to another school site to observe an inclusion program. The Individualized Education Programs of the special education students were reviewed to determine the amount of time the students were included in general education classes.

Case Study Site

The site chosen for this study was an elementary school in a suburban community

near a large city in the state. The city of Centerville had 21,170 residents at the time of the study and was the seat of a county with 70,567 residents. Centerville was a rapidly growing community that covered 12.5 square miles. The Centerville school district employed 298 full-time certified staff and 198 full-time support staff. The school district served 3,931 Pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students at 4 elementary schools, 1 junior high school, 1 high school, an alternative education program and a cooperative for special education students that served the county.

The study was conducted at Center Elementary School which is located in a middle class neighborhood. This school site has pre-kindergarten through 4th grades and is located in a building constructed in 1992. The names of the city, school site and respondents are fictitious.

I was on the school site two full school days and conducted additional interviews during the following two weeks. Some interviews were conducted during school hours while other interviews were conducted after school hours. Informal observations were conducted in the general education and special education classrooms in which students with disabilities were present along with the general and special education teachers who participated in the study. While at the school site, I ate lunch with the teachers and participated in a holiday celebration with school staff. Data collected from the informal observations are included in this chapter along with data collected from the scheduled data collection activities.

Participants

Participants in the case study were the principal of the school, the

previous principal of the school, 10 general education teachers, 5 special education teachers, 5 parents of children with disabilities, a speech and language pathologist, and a principal who was the Assistant Special Services Director when inclusion was initiated at the school site. The previous principal was interviewed because he was principal at the school site when inclusion was initiated. The ten general education teachers included two teachers from each of the five grade levels who had special education students in their classes. All of the special education teachers at the school were interviewed and the five parents interviewed had children with disabilities who had been included in general education classes. The principal who had been Assistant Director of Special Services was interviewed because she had served in that capacity when inclusion was initiated in the school district. The speech and language pathologist was interviewed because her name had been mentioned as a facilitator for included students in the general education classrooms.

Pseudonyms were assigned to all respondents in the study. The principals' pseudonyms begin with P, the general education teachers' pseudonyms begin with R, the special education teachers' and the speech and language pathologist's pseudonyms begin with S, and the parents' pseudonyms begin with N.

The principals were Ms. Patrick, Mr. Peters and Ms. Parker. The general education teachers were Ms. Roberts, Ms. Russell, Ms. Reed, Ms. Ray, Ms. Randall, Ms. Richmond, Mr. Rice, Ms. Rhodes, Ms. Reynolds, and Ms. Riley. The pseudonyms for the special education teachers were Ms. Smith, Ms. Sharp, Ms. Snyder, Ms. Simmons, Ms. Shepherd and Ms. Shelton. The parents' pseudonyms were Ms. Neal, Ms. Nash, Ms. Nelson, Ms. Newman and Ms. North.

Ms. Patrick

Ms. Patrick was the principal at Central Elementary School when the study was conducted. She holds a Master's degree from the University of Houston in Curriculum and Instruction. Ms. Patrick had been a school teacher for twenty years when she stopped teaching for six years to have a family. She returned to teaching for two years then went into the business world for two years, and then returned to education as the principal at Center Elementary School. Ms. Patrick had been the principal at the school site for four years.

Mr. Peters

Mr. Peters was the principal at Center Elementary School before Ms. Patrick assumed the position in 1998, after Mr. Peters transferred to an elementary teaching position at another school site within the school district. He had been the principal at Center Elementary School for ten and one half years, and was the principal when inclusion was implemented at the school in 1995. Mr. Peters graduated from Southwestern Oklahoma State University in 1981 with a Master of Education degree. Mr. Peters had been a school teacher for ten years prior to becoming the principal at the Center Elementary School, and had been in education for a total of twenty four years.

Ms. Parker

Ms. Parker had been the Assistant Director of Special Services when inclusion was initiated at Center Elementary School. At the time of the study, she was the principal at another elementary school within the school district. Ms. Parker had been in education for twenty nine years, and had been employed by the Centerville school district since 1979. Ms. Parker graduated from Central State College in 1975 with a Master of

Education degree. Ms. Parker had taught learning disabled and mentally retarded special education classes within the school district for thirteen years before assuming the position of Assistant Director of Special Services in 1992. In 1998, she became the principal of an elementary school that served kindergarten through 4th grade students in the Centerville school district.

Ms. Roberts

Ms. Roberts had been teaching school for 23 years. She started teaching a 3rd grade class in 1972 and remained in that capacity for eight years. She then taught an art class at the junior high level for one year, after which she stopped teaching for eight years to raise a family. Ms. Roberts returned to teaching in 1989 by accepting a position to teach a kindergarten class at Center Elementary School. Ms. Roberts obtained a Bachelor's degree from Northeastern State University with a major in education. She had been a kindergarten teacher at the school site for 13 years.

Ms. Russell

Ms Russell taught a 1st grade class at the school site, and had taught school for 14 years. She graduated from Northeastern State University in 1988 with a Bachelor's degree in elementary education. All of Ms. Russell's experience was at the 1st grade level at Center Elementary School.

Ms. Reed

Ms. Reed had taught a 2nd grade class at the school site for 15 years. She graduated from Northeastern State University in 1971 with a Bachelor's degree in elementary education. After graduating from college, Ms. Reed taught in elementary schools in Oklahoma City for eleven years before moving to Centerville in 1987.

Ms. Ray

Ms Ray had been a teacher for 20 years. She had taught four years at the 5th grade level, four years at the 6th grade level and 12 years at the 3rd grade level. Ms. Ray graduated from Bartlesville Wesleyan College in 1982 with a Bachelor of Science degree in education.

Ms. Randall

Ms. Randall had taught a 4th grade class at Center Elementary School for 10 years. She began her teaching career at the school site and all of her experience had been at Center Elementary School in a 4th grade classroom. Ms. Randall graduated from Northeastern State University in 1992 with a Bachelor's degree in education.

Ms. Richmond

Ms. Richmond had been a school teacher for 23 years, and had taught a third or fourth grade class at Center Elementary School for 22 years. Ms. Richmond had been at the school site since 1980. She graduated from Northeastern State University in 1988 with a Master of Education degree in reading instruction. She also had certification as a reading specialist.

Mr. Rice

Mr. Rice was the computer teacher at the school site. He taught a second grade class for 10 years and had taught the computer class for 5 years. All of Mr. Rice's experience had been at Center Elementary School. Mr. Rice graduated from Northeastern State University in 1987 with Bachelor's degree in education.

Ms. Rhodes

Ms. Rhodes was the art teacher at Center Elementary School. She had taught the

art class for one year. Prior to teaching art, Ms. Rhodes taught a 1st grade class for one year and a 4th grade class for two years at the school site. She had taught kindergarten for two years at another elementary school in the Centerville school district before teaching at the school site. Ms. Rhodes started her teaching career in 1992 by teaching a 4th grade class in another school district with an emergency teaching certificate before moving to Centerville community. Ms. Rhodes was employed for two years as a paraprofessional at the county cooperative for special education students in the Centerville school district. In 1995, Ms. Rhodes resumed her teaching career by teaching a kindergarten class at another elementary school in the Centerville school district. In 1996, she transferred to Center Elementary School and taught a 4th grade class. Ms. Rhodes graduated from the University of Oklahoma in 1994 with a Bachelor's degree in education.

Ms. Reynolds

Ms. Reynolds had been teaching music at the school site for two years. Ms. Reynolds' music class consisted of pre-kindergarten through 4th grade students at the school site. She taught 2nd grade for one year at another elementary school in the Centerville school district before transferring to the school site, and had been a kindergarten through 2nd grade music teacher for four years in another school district in Oklahoma. Ms. Reynolds graduated from Oral Roberts University in 1984 with a Bachelor's degree in music education.

Ms. Riley

Ms. Riley had been a reading teacher at Center Elementary School for 12 of the 19 years she had been a teacher. She taught a regular education class for five years in an

independent school district in Osage County and two years in a school district near the Centerville community. Ms. Riley graduated from the University of Tulsa in 1984 with Master of Arts degree in elementary education. She had a reading specialist certification at the elementary level.

Ms. Smith

Ms. Smith was the special education department chair at Center Elementary School. She had been teaching a special education class at the school site since 1984. Ms. Smith taught a learning disabilities class and had been the department chair since 1998. She had been serving students with disabilities at the school site by co-teaching with the general education teachers and being a resource or pull out teacher for students who needed more intensive remediation. Ms. Smith graduated from the University of Central Arkansas in 1977 with a Master of Education degree in special education. She had taught a general education class for five years in Arkansas and Oklahoma before coming to Center Elementary School in 1984.

Ms. Sharp

Ms. Sharp taught a special education class of emotionally disturbed students at Center Elementary School, and had been doing so for five years. All of Ms. Sharp's educational experience had been at the school site in the emotionally disturbed class. Ms. Sharp graduated from Northeastern State University in 1997 with a Bachelor of Science degree in special education.

Ms. Snyder

Ms. Snyder had taught a special education class for mentally retarded students for six years at Center Elementary School, and had been a teacher in the district for 16 years.

She began her career in education in 1986 by teaching a special education class at the cooperative in the Centerville school district. In 1991, Ms. Snyder transferred to another elementary school in the Centerville community and taught a special education class for mentally retarded students. In 1995, Ms. Snyder transferred to Center Elementary School to teach mentally retarded students. Ms. Snyder graduated from The University of Tulsa in 1986 with Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education.

Ms Simmons

Ms. Simmons taught a special education class for mentally retarded students at the school site. The special education class served pre-kindergarten through 4th grade students at Center Elementary School. She taught the mentally retarded class at the school site for three years and her entire educational experience had been at Central Elementary School. Ms. Simmons graduated from Northeastern State University in 1997 with a Bachelor of Science degree in speech pathology.

Ms. Shepherd

Ms. Shepherd had been teaching a special education class in the Centerville school district since 1984. She taught two years at the cooperative in the school district before coming to Center Elementary School, where she taught a special education resource lab class for one year. After taking one year off to have a child, she returned to Center Elementary School to teach a special education class during the following four years, then taught a 6th and 7th grade special education class at the junior high. The following year, she taught a special education class one half day at the junior high and one half day at another elementary school in the district. Ms. Shepard then taught a learning disabilities special education class for five years at the high school.

before transferring to Central Elementary School, where she taught a special education resource class. She had been teaching a special education resource class at Central Elementary School at the time of the study. Ms. Shepard graduated from Northeast Missouri State University in 1982 with a Bachelor's degree in education.

Ms. Shelton

Ms. Shelton was a Speech and Language Pathologist who had worked at Central Elementary School when inclusion was initiated in 1995. She went into general education classrooms and assisted the special education teachers in implementing inclusion. She was the Speech and Language Pathologist at the school site until 1997, when she resigned and went into private practice in the Centerville community. Ms. Shelton graduated from The University of Tulsa in 1994 with a Master of Science degree in speech pathology.

Ms. Neal

Ms. Neal was the parent of a student with disabilities who was included in general education classes at Center Elementary School, and her son was in the learning disabilities special education category in 1997 at the school site. Her son was included in Ms. Ray's general education class for two years at Center Elementary School until he was promoted to the higher level elementary school in the district.

Ms. Nash

Ms. Nash was the parent of a daughter who was a special education student at Center Elementary School from 1994 until 1998. Her daughter was a learning disabilities student who was included in general education classes at the school site. Her daughter

had assistance from special education teachers in reading, writing and spelling. Ms. Nash was employed as a paraprofessional in a special education class at the high school in the Centerville school district.

Ms. Nelson

Ms. Nelson was the parent of two sons who have participated in the inclusion program at Center Elementary School. One of her sons was eleven years old and in the 6th grade at another elementary school in the school district. He was a student at the school site from 1995 until 1999, and attended general education classes with assistance from special education teachers in reading and spelling. Ms. Nelson's other son was seven years old and had attended school in a special education class at Center Elementary School for two years. He was diagnosed as severely deaf. Her second son was placed in a special education class for the majority of the school day and included with general education students in assemblies, lunch, and recess.

Ms. Newman

Ms. Newman was the parent of a daughter who was in the learning disabilities special education category at the school site. Her daughter was placed in a special education category when she was in kindergarten at Center Elementary School.

Ms. Newman's daughter was a special education student from kindergarten through 4th grades and she attended Center Elementary School for five years during this time period. Ms. Newman's daughter was included in general education classes and was assisted by the learning disabilities teacher in math.

Ms. North

Ms. North was the parent of a son who was in the learning disabilities special

education category at Central Elementary School. Her son was ten years old and was in the 4th grade at the school site. He had participated in the inclusion program at Center Elementary School for two years. Her son was placed in a learning disabilities category and included in general education classes while in the second grade and received assistance from special education teachers in reading and spelling. Ms. North was a 1st grade teacher at Central Elementary and had taught for twelve years at the school site. Ms. North had taught 1st grade class eleven of the twelve years she has been at Center Elementary School. All of Ms. North's teaching experience had been at Center Elementary School. Ms. North graduated from Northeastern State University in 1991 with a Bachelor of Science degree in education.

Reporting

Data presentation is organized into categories which emerged from the data defined: (1) Perceptions, (2) Processes and (3) Products.

Perceptions were the belief system of each participant, how they perceived the change, who or what was responsible for the change, and why the change occurred at the school site.

Processes include how the participants thought inclusion was implemented at the school and by whom. The respondents discussed why they thought inclusion was implemented, the planning and support provided for the implementation of inclusion and the effectiveness of the facilitation of inclusion at the school.

Products involved what the participants in this study thought happened at the school. The participants gave their opinion of what was successful or unsuccessful about the inclusion program and what was needed to make the inclusion program successful.

After each quote a reference citation indicates the site location, the date of the data collection and the page where the quote may be found in the transcription of the interview.

Summary

Both principals interviewed held Master of Education degrees, as did the former Assistant Director of Special Services, and all three had extensive teaching experience before assuming administrative positions. Two of the ten general education teachers who participated in the study held Master of Education degrees. Of the five special education teachers interviewed, only Ms. Smith, the special education department chair, held a graduate level degree in education.

As may be expected, years of teaching experience among participants varied widely, from a few years to more than twenty, but two of the five special education teachers represented the least number of years of teaching experience. More than half of the teacher participants in the study graduated from the same university (Northeastern State University), originally founded as a teachers' college. Two of the parents interviewed were also employed by the school district.

In April of 2002, according to the Oklahoma State Department of Education, the average years of experience of administrators in Oklahoma was 21 years, the average years of experience for general education teachers was 8 years and the average years of experience for special education teachers was 11 years. The average age of administrators in Oklahoma was 46 to 50 years of age, the average age of general education teachers was 41 to 45 years of age and the average age of special education teachers was 41 to 45 years of age.

Table I is a summary of the background of participants in this case study.

TABLE I
BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF PARTICIPANTS

Principals	Education Level		Years of Experience	Years Experience at School Site	
Ms. Patrick	Master of Curriculum and Instruction		26 Years	4 Years	
Mr. Peters	Master of Education		24 Years	10 ½ Years	
Ms. Parker	Master of Education		26 Years	-----	
General Education Teachers	Subjects Taught	Grade Levels Taught	Education Level	Total Years of Experience	Years of Experience at School Site
Ms. Roberts	All Subjects	Kindergarten	Bachelor of Arts in Education	23 Years	13 Years
Ms. Russell	All Subjects	1 st Grade	Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education	14 Years	14 Years
Ms. Reed	All Subjects	2 nd Grade	Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education	26 Years	15 Years
Ms. Ray	All Subjects	3 rd Grade	Bachelor of Science in Education	20 Years	12 Years
Ms. Randall	All Subjects	4 th Grade	Bachelor of Science in Education	10 Years	10 Years
Ms. Richmond	All Subjects	4 th Grade	Master of Education in Reading Instruction	23 Years	23 Years

General Education Teachers	Subjects Taught	Grade Levels Taught	Education Level	Total Years of Experience	Years of Experience at School Site
Mr. Rice	Computer	All Grade Levels	Bachelor of Science in Education	15 Years	15 Years
Ms. Rhodes	Art	All Grade Levels	Bachelor of Science in Education	11 Years	4 Years
Ms. Reynolds	Music	All Grade Levels	Bachelor of Science In Music	19 Years	12 Years
Ms. Riley	Reading	All Grade Levels	Master of Arts in Elementary Education	19 Years	12 Years

Special Education Teachers	Subjects Taught	Grade Levels Taught	Education Level	Total Years of Experience	Years of Experience at School Site
Ms. Smith	Learning Disabilities	All Grade Levels	Master of Education in Special Education	23 Years	18 Years
Ms. Sharp	Emotionally Disturbed	All Grade Levels	Bachelor of Science in Special Education	5 Years	5 Years
Ms. Snyder	Mentally Retarded	All Grade Levels	Bachelor of Science Elementary Education	16 Years	6 Years
Ms. Simmons	Mentally Retarded	All Grade Levels	Bachelor of Science in Speech Pathology	3 Years	3 Years

Special Education Teachers	Subjects Taught	Grade Levels Taught	Education Level	Total Years of Experience	Years of Experience at School Site
Ms. Shepherd	Mentally Retarded	All Grade Levels	Bachelor of Science in Education	15 Years	2 Years
Ms. Shelton	Speech and Language	All Grade Levels	Master of Science in Speech Pathology	3 Years	3 Years

Parents	Category of Special Education Student	Gender of Student	Years at School Site	Number of Years in Special Education Program	Age(s) of Students When Enrolled at School Site
Ms. Neal	Learning Disabilities	Male	2 Years	5 Years	5 to 10 Years
Ms. Nash	Learning Disabilities	Female	4 Years	5 Years	5 to 10 Years
Ms. Nelson	Learning Disabilities	Male	5 Years	5 Years	5 to 10 Years
Ms. Newman	Learning Disabilities	Female	5 Years	2 Years	7 to 9 Years
Ms. North	Learning Disabilities	Male	5 Years	4 Years	5 to 10 Years

Perceptions

The participants in the study at Center Elementary School discussed what their perceptions of inclusion were, what procedures were followed in implementing inclusion and the changes in the inclusion program since inclusion was initiated at the school site. Perceptions about the change to inclusion and how the decision to make changes related to it varied, particularly in terms of knowing how the school decided to go about making the change. Respondents described how the inclusion program evolved and who they perceived to be primarily responsible for the change, as well as their perceptions of whether inclusion had been relatively successful or unsuccessful. The participants viewed inclusion at the school site as placing students with disabilities into general education classes with modifications and accommodations to meet their special needs. Many of the administrators, general education teachers, special education teachers and parents were apprehensive about the new inclusion program. The participants were asked to discuss the inclusion program at the school site, how their school decided to make changes related to inclusion and to describe the inclusion program after its first year of implementation and the inclusion program at the time of the study. The terms "collaborative" and "inclusion" were used by respondents interchangeably, and understood by most of them to have the same meaning.

When asked to describe their inclusion program, Ms. Roberts, a kindergarten teacher stated,

Up until 5 or six years ago, there weren't any special education kids, to my knowledge. The kids aren't treated any differently. The other kids don't even realize they are part of the kindergarten program, which is a little more

relaxed and free. They come and go and they don't even realize that part of time they're not in there. (2-13-02, 2).

Ms. Reed, a 2nd grade teacher said,

....with Ms. Smith, she has assigned me her children and I have them in the classroom all day. And they are good kids, they just need a lot of help and we work with them and they have been wonderful about either coming in to the classroom and helping me or I send them out. And I think it's very beneficial. (2-15-02, 2).

Ms. Ray, a 3rd grade teacher described her experience with inclusion as:

When we first started out it was years ago and they made the mistake of trying to put all the learning disabilities students in one classroom and that was too many. We usually had six or seven kids, and that was quite a few. So they tried, if you were doing collaborative, to keep you just with the LD students and spread the other health impaired students out somewhere else. (2-13-02, 1).

Ms. Randall, a 4th grade teacher stated,

In the past I've had 1-2, usually that were in the classroom that would kind of filter in and out through the day for different subject areas. This year I have quite a few more. I have a total of seven that travel with my class this year that are full placement. (2-14-02, 1).

When inclusion was initiated at the school site, volunteers were recruited from each grade level to be the designated regular education collaborative teacher.

Mr. Rice, a computer teacher, explained how the inclusion program had evolved with regard to his class:

When they first started it, I was in second grade and the special ed teachers would come down and we would visit about the child's needs and they would see if we could work out times for them to come in. Now, most all of the special ed kids are in a special class rotation, where they go to art, P.E., computers and music. They are included with regular ed kids. (2-13-02, 1).

The school's music teacher, Ms. Reynolds, stated:

I try to include them in the regular activities as much as possible, and find that almost all the students who come through my room can do at least part of the activities that I have going in the music classroom. (2-14-02, 1).

Teachers of art, music and computer, classes which virtually all special education students attended with regular education students, appeared to agree that the program had evolved over time into a more inclusive one. Ms. Shelton, a speech language pathologist, stated:

Actually, we started with a couple of students and it was successful and it slowly grew into a greater program. (2-28-02, 2).

Ms. Smith, a special education teacher and special education department chair described the evolution of the inclusion program. Speaking of the implementation of inclusion and experiences with it during the first year of implementation, she stated:

We were fortunate in that we had some wonderful teachers who did volunteer, without any incentives, I might add. There were no incentives whatsoever, other than just their love of children and their love of children of this type. The problem that year was that no one person really seemed to have the authority to say who would be included in those classrooms and who would not, so we had some

itinerant special ed teachers who would attempt to put students other than learning disabled students. For example, we had a Williams Syndrome child in the classroom; we had a traumatic brain injured student in the classroom in addition to all the others, then we also had our counselors and other special ed teachers wanting their students in the collaborative classrooms, simply because that was the classroom where they would get the help. So, we had an overloaded group of children, overloaded to the special ed and problem behavior type of classroom. We were fortunate that our teachers that we had secured as volunteers didn't revolt, so to speak. So, that first year wasn't a real successful year. (2-15-02, 3).

Ms. Smith perceived much of the difficulty in the first year of implementation as stemming from the numbers of special education students, the diversity of their needs and lack of specific guidelines limiting the number of special education students to be placed in collaborative classrooms. I asked her whether the special education students were placed with other teachers because the numbers of students prohibited putting them in one classroom. Her response was:

Unfortunately, that first year they did put them, to a large extent in the volunteer teachers' classrooms; those teachers had most all of the kids that were special ed or even problem behaviors, as I said. We'd have our ED teacher wanting to put ED students in there as well, and it was very difficult due to lack of education and lack of written guidelines, really. The following year [the Assistant Director of Special Services] wrote some guidelines that we should have no more than eight special ed students, eight average students and we should definitely have eight

top, or gifted students. So, the following year was a quite successful year, because we had something in writing that we could use as leverage. (2-15-02, 3).

The parents who were interviewed expressed their perceptions of how inclusion was implemented and who they believed responsible for the change to inclusion. Parents tended to view the change to inclusion positively, but differed in their perceptions of who was responsible for the change to inclusion. Three of five parents interviewed felt Ms. Smith, the special education department chair, was responsible for the change and was the primary decision-maker with regard to how it was implemented. However, two parents expressed the view that the principal was responsible for the change. Children of the parents interviewed included learning disabled students, as well as one student with ADD and two students who were identified as LD in reading. Ms. Nash described the reasons for her child's participation in the inclusion process:

She was tested, they gave her a test in first grade and she came back as LD. And a real classic case with a real high IQ but LD in reading. So we debated on whether to hold her back in first grade or put her in the collaborative program for the inclusion. All the research I found said to get tutors and basically the inclusion allowed for an aide to be there as an assistant for Ms. Smith. They worked with her on reading, they assisted her in writing, they did pull her from time to time for extra work with reading and extra assistance on some assignments and spelling. Of course, when you have trouble reading, you have trouble with spelling. (3-3-02, 1).

I asked Ms. Nash whether her child was mostly in a regular classroom with supports and she confirmed that was the case. Ms. Newman, another parent described her child:

She was tested LD when she was in the second grade. They tested because her reading wasn't up to her performance level and everything tested fine except math which she wasn't having trouble with at the time. (2-26-02, 1).

As was the case with both teachers and parents, the two principals and one former principal interviewed had differing views of who was responsible for implementing inclusion at the school site. Two felt that Ms. Smith, the special education department chair, was primarily responsible, while Ms. Patrick, the principal at the school, felt that the superintendent was most responsible for the inclusion program. She stated:

I would say the superintendent [was primarily responsible]. He was a reading specialist and so he knew curriculum and he had strong feelings about the special kids being included and not being special kids. (2-15-02, 9).

In describing the school's inclusion program, she said:

We have all the children out in the classroom as much as possible, even our emotionally disturbed children if they earn the right to be out in the regular classes and, of course, we encourage that. The children in Ms. Snyder's room, the EMH, TMH kids in there also are out in the classrooms. Everyone knows them, the teachers have no problems with them coming in their classrooms and in fact know the kids in there and will fight over "I want this one" or "I want that one." I don't think the children here have a preconceived idea about kids that are different. Kids come and go for various reasons in classrooms all the time. For

ESL, for gifted - those kids come and go, so if a child goes to the resource room or whatever nobody thinks too much about it. (2-15-02, 5).

Ms. Patrick discussed physical placement of the classrooms as part of the school culture and the effort to integrate special and regular education students and teachers. At the time she assumed the position of principal at the school, special education classrooms were "together" in one wing of the school. As part of the inclusion process, she decided to split the classrooms to provide a more integrated atmosphere. Her description of the resistance from special education teachers to the new arrangement supports the findings of Burrello and Sage (1979), as reported in the literature review. She stated:

When I started moving the special ed teachers out with regular ed, I anticipated them saying "Oh, thank you. This should have been done a long time ago" and that was not the response I received at all. The special ed teachers were quite upset. They even talked to the superintendent, saying "Can you get her to change her mind? We all need to stay together down here." But the superintendent said "No. This is the intent of inclusion and I think you're going to like it." I appreciated that comment. We just kept saying "You're going to like it and you're going to have a blast - you're going to love working with those teachers." The change was dramatic really. The whole climate of the building was positively affected by that. And, it was a big change. They were all in the same wing together lined up room after room and people referred to that as B wing when I first came here - B wing being synonymous with special ed. Now B wing is first grade, third grade, looping class, one special ed class and speech - I mean it's like a hodge-podge. (2-15-02, 5).

She also stated that when she assumed the position of principal, she made her views on inclusion clear to staff members, letting them know "right up front" that no one would be left out of the inclusion process. She said:

No one is going to be left out - we're all in this together. There is not "them" and "us" and parent-teacher conferences need to be both people if it's appropriate for the grade, subject and so forth. I think that once the word spread that that is my stand, then they could relax and do that. (02-15-02, 5).

Mr. Peters, the principal at the school at the time inclusion was implemented, expressed his view that Ms. Smith, the special education department chair, was primarily responsible for the change to inclusion. In describing the initial stages, he stated that in the time frame prior to implementation, Ms. Smith attended workshops on inclusion and the former Director of Special Services had approached principals to discuss the idea. He expressed his view that

The first year was rather successful. After that, some of the teachers saw that it was okay - that there wasn't going to be outsiders coming in. I think more of them were receptive when they saw basically it was going to be [Ms. Smith]. (2-22-02, 3).

Ms. Smith discussed her collaboration with Ms. Parker, the former Assistant Director of Special Services, in initiating the implementation of inclusion and identified her as primarily responsible for the change. Her statements supported Mr. Peters' perception of their collaboration in terms of laying the groundwork for inclusion prior to its actual implementation at the school. She stated:

Several years ago, Ms. Parker was instrumental in beginning that program, I believe (at another school). At that time (Ms. Parker) approached me and probably Mr. Peters at that time and wanted us to begin that and I was very enthusiastic about doing it. (02-15-02, 2).

Mr. Peters mentioned the growing numbers of identified students as part of the evolutionary process in implementing inclusion:

The numbers continued to grow to the point that, when I left there, we were needing more help because when the children saw that these other kids were getting a little help it wasn't really so bad. (02-22-02, 3).

When I asked him whether the teachers had become more comfortable with inclusion, he responded by saying:

Yes. There were still some that just weren't comfortable, but we could respect that because the school was large enough that we had several teachers per grade level. (02-22-02, 3).

The former Assistant Director of Special Services, Ms. Parker, agreed with Mr. Peters that Ms. Smith was primarily responsible for initiating the inclusion program, which seemed to contradict her statement that:

Well, I started the collaborative program, and then we kept adding more teachers and more teachers and took it all the way through the school. At that time I became kind of a prescriptive collaborative coordinator and moved into Special Services and was Assistant Director of Special Services in charge of federal programs. (02-22-02, 1).

In speaking of the mandate to implement inclusion, she stated:

We were already ahead of the game. We felt like that's where we wanted to go before it became mandated. (02-22-02, 4).

She also resonated with other respondents who mentioned increasing numbers of identified students as an integral aspect of the changes that occurred as the inclusion process evolved. She said:

All we've ever had is more and more and more kids. (02-22-02, 5).

Processes

Interviewees varied in their responses to the question of how and why inclusion was implemented, but the overall tendency was to identify the principal as the primary facilitator of the process. With regard to planning and staff development, the consensus among the participants was that in spite of attendance at workshops, not enough was done to prepare the staff for the change, and general education teachers in particular were apprehensive about how the change would be brought about. According to Ms. Russell, a first grade teacher, the reason for the inclusion program was simply a directive from Mr. Peters, the former principal:

I think it was kind of just "this is what's happening" and, I hate to say it that way, but "like it or lump it." "This is the new...this is the way it's going to be." From my recollection, everybody just kind of picked up and said "Okay. That's not a problem." (2-14-02, 2).

In speaking of how inclusion came about, Ms. Randall, a fourth grade teacher, stated:

I couldn't tell you just one thing...it is just known that this is what we will do, so it's from the top down. It's stated that this is how we will handle things and we

must make sure that we... whether it be field trips that we go on, or special programs, or special units, we must always think and consider those other children who follow your class to specials or at your grade level...you make sure you always bring them in whenever possible, and especially, like I said, on field trips, programs, performances. So, from the top down, we know that that is expected. (02-14-02, 3).

Ms. Neal, a parent, was uncertain about how the program came about and how her child was selected for the program. She said:

I'm not sure how he was selected to be put in that program. I don't know how they chose [him] to be in that class because I don't believe I brought his papers and evaluation up until school started, but they already placed him in that specific class. (3-5-02, 2).

When I mentioned the initiative by the State Department of Education to include LD students in the general classroom to Mr. Peters, former principal at the school, he acknowledged his awareness of the mandate.

In terms of how inclusion was implemented, Ms. Sharp, a teacher of emotionally disturbed children, mentioned the principal's efforts to integrate the special and regular education students and teachers by dispersing the special education classrooms throughout the building, rather than having them grouped together, and how she facilitated the integration process:

She really pushed to get the kids out as much as possible, to get everybody spread out so that we were all mixed in together. (02-13-02, 2). She has asked that all kids to the best of their ability be put in regular ed classes as much as possible for

social skills, for peer relations, as much as we can get them to do that. (02-13-02, 1).

Another special education teacher, Ms. Snyder, stated:

She made room for them in the classrooms. She facilitated the inclusion of kids in regular ed classes. (02-13-02, 2).

According to Ms. Simmons, a special education teacher, the principal, Ms.

Patrick, was a primary facilitator of the inclusion process. She said:

Our principal has been very, very supportive of inclusion. Like when we have faculty meetings or are getting ready for school, she always pushes to keep the special education teachers informed of what is going on and to include the ones that do go with their classes to specials - that kind of thing. (02-18-02, 2).

Ms. Riley, a reading teacher, mentioned Mr. Peters, the former principal, as a facilitator, and said:

...let teachers, like the regular classroom teacher, volunteer at each grade level, to work with the special ed teachers in the collaborative program. (02-15-02, 3).

Ms. Richmond, a fourth grade regular education teacher, appeared to agree with Ms. Riley's perception of Mr. Peters' facilitation of the inclusion process when she stated:

He basically let us do what we felt needed to be done. Basically, we said "This is what we need to do." He said "Fine, no problem." He allowed Ms. Smith and Ms. Ray, who was the third grade collaborative teacher to set the class. (02-14-02, 5).

A first grade teacher, Ms. Russell, felt the former Director of Special Services and a psychologist employed by the school system on a contract basis, helped facilitate the inclusion process:

I know [the former Director] and I can't remember his name...the psychologist...anyway, they came over and worked with [a teacher], with her classroom and with her, on helping her and her children with the inclusion. (02-14-02, 3).

In speaking of how inclusion came about, Mr. Peters, the former principal, said: Ms. Smith was the LD teacher in our building at the time. She, of course, was picking up on some of that - the special - so the other special ed people, through some of their publications and workshops, said "What do you think about this?" and I said "Bring me some more information." We had the guidelines to follow, but it was primarily, what was best for the kids. Then we sat down and started talking about placement of the children - how to work that out. If they were not going to be pulled, how are we going to place them in the room where the balance...I let her guide me a lot on that. I truly think the highest of her and she kept bringing me things to read or "I went to a workshop" and she came back and would tell me about it, share some notes with me or whatever, and then of course, [the former Director of Special Services] was visiting the principals all that time. (02-22-02, 2). She also provided lots of suggestions, guidelines on if a child's IEP read a certain way - maybe the regular ed teacher had tried certain things and we weren't getting anywhere. (02-22-02, 3).

The former Assistant Director of Special Services, Ms. Parker, also expressed her view of how the inclusion process was facilitated by Ms. Smith:

Ms. Smith was there. She was the LD resource or the LD lab teacher at the time, so she was naturally one that we would target for being the person that would start the collaborative program. Also, we were very careful to try not to put all special ed students in one teacher's class. That never would have worked. (02-22-02, 3).

Many teachers interviewed expressed the view that planning and staff development before inclusion was implemented was inadequate. General education teachers felt apprehensive about their lack of training and knowledge about the program, in spite of the fact that both the former and current principals, as well as the former Assistant Director of Special Services were viewed as supportive and as facilitators of opportunities to provide them with such training and knowledge. Lack of sufficient funding for the inclusion program was commented upon by a number of respondents. Ms. Smith, perceived by many respondents to have been responsible for the inclusion program, stated:

We did workshops. I did reading...outside reading. I stayed current in the field with professional organizations. I attend conferences and workshops, so I probably attended far more meetings and conferences, etc. than the regular ed teachers, although I did have the opportunity to take some regular ed teachers with me to some of these conferences. Some were good. Some I think...I've heard the comment of even kind of...sway the teacher in the opposite direction of what we wished...scared the teacher away, so to speak. (02-15-02, 7).

Ms. Smith's observations support Fullan (2001) description of how teachers (particularly regular education teachers) feel beleaguered by the demands placed upon them, in view of what appears to be an increasingly diverse student population and for which their college training and life experience may not have prepared them. Not surprisingly, the special education teachers interviewed felt they were better prepared for dealing with inclusion because of the training they had in college, outside of any specific training or staff development support offered by the school system prior to the implementation of inclusion. Ms. Snyder commented:

I did have some training...and just talking to other special educators...and just seeing the need for them to be out. I just feel like their social interaction is so important with them - more so than some other things. They just need to be there. Their parents want them there, you know. (02-13-02, 4).

Ms. Shepherd, a special education teacher, said:

We went to a conference in Denver in February in the following school year we did implementation. We also had a doctor from California...I can't recall her name...come in and do several days of inservice with us. Probably a total of ten days, I'm guessing. (02-13-02, 3).

Ms. Riley, the reading teacher, had positive views toward the inclusion process, but the primary training she received to prepare for the inclusion of special education students was obtained on her own initiative. She recalled:

I think we had some staff development. But, I know the summer before we started doing this I took a course about inclusion. (02-15-02, 4).

According to Ms. Richmond, a regular education fourth grade teacher:

We had a lot of training. We had people come in from...I believe it was Texas.

I'm not sure where...California. Some lady from California. They brought her in a couple of times. (02-14-02, 6).

Ms. Reynolds, the music teacher, stated a theme that others expressed: the way in which individual teachers implemented inclusion was often by what may be called the "trial and error" method:

There have been staff developments on inclusion. Lots of educational journals cover it, and I've gotten hold of some of those articles. My university had classes on it and I did a lot of reading through the university before I ever got into teaching. But, mostly, I would say that trial and error has been my best teacher. (02-12-02, 4).

Mr. Peters, the former principal, stated:

Through administrative workshops, publications and stuff, of course, two or more years prior to that we started hearing about it, reading about it. Primarily, it was Ms. Smith who would come to me and we could really sit down and talk. [The former Director of Special Services] started informing us about some of it. (02-22-02, 2). The Director of Special Services at the time would send us all these things to read and then have workshops for us. Because [Ms. Smith] could be trusted, she kept on top of things. Even though she was the authority, she was open to suggestions from the regular ed people, and I think that made it work. She had regular meetings with the teachers on "How is it going?" "What can I do?". (02-22-02, 4).

Though many of the interviewees who attended the workshop could not recall specifics about the workshops they attended, including names and where the workshop presenter was from, Ms. Parker, the former Assistant Director of Special Services, recalled the training sessions in detail, and felt the training was both extensive and the best the Special Services Department could offer at the time:

We had had several trainings. We had Dr. Lynn Cook from California. She came several times. We had Floyd Hudson from Kansas - we had Joyce Cofelt...she was just on strategies. We had her speak several times. We wanted to get everybody's approach. Everybody has a little different slant and we wanted to take everybody's slant, learn about it and develop our own that best fit our needs.

I mean, to start this, we needed to offer as much training as possible. We sent all our special ed teachers to everything they had to offer in the state at that time.

(02-22-02, 2).

Products

The dominant view among respondents was that inclusion at the school site was successful, both for special needs students and their regular education peers. In addition, the evidence suggested that the self-esteem and academic success of special needs students improved after the implementation of inclusion. The way in which inclusion developed at Center Elementary School appears to support the adhocratic theory of Skrtic, et al., (1995), cited in the literature; that traditional bureaucratic structures and a collaborative culture are fundamentally incompatible, and that inclusion is more likely to take root and flourish when there is a fluid exchange of ideas and decision-making is

shared. Comments such as the following were the dominant response to the question of whether inclusion had been successful at Center Elementary School:

I think it's successful. I think that as long as everyone is on the same page and I think I'm very fortunate to be in the school that I am because there is a lot of support. I'd say we have more support for it than we don't. (Ms. Simmons, 02-18-02, 4).

It was successful in my classroom. I'm not sure it was successful at every grade level because of time. Because I know in some grade levels they didn't have the same time spent together that we had, so I thought it was very successful. (Ms. Richmond, 02-14-02, 9).

I think it's been very successful for the special ed kids to be in the regular classroom. I think it's been good for the other kids too, to be exposed to them. (Ms. Riley, 02-15-02, 4).

I think with most children it would be very successful because it gives them all those additional peers. (Ms. Roberts, 02-13-02, 5).

I think it's successful because I think the little kids need to be in the classroom with all the other kids. (Ms. Reed, 02-15-02, 10).

From my own experience, I thought it was successful. I could see the growth in them from the beginning of the year to the end of the year and the confidence they seemed to gain through the year, and having that little bit of extra help, I thought, was well worth the time and what we put into the program. I thought it definitely did what we set out to do. Those kids felt successful and felt they were every bit a part of that class as anyone else was. (Ms. Ray, 02-13-02, 6).

Parents agreed with teachers that inclusion had been successful for their children.

For [my child] it was very successful. It's been very, very helpful. (Ms.

Newman, 02-26-02, 4).

Ms. North, both the parent of a special needs child and a first grade general education teacher, remarked:

I think the collaborative that they had, like in [my child's] class, I think that was successful. There were some problems, but I see problems in every classroom, including mine. (02-19-02, 5).

Administrators (Mr. Peters, former principal, Ms. Patrick, principal, and Ms. Parker, former Assistant Director of Special Services) all agreed with teachers and parents interviewed that the process of inclusion at Center Elementary School had been a successful venture. When I asked Mr. Peters whether he believed inclusion had been successful, his response was:

Yes, quite successful. (02-22-02, 6).

When I asked the same question of Ms. Parker, she stated:

In remembering the three elementary schools [at which inclusion was initiated] Center Elementary was the most successful. I remember at [a different school] the teacher was hesitant, wasn't embracing it like we wanted her to. (02-22-02, 7).

According to Ms. Patrick, principal at the school:

I think it's a work in progress. I don't think we're there yet, but, my, have we come a long way and because the teachers are starting to... I mean this year even

more than last year...I mean each year I've seen changes. I keep going back to culture, but that is just so important in a building. (02-15-02,10).

Responses to the question of whether the change to inclusion was relatively difficult or easy varied. Though most participants didn't appear to feel the change had been particularly difficult, a significant number qualified their response and two of the administrators, Ms. Patrick and Ms. Parker, felt the change was relatively difficult. Mr. Peters, the principal at the school when inclusion was initiated, responded to this question by stating:

In my memory it wasn't all that difficult. I attribute it to the way it was handled by Ms. Smith, guiding me, guiding the others. (02-22-02, 6).

Teachers and parents who expressed the view that the change to inclusion was relatively easy responded with comments which include the following:

The change to inclusion has been easy for me. All of the teachers have been very cooperative and worked well with the special ed kids. (Ms. Sharp, 02-13-02, 5).

Well, not knowing it the other way, for [my child] it wasn't an easy decision, but I think the transition seemed to go pretty smooth. (Ms. Nash, 03-04-02, 6).

I think it was very, very easy. (Ms. Neal, 03-05-02, 5).

For me, it wasn't difficult, because I was used to working with the teachers anyway. (Ms. Riley, 02-15-02, 4).

All students come up with great surprises and you have to have so much energy. Every class is different, every child is different, and all children have special needs - regular education or special education - and so I really can't say that my job is harder because of inclusion. (Ms. Reynolds, 02-14-02, p. 4).

Well, of course, change is difficult. It always has its moments. But I felt that it was rather easy for me. (Ms. Shelton, 02-28-02, 4).

I wouldn't say difficult. You just have to do things differently, think differently. But again, I was fresh out of college, too, and that's what I had been taught, and so, to me, it was not that difficult. (Ms. Randall, 02-14-02, 5).

From my perspective, it was just another change. Special ed is always constantly evolving and I've just looked at it as another positive step - another challenge.

Exciting. No, it was not a problem to me. (Ms. Smith, 02-15-02, 8).

Some respondents indicated they felt the change to inclusion was relatively easy, but qualified their response in such a way that shed light upon the reasons why they felt that way.

Ms. Russell, a first grade teacher, said:

I think the change itself wasn't difficult...no one has a problem with having a special needs child in their room, as long as they get support, from everywhere.

Ms. Roberts, a kindergarten teacher, responded by saying:

Before I got my first child, I think it was very hard. After I got my first child, it wasn't nearly what I had created in my mind, so it really isn't a hard thing to do.

(02-13-02, 4).

According to a fourth grade teacher, Ms. Richmond:

I think it depended on the grade level and the teacher. For me, it wasn't that difficult. I'm not going to say it was always easy, because there were some struggles, but I always kept in mind that the children needed the adaptations. (02-14-02, 9).

Ms. Snyder, a special education teacher commented:

I would probably characterize it more as frustrating than hard or easy. Because it's not that hard to get them in the slots...I mean, to find the slots...it's just finding the time and everything to get them in there. But then, frustrating. There just aren't enough hours in the day. (02-13-02, 1).

In contrast to the majority of respondents, Ms. Parker, former Assistant Director of Special Services and Ms. Patrick, current principal at the site, expressed their views that the transition to inclusion was difficult.

When I asked Ms. Parker whether the change to inclusion at Central Elementary was difficult or easy, she said:

Always difficult. I've never known one to be easy. Even at the beginning when we had the principal wanting it, I would never say that a change to a new program in special education was easy. (02-22-02, 6).

Ms. Patrick responded to the question by saying:

I would not call it just another change. It was difficult. As a new principal coming in, not just new to this building and new to this district, but new to the state, I had a lot to overcome because I was looked at as an outsider. (02-15-02, 9).

When asked about their views on what is needed to make inclusion a successful process, most participants indicated they felt additional training, more time for IEP meetings and improved communication was needed to improve the process and support the success they feel has already been achieved. Many also felt that more personnel was needed to fully accomplish the goals of inclusion.

Ms. Snyder, a special education teacher at the site, stated:

I think probably...I know a lot more of my kids could be out if I had the time in their schedules. (02-13-02, 4).

Ms. Smith, the special education department chair, and a teacher that a number of respondents identified as primarily responsible for the inclusion program at Central Elementary School, said:

To do the programs with all of those categories, it just...we would just need more personnel for it to work effectively, in my opinion. (02-15-02, 6).

Ms. Smith also stated:

It should be in writing, so that the principals would have this to fall back on.

They really didn't have any guidelines. (02-15-02, 6).

She expressed her concerns with regard to insufficient personnel and funding:

At the top of the list would be more personnel, and, of course, it follows that you would have to have more funding. And...have some written policies so that everybody knows, and is on the same page, and include your principal. (02-15-02, 8).

She further commented:

More training. And include plan time. That's always a big thing - to figure out a way for your regular ed and special ed teachers to plan their program together. (02-15-02, 9).

Another special education teacher, Ms. Shepherd, expressed her views about the attitudes of teachers and the need for teachers who support the values of inclusion:

The thing I've noticed most that hinders, is you get a teacher who is unwilling to make modifications or adaptations, and that's very difficult. What I found is that you need teachers that are flexible, whose personalities would mesh with yours and who were kid advocates. (02-13-02, 2).

Ms. Simmons, another special education teacher, said:

I think, maybe, to have some training for the regular ed teachers...just a little more understanding. (02-18-02, 4).

Ms. Nelson, the parent of a special needs child, expressed the view that greater communication is needed between parents and school staff to make inclusion a success:

I think it's very important to listen to the wants of the children and let them know it's been realized, and possibly, deal more directly with the parents if there is an issue that needs to be dealt with. (02-21-02, 4).

She further commented:

The most important thing is communication between parents and teachers - just keeping the communication lines open and I really want to know ahead of time if there's a problem or issue. (02-21-02, 5).

Ms. North, both a first grade teacher at the school and the parent of a special needs child, stated:

I would say more teacher training...especially for the teachers who are actually going to have the students...There's so much more, I think, that most teachers would do to prepare. And, I think that should be, early notice if possible. And parent/teacher conferences, maybe even more conferences with teachers for parents with special ed children, and workshops. (02-19-02, 6).

One of the second grade, general education teachers expressed her support, both for special needs children and for her colleague, Ms. Smith. She said:

The only thing that I have seen is that Ms. Smith needs more people, more help, because I don't think she has prescriptive reading any longer and that's a big concern for me. I think we're supplementing and we're doing the best we can, but I think if they could have the prescriptive also, it would be very beneficial to the children. (02-15-02, 3).

She also mentioned the growing numbers of special needs children being identified. When I mentioned the fact that others felt the numbers and need was growing, she said:

Yes they do. They just grow every year and these babies need all the help they can get. (02-15-02, 3).

She felt (with many of her colleagues) that more staffing is needed to adequately serve children with special needs in an inclusive environment.

Ms. Randall, a fourth grade general education teacher, felt that peers were very important to successful inclusion. She said:

Placement in the classroom. Making sure they had - I felt they had a good, reliable person sitting next to them - a good peer - that they were around. (02-14-02, 4).

She also felt that training and information about "what works and doesn't work" would be beneficial to creating an environment that supports inclusion.

Ms. Russell, a first grade general education teacher, also emphasized the importance of training. When I asked whether she had any suggestions for training, or

other ways to support the inclusion initiative, she described the experience she was having with a special needs child who was having difficulty with the Saxon math program. When I mentioned there was a special ed version of it, she said:

Well, you mentioned training. He's coming into that and he hasn't had the prerequisite skills. So, for me, it's "Okay. What do I do? How do I help him get there?" And, I need some more training on that...take them where they are...how do I accommodate for that, yet make them still feel part of the class? (02-14-02, 6).

Ms. Riley, the reading teacher, felt:

I think maybe more training before it's implemented, before you have people go into it, you might have them volunteer for training. (02-15-02, 4).

The music teacher at Center Elementary, Ms. Reynolds, expressed concerns about the notebooks which special education students are required to carry between classes, and how that might be counter-productive to inclusion. She said:

The only concern I have probably isn't as much a part of inclusion as it is just the way we do things [at Center Elementary] but that's the notebooks. The documentation is great, the communication from the special ed teachers is great...but those kids feel conspicuous carrying those folders. Some of them do, and some of them...I think they would love to hide those folders or burn them, or something. Not because they're afraid of what I'm going to write in them, but because the other kids see them with those folders and that's a standout. (02-14-02, 4-5).

The computer teacher, Mr. Rice, felt that more support from the Special Services department would assist him in creating an environment which would be more inclusive. He said:

I think what would be helpful, is just, for instance, if maybe at the beginning of the year, someone from Special Services could come over and just visit with the elective teachers. Like...this is what we expect from you. Because I still question myself at times. "Am I doing the right thing for the kids?" (02-13-02, 3).

Ms. Rhodes, an art teacher, felt excessive paperwork is a significant impediment to the actual implementation of inclusion. She said:

Probably what hinders [the inclusion process] the most is all the paperwork. There's just a tremendous amount of paperwork and I'm forever getting things from the special ed teachers and...bless their hearts...they must spend all night on paperwork. (02-15-02, 4).

Mr. Peters, former principal at the site, focused his response to the question of what is needed to make inclusion successful on the experience he recalled, and challenges faced by the person he felt primarily responsible for the change; Ms. Smith, the special education department chair. He said:

I think that probably one of the things that would be most helpful...if it's a building that size...that that person have, the special ed person, have someone to help them to visit with people, do paperwork, help with organization...that sort of thing. (02-22-02, 6).

Ms. Parker, the former Assistant Director of Special Services (who also felt Ms. Smith was primarily responsible for the change to inclusion) discussed the need for communication, a supportive principal, and for making special education teachers feel they are an integral part of the school culture. She said:

We developed our own forms, as far as we felt like there were two key ingredients, and #1 was communication. (02-22-02, 3).

I can tell you from being on the other side of the fence now, I think it's very important for the principal to be supportive of a collaborative program and modeling is a key. (02-22-02, 5).

Making sure that special ed teacher feels a part of that faculty... which, I think, is the key in any situation. (02-22-02, 5).

And then it starts at the top... you've got to have that principal and those counselors... everybody solidly believing it and supporting you. Supporting both sides, not just the regular ed or not just the special ed, but both sides together. I think a key to that would be communication. (02-22-02, 8).

If a principal models special education, then so will everybody else. (02-22-02, 9).

Ms. Patrick, principal at the site, mentioned personnel and funding as critical to a successful inclusion program. When I asked whether she had any suggestions for improving the inclusion program, she stated:

More personnel... If the government would fund special ed, even not fully, but double what they do now, then I could project we would have more help in the

classrooms. We would have more consultation time for the regular ed teachers - more time to educate them. (02-15-02, 11).

Summary

Participants in the study felt that the inclusion initiative at Center Elementary School had been a success, and that both the principal and former principal were primary facilitators of the process. Ms. Smith, the principals, and the former Assistant Director of Special Services were all identified as assuming leadership roles and were perceived to be primarily responsible for the change to inclusion.

General and special education teachers were supportive of each other's efforts, and were observed by the principal to have begun to see each other as belonging to the same, integrated school culture. She attributed a great deal of the change in school culture to her decision to physically disperse special education classrooms throughout the entire building, and provide more opportunities for general and special educators to attend the same workshops and professional development activities.

Though many participants viewed lack of funding, personnel and training as impediments to the inclusion process, they believed inclusion was successfully achieved in spite of these and other obstacles. Principals and teachers who participated in the study expressed appreciation for the support they received from the Department of Special Services and its former Assistant Director, Ms. Parker.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

To analyze the data presented in Chapter III, it is necessary to examine how it relates to two propositions underlying the theoretical framework. First, Fullan's (1991) assertion that six organizational themes represent activities necessary for positive, substantive change to occur, and that principals are the main agents or blockers of change. The degree to which individual participation at the site contributed to the meaningful change to an inclusion program must be determined. Second, the degree to which the teachers' participation in the change followed or did not follow the four perspectives on the constructivist approach to change posited by Lambert, et al. (1995) must be determined. Therefore, this analysis will center around Fullan's (1991) six components essential for change and Lambert, et al.'s (1995) four perspectives on the constructivist approach to change.

Theoretical Framework: Fullan

According to Fullan (1991, 2001) meaningful change is created by a simultaneous effort from the top down and bottom up. However with regard to principals and their leadership functions, he assumed a position more characteristic of a hierarchical "top down" perspective, "stating that the main agents (or blockers) of change are the principals... the principal is the person most likely to be in a position to shape the organizational conditions necessary for change" (Fullan, 1991, p. 76) through engagement in six activities that directly impact change. According to Fullan (1991) principals engage in six activities that directly impact change: (1) have and articulate a vision, (2) provide evolutionary planning, (3) take and allow initiative and empowerment,

(4) provide staff development and assistance, (5) provide monitoring and problem coping and (6) bring about restructuring. In the sections that follow, data supporting these constructions will be presented.

Have and Articulate a Vision

The teachers believed that the principals facilitated and supported the inclusion program when it was initiated at the school site. Ms. Patrick and Mr. Peters created a shared vision that enabled the teachers to achieve the goals of inclusion through the process of implementing the change to inclusion. Both principals created a vision of inclusion based on egalitarian values, which provided the impetus for creating a successful inclusion program. Ms. Randall summarized her view of the principal's (Mr. Peters) vision by saying "I couldn't tell you just one thing...it was known that this is what we will do, so it's from the top down. It's stated that this is how we will handle things and we must make sure...we must always think and consider those other children...you make sure you always bring them in whenever possible, so from the top down we know what is expected." (02-14-02, 2). According to Ms. Rice, "We were encouraged to work with the special ed teachers and accommodate any way that we could. Mr. Peters was supportive in that way." (02-13-02, 2). Teachers felt that the principal, Ms. Patrick, made inclusion a priority and understood that she had an inclusionary vision for the school. That vision was concretely demonstrated when she desegregated the special education classrooms and dispersed them throughout the building. Ms. Roberts commented: "The principal I have now is real...she has a heart for that, I think. And, it's just a real priority with her." (02-13-02, 2).

Fullan (1993) posits that each professional involved in educating students are key players in the change process. The general education teachers who volunteered to teach in inclusive classrooms were key to developing a successful inclusion program at Center Elementary School, and the teachers' perceptions of the principal's vision had a substantial effect on the vision becoming integral cultural change. Ms. Patrick encouraged both professional and social interaction between special education and general education teachers, and sought to diminish the parallel culture that had existed prior to the implementation of the inclusion initiative. She noted: "I do know that because the special ed teachers work really closely with the regular ed teachers to say how much can he, let's try this, he can handle that, let's add some more. I'll tell you frankly that the special ed teachers specifically pick which teacher they want those kids to go to and I think it has to be done that way. But it took efforts on both parts, it wasn't...I could see special ed teachers really trying to communicate with regular ed teachers for the first time. (02-15-02, 3). According to Ms. Roberts, "And everybody just kind of got together and worked together. It wasn't like one person did all. We worked together. We had the backing of the special ed, we had the backing of the other teachers, we had the backing of the principal. (02-13-02, 3).

Evolutionary Planning

When the change to inclusion was initiated at Center Elementary School, the principal allowed the change process to evolve in a natural way. This adaptability enabled the principal and teachers to take advantage of unexpected developments and opportunities to create a flexible inclusion program that was modified as necessary to

meet the needs of the teachers and students with disabilities. Ms. Smith stated "The biggest thing that Mr. Peters did, and of course, Ms. Patrick does as well, we're very fortunate, is that they allowed us to do what we needed to do in terms of student placement and just whatever we needed to do." (2-15-02, 5). Ms. Richmond described how the inclusion program evolved and Mr. Peters' facilitation of the program by encouraging and supporting adaptability: "He basically let us do what we felt needed to be done. Basically, we said, "This is what we need to do." "Fine, no problem." He allowed Ms. Smith and Ms. Ray, who was the third grade collaborative teacher to set the class. They basically went through and said "We're going to put these students in here" because they wanted to make it a good mix." (02-14-02, 5).

Teachers also demonstrated a high degree of adaptability as the program evolved and supported each other in the change effort. Ms. Russell said "Probably, in every case with children I've had, just the special ed teacher that they were coming from. I would run to them and they would come to me with lots of help. Ms. Smith, Ms. Snyder, were very wonderful about helping us with what we needed to do to be prepared." (02-14-02, 3). Ms. Reed echoed the view of Ms. Russell with regard to the support teachers gave each other and talked about the overall climate at the school. She said "I think we have a good climate here. We're just real supportive of each other. I guess that comes from the whole school, though. The teachers are supportive of each other." (02-15-02, 6).

Take and Allow Initiative and Empowerment

The principals allowed the teachers who implemented the change to inclusion to facilitate the process through initiative-taking and empowerment. The principal relied on

the initiative of the teachers to create and mold the change process, and the teachers were aware both principals relied on their judgment and felt empowered to make day-to-day decisions which affected the way in which inclusion at the school developed. Both principals were concerned about the difficulties teachers encountered during implementation and were supportive of their efforts. Ms. Patrick said "But, and I'll tell you frankly, that the special ed teachers specifically pick which teacher they want those kids to go to and I think it has to be that way." (02-15-02, 3). Mr. Peters described his interactions with Ms. Smith and the other teachers involved in implementing inclusion. He said "Ms. Smith was very good to keep me informed. I would go around and ask some of the teachers that were included, 'How are you with this?' 'Is it all that it was built up to be?' 'Are you comfortable?' 'Do we need to consider any modifications?' Every one of them said, 'Well, Ms. Smith is working with us. She is very supportive, respects that we do things a little bit differently, but made it fit.' Ms. Smith was very receptive to me. When I said 'Ms. Smith, tell me what is going on, I question this or I question that, or I've heard this or I've heard that.' If she didn't know, she would find out." (02-22-02, 3). Ms. Reynolds' description of the reciprocal nature of the interactions between teachers and the way in which they assumed initiative in implementing the inclusion initiative was typical. She said "I try to communicate with them (the special education teachers) a lot in letting them know how the student is doing in my classroom and they have always been very supportive. If I need to communicate with a parent and I'm not, through notes, getting any response, they always are there to offer to step in and help." (02-14-02, 3).

The teachers who contributed significantly to the goal of inclusion were empowered by the principals to make suggestions and determine how to make the change

to inclusion. According to Ms. Smith, the special education department chair, "They [Mr. Peters and Ms. Patrick] weren't trying to micromanage the inclusion program or control it. They trusted us to do what we needed to do and were supportive of it." (02-15-02, 5). Ms. Ray said "He [Mr. Peters] was very supportive of it and kind of let us lead the way, whatever we found, trial and error-whatever worked, worked and he just kind of monitored and let us do what we needed to do. But he was always supportive of the program, I felt. (02-13-02, p.4). In speaking of the way in which Ms. Patrick interacted with teachers, Ms. Snyder said "Well, she guides you enough, but she doesn't hinder you. If you have an idea, we'll run it by her, and our 'whys' and 'why not's' and 'we really think this will work' and she will give us her input, but she trusts our judgment, because we do know the kids." (02-13-02, p. 4).

Provide Staff Development and Assistance

The professional development and in service training sessions enabled the teachers to develop and learn new concepts, skills and behaviors about the inclusion initiative at Center Elementary School. The general education teachers believed they were supported by feedback and guidance from the special education teachers. This feedback and support was especially critical when the inclusion program was implemented at the school site. Ms. Smith stated "We had workshops. I did reading...outside reading. I stayed current in the field with professional organizations. I attend conferences and workshops, so I probably attended far more meetings and conferences and such with regular ed teachers, although I did have the opportunity to take some regular ed teachers with me to some of these conferences." (02-15-02, 7). Ms. Patrick's ongoing efforts to provide staff members with information and help provide

them the assistance needed to implement the inclusion program was commented upon by Ms. Sharp: "There's different books and publications and [Ms. Patrick] is always constantly reading and she sends us copies of things she has read and we sign off that we have read them and she sent us a lot of pamphlets and copies of publications on inclusion, all of that has helped. She's keeping us up to date. (02-13-02, 4). Ms. Shepherd spoke of staff development, saying "We went to a conference in Denver in February, in the following school year we did implementation. We also had a doctor from California- I can't recall her name- come in and do several days of in service with us. Probably a total of ten days. (02-13-02, 3). Ms. Shelton provided a description which is indicative of the types of staff development opportunities which were provided: "We had certain workshops that we attended. We visited other schools. We had presentations here at [Center Elementary School] from other schools. And then, of course, trial and error. We had a lot of readings to do." (02-28-02, 3).

The principal at the school site when inclusion was implemented was receptive to input from special education teachers who he believed were knowledgeable about techniques and educational practices necessary to include children with disabilities in general education classes . The teachers felt free to voice their concerns to the principal, and felt their needs would be met by the administrators at the school. Ms. Patrick stated "That's a good setup when the principal can learn from the experts in your building because I can not be an expert on everything, I can't, I would love to be, and special ed is not my background and I want them to ... and I really have learned a lot from them. They are willing to go to workshops. (02-15-02, 6).

Ms. Parker, former Assistant Director of Special Services, was instrumental in assisting the principals to provide opportunities for staff development in inclusion. She said "But, then the other thing that we did was to use that time and we spent an hour and we used that to teach a new strategy, model a new strategy because we had lots of things we could do and we felt like it was easier in that setting. And the regular ed teachers seemed very appreciative and I think that helped. (02-22-02, 7).

Provide Monitoring and Problem Coping

The success of the inclusion program at Center Elementary School depended heavily on establishing ways to transfer information to the principals and teachers about the new program. The administrators in the Centerville school district provided opportunities to learn about the new inclusion program and visit school districts that had implemented inclusion. Many of the teachers believed that the opportunities to share information were beneficial in the implementation of the inclusion initiative. Ms. Sharp described one of the ways in which information was transmitted between teachers: "We have an accommodation plan that we send with each student that shows the regular ed teacher exactly what their disability is, what they need to work on and how to modify for that particular student to help them succeed in the classroom. We have meetings with teachers." (02-13-02, 3). Ms. Snyder said: "And then [Ms. Patrick] encouraged us and then actually doing it (inclusion). I mean putting your kids out and working with the regular ed teachers and finding things that work and constantly rechanging things to where it does work better." (02-13-02, 4). Ms. Roberts described one of the primary ways in which information was communicated, which enabled participants in the inclusion program to adjust to the needs of individual children, and continuously monitor

and create problem-solving solutions. She said: "When I get a child now, I will go straight to the teacher and I'll say 'Okay, how do I do this with this child?' and she will just lay it out this, this and this, and they can do this. So when they come to my class and they pull 'I can't cut it.' I'll say, 'Excuse me, I think you can.' You have to work together. (02-13-02, 4).

Restructuring

The staff at Center Elementary School created a new organizational structure that reflects the inclusion program envisioned by the administrators and principals at the school site. The continuous interactions between the general education teachers and special education teachers allowed the change to inclusion to be an ongoing process that modified the structure of the change initiative, and to be further modified as necessary to meet the needs of the participants in the change process. Ms. Snyder commented: "Some of them that, when they come in, you think 'We're going to have to go with this kid all year.' And then, in a couple of months they're on their own and their parents and teachers are amazed. But that's ...that's the main thing and is the reason for the success of the inclusion program." (01-13-02, 3). Ms. Simmons described the change in school climate as the result of school-wide support of the inclusion initiative, by saying: "I think that as long as everyone is on the same page and I think that I'm very fortunate to be in the school that I am because there is a lot of support [for inclusion]. I'd say that we have more support for it than we don't. I think it has been successful." (02-18-02, 4). Ms. Shelton described the evolution of the program, and commented: "Well, actually we started with a couple of students and it was successful and it slowly grew into a greater program. I enjoyed it and I saw a lot of success in my kids that I was responsible for."

(02-28-02, 2). Ms. Reed noted the effect on general education students as the school evolved into a structure that transformed the school culture into one of acceptance of special education students: "I think it's been very successful here and as a matter of fact when the other kids get to go, the regular kids will say they want to go out. They always do. I think we have a good climate here. We're just real supportive of, I guess that comes from the support of the whole school, though. The teachers are supportive of each other." (02-15-02, 6).

The principals and teachers believed that the change process transformed the educational program at the school to an educational environment that included children with disabilities in general education classes and all activities at the school site, allowing for their successful participation. Many of the teachers discussed the positive nature of the changes at the school regarding the acceptance and increased self esteem of both the special education students and the general education students. Ms. Nelson said: "I feel that it's been successful. I think the children need, on both sides, the children without disabilities or deficiencies need exposure to the children with disabilities. I think it's more fair to both groups of children." (02-21-02, 4). Ms. Ray described her view on the effect on special needs children as the school changed to an inclusive, desegregated culture: "From my own experience, I thought it was successful. I thought it was successful and the kids that I had, I could see the growth in them from the beginning of the year to the end of the year and the confidence they seemed to gain through the year and having that little bit of extra help, I thought, was well worth the time and what we put into the program. I thought it definitely did what we set out to do. Those kids felt successful and felt they were every bit a part of that class as anyone else was." (02-13-02, 6). Ms.

Russell described the difference in the inclusion program and the school culture she observed years earlier in her teaching career: "I think it's [inclusion] a good thing. I think we didn't do that when I first started fourteen years ago, they didn't participate with us in programs. I think it's really a good thing because they developed those attachments to the other kids that they don't normally have and so I think we do need to make sure we continue to do that." (02-14-02, 5).

Summary

Fullan's (1991) six activities that directly impact change were present in this explanatory case study. The six activities: leadership and vision, evolutionary planning, initiative-taking and empowerment, staff development and assistance, monitoring and problem coping and restructuring were utilized by the principals to facilitate the change process at the school. All of the respondents indicated that the change to inclusion at Center Elementary School had been successful in varying degrees. The study determined that there were several different main agents of change. The principal and former principal, the special education department chair who was also the learning disabilities teacher, the Assistant Director of Special Services, the superintendent and the entire staff of special education teachers at the school site were each named as the person or persons most responsible for the change to inclusion. The principal facilitated the change to inclusion by creating the structures needed to implement the inclusion program. The change was allowed to evolve and be transformed into a viable and workable change initiative. The teachers were empowered by the structures of the change process to modify the change process as needed to meet the needs of the participants in the change process. The general education teachers believed that the support necessary to implement

the change process was provided by the special education teachers. This was especially evident in the initiative-taking and empowerment and monitoring and problem-coping activities. All of the teachers felt that the change to inclusion had a positive effect on both the special education and the general education students. The interactions and feedback between the general and special education teachers at the school site enabled the change to inclusion to become a new and enduring educational practice was considered by participants to have been successful at Center Elementary School.

Theoretical Framework: Lambert, et al.

The constructivist perspective of Lambert, et al. (1995), is based on a view of intelligence that focuses on subjective aspects of learning, stemming from complex interactions between socially derived communications and experiences, reflection on those experiences, engagement with "big" ideas and by recognizing and forming new patterns. In the constructivist view of Lambert, et al., leadership roles may be assumed by anyone involved in the educational process, including teachers, students and parents.

Leadership

Responses from the participants in the study support the constructivist view of leadership as posited by Lambert, et al. (1995). Though principals were key facilitators of the inclusion process, administrators, teachers and parents were also leaders and agents of change. Through an interactive process of contributing and sharing knowledge, principals, teachers, administrators and parents all made valuable contributions to the change process.

Though the mandatory nature of the change to inclusion influenced decisions about initiating and implementing it, both the former and current principals at the school

site were supportive of the change and looked for ways to make it successful, assuming roles as leaders and facilitators. Mr. Peters, the former principal, made it clear to the staff that inclusion would be implemented. However, he actively sought input from the staff and allowed them to be full participants in the decision making process with regard to how it would be accomplished. He particularly relied on Ms. Smith, the special education department chair, for ideas and guidance about how implementing the change would occur. He also sought input and relied on Ms. Parker, the former Assistant Director of Special Services, for guidance on issues related to staff development and training. Volunteers were recruited at each regular education grade level to implement the change. He pointed to Ms. Smith as the primary agent of change to inclusion, and commented "We had some really good discussions about it. [The former Director of Special Services] started informing us about some of it. Primarily, it was Ms. Smith who would come to me and we could really sit down and talk, and be honest with each other...not always agree, but come out with a solution that we were willing to try to see what would happen.... Ms. Smith would come and discuss some of the regular ed home room type teachers and say 'What do you think about this as far as approaching them to work in this capacity?' I let her guide me a lot on that. I truly think the highest of her, and she (along the line) kept bringing me things to read or 'I went to this workshop' and come back and tell me about it, share some notes with me, or whatever, and then, of course, [the former Director of Special Services] was visiting with all the principals at that time." Mr. Peters also solicited input from the regular education teachers who volunteered to be the collaborative teacher at each grade level, and attempted to maintain

open lines of communication about how they were handling the change and whether they were comfortable with it.

He discussed the critical leadership role of Ms. Smith, in her capacity as special education department chair. He said:

"The special ed teacher would have to be able to...especially if it was a large building, guide the principal a little bit because even though the principal is supposed to be the ultimate authority over all these things, I felt at the time that I couldn't be all knowing. Even though [the former Director of Special Services] would send us all these things to read and then have workshops for us...still, if you're not a hands on, doing it every day...I wasn't comfortable making all those decisions on my own."

Mr. Peters also said "I depended highly on people over there, whether it was regular or special ed or whatever...speech...they were very good to me, to say 'This is what's coming, or these are the changes. We went to this workshop, we found out this is coming, we better start thinking about this now. That was helpful."

Ms. Patrick, the current principal at the school, built upon the foundation laid by Mr. Peters, Ms. Smith, and the other teachers and parents who initiated the inclusion process. Though she initially met with considerable resistance, particularly from the special education teachers, she dispersed their classrooms throughout the building, and felt that action was the single most important change she made. She remarked upon the impact the dispersal eventually had on the culture of the school, saying "I think the regular ed teachers more appreciated the special ed teachers and what they do. The

interaction among the teachers was almost immediate...you can even see it socially...that culture in a school is so important."

It is clear that in addition to the leadership role assumed by both principals, the former Assistant Director of Special Services played a vital role in the development of inclusion at the school site. A key feature of the way inclusion developed at Center Elementary was the reciprocal way in which participants sought to develop their own knowledge of the process through open-ended interaction with others. Ms. Parker was a source of encouragement and support, both for teachers and principals at the school site. She said "I think it's very important for the principal to be supportive of a collaborative program and modeling is a key." She also stressed the importance of the principal making special education teachers feel a part of the faculty, which echoed Ms. Patrick's emphasis on the importance of school culture in making inclusion successful. Ms. Parker felt communication was essential, saying "It starts at the top. You've got to have that principal, those counselors, everybody solidly believing it and supporting you. Supporting both sides - not just the regular ed or not just the special ed - but both sides together and I think a key to that is communication."

Ms. Smith, the special education department chair, clearly emerged as a leader in implementing inclusion at the school. Mr. Peters emphasized his reliance on her and identified her as the person primarily responsible for the change to inclusion, as did Ms. Parker. She understood that others, including the principal, other teachers and parents, relied on her expertise in the field of special education and for guidance about the way in which the change should be implemented. The reciprocal nature of the communications between Ms. Smith and the principals was made clear in her statement that the principals

"...allowed us to do what we needed to do in terms of student placement, and just whatever we needed to do."

Regular education teachers also played a significant leadership role in implementing inclusion by volunteering to be collaborators in the program. Though many of them felt some apprehension about the change and their own lack of expertise in the field of special education, they attended workshops and actively sought to learn about the process. They asked for and received unqualified support from special education teachers.

The parents who participated in the study were clearly involved with their child's education. They assumed a leadership role by supporting the inclusion program, seeking information, and, in general, actively seeking to make their child's school experience a successful one. Their communication with teachers about their child's specific needs assisted staff in making decisions appropriate for their individual child.

Patterns of Relationships

According to Lambert, et al. (1995), individuals construct meaning, interpret information and attain knowledge through patterns of relationships. These patterns serve to integrate identity, emotions and cognition. Based on this view, it is reasonable to assume that different patterns of relationships can be created which facilitate the goals of inclusion and help maintain the vision necessary to achieve those goals.

A number of participants in the study emphasized the importance of communication in making the change to an inclusive school culture. It appears that though the change was mandatory, the fact that regular education teachers were recruited to volunteer to be collaborators in the process helped to establish patterns of relationships

which were characterized primarily by trust and a spirit of cooperation. It also appears that Ms. Peters' decision to physically desegregate special education teachers served to positively impact school culture and help establish new patterns of relationships between regular and special education staff. Though both the former and current principals assumed positions of leadership in terms of making it clear the change was mandatory, they both facilitated the change in a way that enabled all participants to learn from each other and encouraged the development of new patterns of relationships between special and regular education teachers and their students. Ms. Patrick said "When I first came here, it was...special ed stayed together. They were not around the other people, they had birthday parties alone, they didn't sit with anyone else at faculty meetings. They were very isolated. In four years I've seen the climate change from 'them' to 'us.'"

In remarking upon the communication process, Mr. Peters stated "There were some teachers that would come to Ms. Smith or me and say 'When you are working out next year's schedule I would like to be considered', or some would say, 'I'm just not comfortable with that.' We were able to accommodate."

Ms. Patrick stated that the special education teachers specifically choose the regular education teacher they want a specific child to go to. She said "They hand pick them. And I think it has to be that way, really. We can't just randomly shotgun the kids out there and expect them all to be successful, it just isn't going to happen." She felt both the physical desegregation of the special education teachers and attendance by both regular and special education teachers at the same workshops gave them the opportunity to bond.

Ms. Smith expressed concern for her regular education colleagues and the ways in which inclusion affected their workload, which undoubtedly served to foster the development of positive relationships between the regular and special education staff. She said "Unfortunately, that first year they did put them, to a large extent, in the volunteer teachers' classrooms. Those teachers had most all of the kids that were special ed or even problem behaviors. We'd have our ED teacher wanting to put ED students in there as well, and it was very difficult due to lack of education and written guidelines." In spite of the difficulties encountered in making the transition to inclusion, the regular education teachers who participated in the study made it clear that they felt they received outstanding and ongoing support from the special education staff, especially Ms. Smith. Ms. Riley, the reading teacher commented "Ms. Smith, our LD teacher, she was cooperative and interested in working with the teachers and being open with them." Ms. Reynolds, the music teacher, stated "If I have any needs at all, I've been able to go to these children's special teachers and have had total support."

In general, parent participants expressed concern about the communication process and felt their ability to communicate with their child's teacher was critical to their child's success, but also expressed the view that they felt supported - by the principal, teachers and by the Department of Special Services. Ms. Newman said "...it was really nice...the people from Special Services were very supportive and explained it in more detail and the teacher I worked with also explained a lot of the process to me." Ms. Nelson stated "I think Ms. Smith has been my biggest support. She's been wonderful. We've dealt directly with her, usually on [my child's] deficiencies and progress and she's probably been my strongest supporter here."

Inquiry and the Role of Information

Inquiry is an active process requiring initiative on the part of the inquirer.

Participants in the study, including principals, teachers, parents and administrative personnel, all engaged in an ongoing effort to obtain information and share information obtained with other participants in the inclusion process. Parents were concerned about sharing information and maintaining open lines of communication. Ms. Nelson said "The most important thing is communication between parents and teachers - just keeping the communication lines open and I really want to know ahead of time if there's a problem or an issue."

The apprehension experienced by some regular education teachers about the inclusion process can be explained to a great degree in terms of their perception that they did not have the knowledge required to successfully integrate special needs students in their classrooms. However, in the case of Central Elementary School, those who volunteered to be collaborative teachers were not deterred by lack of special expertise from participating in the inclusion program. It appears the predominant reason these teachers volunteered in spite of their lack of expertise might be primarily related to personality characteristics of the individual teachers involved. The voluntary participation by general education teachers stemmed from a personal vision that corresponded to the values of inclusion. These teachers obtained information about how to accommodate special needs students by talking to special education teachers, attending workshops and training sessions and by "trial and error." Ms. North, both a regular education first grade teacher and the parent of a special needs child, said she took sign

language classes, and, when she had a student with Down Syndrome, went to a training session.

Teachers discussed the training sessions they had and the need for them. Though many teacher participants in the study could not recall the specifics of the training they received, they all stated that they did receive some type of training. Ms. Richmond said "We had a lot of training, we had people come in from...I believe from Texas...I'm not sure where...we had a lot of team meetings and there was a lot of support."

The primary source of training and the impetus for workshop attendance appears to have come from Ms. Parker, former Assistant Director of Special Services. Ms. Ray stated: "We went to training and then Ms. Parker met with us several different times and went over it." Most teacher participants attributed training and opportunities to attend workshops to Ms. Parker's efforts to provide those opportunities.

Some teachers mentioned receiving preparatory information in college. Ms. Randall, a regular education fourth grade teacher, said "I mean, it was something I learned about in college. You know I was going through the university at the time, but that was what they were saying you should be doing."

Mr. Peters felt the efforts by Ms. Smith to provide him with reading material and keep him informed was crucial to the implementation of inclusion at the school site.

Breaking Set With Old Assumptions

The primary impetus for "breaking set with old assumptions" originated with the governmental mandate to implement inclusion, which represented a clear directive that educators would have to start dealing with a new agenda. As with most major

organizational changes, this directive was communicated from the top down. In the case of Central Elementary School, once the directive was communicated to the staff, a process was set in motion which served to start breaking down the parallel system which had existed at the school. First, regular educators were recruited to voluntarily participate in the inclusion program. It must be acknowledged that these "pioneers" did not have far to go with regard to breaking set with old assumptions. Their personal vision of education was in accord with the goals of inclusion, even though they were uncertain about specifically how it would be accomplished.

Ms. Patrick's decision to disperse special education classrooms throughout the building facilitated breaking set with old assumptions for teachers and students alike. She observed that, over time, "the regular ed teachers more appreciated the special ed teachers and what they do and the interaction among the teachers was almost immediate. You can even see it socially. That culture in a school is so important." She also noted that when she first assumed the position of principal at the school "...it was special ed stayed together. They were not around the other people, they had birthday parties alone, they didn't sit with anyone else at faculty meetings. They were very isolated." (02-15-02, 3).

Several teachers noted changes in student attitudes as the inclusion program evolved, and the school culture began to embrace new assumptions about the integration of special needs students. It is possible that this change may have occurred partly as the result of modeling by their teachers in their own social interactions, the evolution of which was noted by Ms. Patrick. Ms. Ray discussed the lack of peer models for special needs students when the program was initiated. She said "I mean, they were successful,

but it was a lot of work and they didn't have very many models to model themselves after in the classroom when everyone else was just like them." (02-13-02, 2). Ms. Shepherd, a special education teacher at the site, said "The kids seemed to...there was like a change, within two or three years, the kids seemed to know that they were going to have to do the kind of work they were doing there in the classroom, compared to a lab situation, and they were glad that they got to be in there with the regular kids, instead of being 'different' and being pulled out, and there wasn't a stigma associated with it." (02-13-02, 5). Ms. Rhodes, an art teacher, shared her observations of the positive impact the inclusion initiative had on the special needs students' non-disabled peers: "I think it's successful for the regular ed kids, to deal with those kids and talk with those kids. And even on the playground. I see them interacting. They still know the kids are different, but right now in our world we have so much violence and negative attitude going, that to see the kids reach out to try to help somebody - that's good." (02-15-02, 6).

Summary

Teachers at Center Elementary School engaged in reciprocal communication, webs and relationships and assumed leadership roles in the implementation of inclusion at the school. Facilitated by principals and administrators, they created and engaged in common experiences through leadership, patterns of relationships, inquiry and the role of information and by breaking set with old assumptions, and modeled that behavior to their students. New patterns of relationships evolved which both facilitated and resulted in the creation of a more inclusive school culture.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS, AND COMMENTARY

This chapter includes a summary of the study, conclusions, recommendations and implications and a commentary derived from the data collected at Center Elementary School in this explanatory case study.

Summary

The purpose of this explanatory case study was to examine an educational context in which meaningful change has occurred and document the realities described. This purpose was accomplished by:

- Data collected from Center Elementary School and the Centerville school district using the sources of long interview, direct observation, and document review.
- Data presentation into (1) perceptions, (2) processes, and (3) outcomes from the individual long interviews.
- The analysis of the data against the conceptual frame of Fullan (1991) and Lambert et al. (1995).

Data Needs

Data from individuals associated with the change to inclusion were needed to achieve the purpose of this study. Requirements to accomplish this purpose were to interview persons who were associated with Center Elementary School during and after the change to inclusion at the school site. I needed to interview principals, general and special education teachers and parents/guardians of students with disabilities who

participated in the development of the inclusion program at Center Elementary School, to gather data on their perceptions of who and/or what was responsible for the change, and whether they viewed the change as successful.

Data Sources

A total of twenty four teachers, principals, and parents from a single elementary school in a suburban public school district were used as data sources. Ten teachers taught general education and six were special education teachers at the school site. The principal at the time of the study, the principal at the school site when the change to inclusion occurred and the former Assistant Director of Special Services were used as data sources. The special education department chair provided the names of the parents who were interviewed and used as data sources. Additional sources included observations of general education and special education classes and review of documents related to the change to inclusion.

Data Collection

This explanatory case study used three methodological procedures to gather evidence: interviews, observations added by participants and document review. The interviews were conducted to elicit participants' perceptions of meaningful change to inclusion and to identify the individual or individuals responsible for the change that led to their success. Documents reviewed were records at the school site and the Special Services office including IEP's and agendas relating to in service and professional development training about inclusion.

Data Presentation

Before the collection of data began, a review of the literature was completed. The

themes that emerged from the data were then compared to the literature. Continuous comparison of information occurred until no other themes emerged (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). Through this process, three data categories emerged: (1) perceptions, (2) processes, and (3) outcomes.

Perceptions.

Perceptions were the belief system of each participant, how they perceived the change, who or what was responsible for the change, and why the change occurred at the school site.

The participants noted that a reciprocal process enabled all the staff, not one individual, to be actively involved in creating a meaningful change to inclusion (Lambert, et al., 1995). The principal at the school site when inclusion was initiated stated that he informed the school staff that inclusion would be implemented, and the general education teachers who were willing to include children with disabilities in their classes and the special education department chair made the decisions regarding the educational programs of special education students. The respondents in the study had mixed responses regarding who was most responsible for the change to inclusion. Some of the participants stated that the principal was responsible for the change to inclusion, while others said that the special education department chair at the school site or the Assistant Director of Special Services was responsible for the change. The responses of the participants in the study indicated that there were multiple leaders and followers which were reciprocal and multi-directional when inclusion was implemented. These findings are supported by the research of Lambert, et al. (1995).

Processes.

Processes include how the participants thought inclusion was implemented and by whom, why they thought inclusion was implemented, the planning and support provided for the implementation of inclusion, and the effectiveness of the facilitation of inclusion at the school.

A common theme from the teachers and parents was that the principal was the facilitator of the inclusion process. The principal had the knowledge and the organizational development skills to arrange schedules, teams of general education teachers, special education teachers and paraprofessionals to address the needs of students with disabilities, meetings, professional development training, and placement of special education students in general education classes in the school building to make the change to inclusion possible. The crucial role played by principals at the site in facilitating inclusion supports the findings of DeClue (1990) and VanHorn (1989), who found that an inclusive school culture was facilitated by principals who made educating students with disabilities a priority, and who fostered a positive relationship between special and general educators. The leadership role played by principals at the site is also supported by the findings of Sage (1997), who concluded that his examination of a sampling of schools considered to have successfully implemented inclusion indicated important aspects of their success were (1) a conscious decision to break with traditional structure, and (2) a focus on building community.

The participants in the study stated that little planning or staff development was provided for those involved in the change before inclusion was initiated. The general education teachers expressed apprehension regarding including the children with disabilities in their classrooms when the inclusion initiative was implemented due to

lack of training and knowledge about the program. Though the general educators who participated in the study expressed concerns about their ability to serve children with special needs during the initial stages of implementing inclusion, supporting the findings of Ainscow, et al. (1991), in this case study, general educators who participated in the change to inclusion felt supported by the principals involved, and by as their special education colleagues and the Special Services Department, and were able to overcome obstacles presented by their lack of specific training.

The administrators in the Special Services department provided some guidance and training for the teachers at the school site about the change to inclusion. As noted, many teachers felt that they were not adequately prepared to teach both special education and general education students in the same classroom under the new inclusion program. Administrators in the Special Services department informed the principal and teachers of the mandate to include children with disabilities in the general education classes, but left the planning and implementation of the program to the staff at the school site.

Products.

Products involved what the participants thought happened at the school. The participants gave their opinion of what was successful or unsuccessful about the inclusion program and what was needed to make the inclusion program successful.

The participants viewed the inclusion program as successful for students with and without disabilities. The respondents observed that the special education students' behavior and self esteem improved with the implementation of the new program. Academic success and socialization for both general education and special education

students improved after the inclusion program was initiated. It was also observed that the change to inclusion, and the physical desegregation of general and special education classrooms led to increased interaction between general and special education teachers, including social interaction, which helped facilitate a feeling of community. These results are noted in the literature by Villa and Thousand (2000). Most of the participants stated that additional training, time for IEP meetings and improved communication was needed to improve the change process and continue the success of the inclusion program.

The parents of students with disabilities who were participants in the study perceived the change to inclusion as positive for their children. The parents stated that they wanted better communication with professionals in the school by having more parent/teacher conferences, additional conferences with teachers and administrators at the school site, and opportunities to attend workshops.

Analysis

Data were compared to the six components Fullan (1991) believes are necessary for any successful change: (1) have and articulate a vision, (2) provide evolutionary planning, (3) take and allow initiative and empowerment, (4) provide staff development and assistance, (5) provide monitoring and problem coping, and (6) bring about restructuring. The data was also compared to the four perspectives of Lambert et al. (1995), who found that four components are essential to the understanding of a constructivist approach to change: (1) leadership, (2) patterns of relationships, (3) inquiry and the role of information, and (4) breaking set with old assumptions.

Findings

This analysis resulted in the following findings:

1. The principal was not perceived as the main agent of change by all participants in the study. The special education department chair and the former Assistant Director of Special Services were also perceived as agents of change.
2. The general education and special education teachers who participated in the inclusion process accepted and participated in the activities the principals engaged in that directly impacted change, however, other general education teachers rejected those activities.
3. In contradiction to Fullan and the emphasis on principal's activities, the teachers and administrators were key participants in the change to inclusion by having and articulating the vision of inclusion, by taking initiative, through empowerment, and by providing monitoring and problem coping strategies.
4. In contradiction to Fullan and the emphasis on principal's activities, the teachers created and engaged in common experiences through leadership, patterns of relationships, inquiry and obtaining necessary information, and by breaking set with old assumptions in order to give purposeful direction to their efforts to change to inclusion as posited by Lambert, et al.
5. In support of Lambert's perspective of change of reciprocal communication, webs of relationships and informed common experiences appear to have brought these elementary school teachers, administrators and parents together as a whole to give force and purposeful direction to their efforts to create change to inclusion.

Conclusions

The conclusions drawn from the findings center around answers to the research questions developed to guide the study.

Who creates change?

It can be concluded from the findings of this explanatory case study that the principals facilitated and supported the change to inclusion at the school site. The principal had a vision of the change and articulated the vision to the school staff, provided evolutionary planning and assistance, took initiative and empowered the staff to take initiative, provided staff development and training, and provided monitoring and problem coping to facilitate the change to inclusion (Fullan, 1991).

The data indicated that there were three main agents of change. The principal, special education department chair and the Assistant Director of Special Services were each perceived as the main agents of change regarding the implementation of inclusion at Center Elementary School.

There was a dichotomy of perceptions regarding the general education teachers' acceptance of the vision of inclusion espoused by the principal and the Assistant Director of Special Services. The general education teachers who participated in the inclusion program were teachers who volunteered or were recruited to be inclusion teachers and have students with disabilities in their classrooms. The data indicated that some general education teachers were reluctant or resisted the change to inclusion, and special education students were not placed in their classrooms. The special education teachers who participated in the inclusion program understood the vision of the principal, communicated the vision to the general education teachers who had children with disabilities in their classrooms, and took ownership of the new program. The teachers who were part of the inclusion program worked together collaboratively to facilitate the change to inclusion. The process of the change to inclusion was a trial and error process

that engaged both general education teachers and special education teachers in developing an educational program that included children with disabilities in general education classrooms.

The data also indicates that the teachers who participated in the inclusion program became leaders and change agents. These teachers developed webs of relationships and perpetuated the expectations through reciprocal communication. The teachers who participated in the inclusion program implicitly knew and understood issues related to leadership, patterns of relationships, inquiry and the role of information and breaking set with old assumptions (Lambert, et al, 1995).

Who or what else facilitated the change process?

The data in the study indicated that many individuals were instrumental in implementing the change to inclusion. The principals had a vision of inclusion and were supportive of the inclusion program; the Assistant Director of Special Services transferred information about inclusion to the staff at the school and conducted meetings and staff development regarding inclusion; the special education department chair facilitated inclusion by working closely with general education teachers who volunteered for the program; and the volunteer general education teachers willingly agreed to have special education students in their classrooms. The principals, general education teachers and special education teachers were involved in the change process at the school site through informed common experiences, but no one individual accomplished the change.

Reciprocal communication was a prominent feature in the implementation to inclusion at Center Elementary School. The general education teachers who participated in the inclusion program believed they could communicate with the principals and special

education teachers and felt they were supported in their efforts to include special education students in their classrooms. This communication process involved all participants in the change to inclusion, and included professional development training sessions and in service meetings. The data indicated that these reciprocal processes enabled the participants to construct a common meaning which led to a common purpose about the change to inclusion.

The data indicated that the teachers in the inclusion program utilized new information to construct new meanings and knowledge about the way children with disabilities would be taught at the school. Information was generated by interactions between general education teachers, principals and special education teachers regarding the change to inclusion and new classroom educational practices. The data suggests that assumptions about children with disabilities were deconstructed by discussing the problems with the new initiative and by establishing new relationships between general and special education teachers and new educational practices in the general education classrooms. The teachers created a meaningful change to inclusion, which was fostered by leadership, patterns of relationships, inquiry and the role of information and breaking set with old assumptions (Lambert et al., 1995).

Summary

The teachers' perceptions in this explanatory case study were contradictory. The teachers believed that one of three individuals was the main agent of change in the inclusion initiative. The principal, special education department chair and the Assistant Director of Special Services were each named as the main agent of change by the teachers. The principals named the Superintendent of the Centerville school district and

the special education department chair at Center Elementary School as the main agent of change. The parents named the special education department chair, who was the learning disabilities special education teacher at the school site, and the principals, either Mrs. Patrick or Mr. Peters, as the main agent of change. The teachers stated that the two principals were supportive and facilitated the change to inclusion at Center Elementary School.

The teachers' perceptions of who created change did not result in a consensus of who the main agent of change was regarding the change to inclusion. The main agents of change in the study performed most of the six activities posited by Fullan (1991) and the four perspectives of Lambert (1995). However, the activities and perspectives were performed by several different individuals in the school district.

Implications and Recommendations

This research was designed to meet three criteria: (1) to build upon the existing knowledge, (2) impact practice, and (3) to clarify or add to existing theory (Erlandson et al, 1993).

Research

The findings of this explanatory case study added to the knowledge base of the roles and responsibilities of all individuals in the learning community regarding implementation of change by documenting perceptions, processes and products associated with the change process to inclusion. The research indicated that the six activities of a principal that cause change to occur (Fullan, 1991) and the four perspectives of a constructivist approach to change (Lambert, 1995) are useful in examining how change occurs. The main agent of change was viewed as different people

by the respondents in the study. However, the study confirmed that multiple lenses are useful in studying change. This study illustrated the need for additional training and professional development before a change in educational programming is implemented. Future research might examine the how training prior to implementing change can positively affect the change process.

Practice

The study confirmed that the principals facilitated the change to inclusion and provided support for the change process. Some of the general education teachers embraced the inclusion program, while others were reluctant to have children with disabilities in their classrooms. The special education students were placed in the classrooms of teachers who volunteered or were perceived to be receptive to including students with disabilities.

Recommendations for practice include the need to train and familiarize teachers, administrators and parents about the proposed change before it is implemented. Teacher preparation programs at the higher education level should provide training related to how to teach in inclusive classrooms. Educational leadership and administration programs should prepare leaders in how to implement change effectively, and administrators should provide the supports necessary to reduce apprehension about a proposed change.

Future studies on change should examine how teachers view inclusion as central to the educational experience. The teachers in the study stated that inclusion benefited general education students as well as students with disabilities. How do teachers change their attitudes about inclusion to benefit all students? Can all teachers be trained to teach in a classroom that includes children with disabilities?

The previous principal at the school site stated that he trusted the special education department chair to make decisions regarding the change to inclusion. Future studies might examine this issue.

Future studies might also look at the special education classes after the students with disabilities had been included in general education classrooms. How are the special education classes different after students had been included in general education classes? What is the criteria for placing special education students in general education classes.

Commentary

When I began this study I was interested in who or what creates change in an elementary school. I had observed in my school district that some schools appeared to be less successful than Center Elementary School in including students with disabilities in general education classrooms. I wanted to study the inclusion process and how it was implemental at the school site to determine if the results of the study could be transferred to other schools in the Centerville School District. I believed that the principal, as the instructional leader in the school, was the facilitator and the main agent of change. The study revealed different issues that must be addressed in the change process. I was not aware of the intensity of the resistance felt by many general education teachers to the inclusion initiative. Lambert, et al. (1995) link change to the leader's ability to incorporate all adults in the learning and leading process, create a culture in which reflective and interactive learning can take place, evolve structures that allow for conversations from which meaning and knowledge can be constructed, and encourage professionals to seek collective meaning and collective purpose grounded in practice. The Lambert, et al. (1995) lenses can be a useful tool in helping administrators implement

change effectively by understanding the intellectual, emotional and social processes that teachers go through when a change is implemented. Teachers must be allowed to exchange ideas and knowledge by creating patterns of relationships and reciprocal processes that enable a change to be successful and create ownership of a change by all participants in the school.

This case study illustrates the role of information in the change process (Lambert, 1995). The participants in the study felt apprehensive about the change to inclusion based on a lack of knowledge about what to expect when the change was implemented.

Information must be provided to the players in a change process to help reduce apprehension and resistance to its implementation. Professional development opportunities and in service training was provided to the staff at the school prior to the implementation of inclusion, but additional training and dissemination of information was needed to reduce the stress level of the teachers and administrators. Information emanating from guest speakers who are knowledgeable about the change to inclusion, conversations among professionals in the school and parents, visiting successful inclusion programs and action research at the school site would enable the teachers to construct new meaning and information, allow the school staff to break set with old assumptions, and be better prepared to implement a major change to inclusion (Lambert, 1995). The implementation of inclusion initially created a dissonance among the school staff that could have been alleviated by providing additional training about the proposed change. As the Director of Special Services in the Centerville school district, I now realize the importance of providing enough training and information to the school staff and parents before a change is implemented, and allocating the resources of time and

additional staff necessary to implement the change. I also realize that there may be several change agents when change is implemented in a school.

This case study confirmed my previous assumptions regarding the difficulties with implementing a change in educational settings. I believe that the issue of implementing change is more important now than ever, given increasing demands to reform schools. The examination of change in public schools is critical to the revitalization of the public school system, and to meet the needs and demands of a rapidly changing society and its diverse members.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Each participant in this multiple case study was asked to respond to the following questions and statements:

1. Tell me about your inclusion program.
2. How did your school decide to go about making changes related to inclusion?
3. Describe your inclusion program after its first year of implementation.
Describe your inclusion program now.
4. What did the principal do to facilitate or not facilitate the change to inclusion at your school?
5. Who and what else aided or hindered the change to inclusion process at your school?
6. What accommodations did you make to facilitate inclusion?
7. How did you learn what you needed to make the transition to inclusion successfully?

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT TO PERFORM RESEARCH

INFORMED CONSENT AND AUTHORIZATION TO PERFORM RESEARCH

A. AUTHORIZATION

I, _____, hereby authorize Richard Bishop, or associates of his choosing, to interview and/or observe me as a member of A GROUP TO BE INTERVIEWED AND/OR OBSERVED (educators and others involved in the inclusion process) in Claremore Public Schools.

B. GENERAL INFORMATION

You have been asked by a graduate student of Oklahoma State University working on a research project, related to a doctoral dissertation, to be interviewed and/or observed about your role as a member of a group to be interviewed and/or observed as part of that research project, entitled Implementing Inclusion in an Elementary School: A Case Study of Who Creates Change. Research is being conducted through the doctoral student's association with Oklahoma State University.

The interview and/or observation serves two purposes:

(1) Information collected in the interview and/or observation will be used by the student interviewer to prepare a dissertation about those people involved in the inclusion program at your school building.

(2) Information collected by the doctoral student may be used in scholarly publications of the student.

The interview should last from one to one and one-half hours and will be recorded. The questions asked will be developed by the doctoral student. All subjects will be asked the same general questions and their interviews will be recorded, both on tape and in written form. The doctoral student will type transcripts of the interview for analysis. The dissertation advisor may review these transcripts. All tapes and transcripts will be treated as confidential materials. These tapes and transcripts will be kept in a secure location and treated as private materials. Student reserves the right to use materials for future publication and research purposes.

Observations will last approximately one class period. Notes will be taken by the doctoral student. The dissertation advisor may also review these notes. All notes will be treated as confidential materials, and only the doctoral student and dissertation advisor will have access to the materials.

The doctoral student will assign pseudonyms for each person interviewed and/or observed. These pseudonyms will be used in all discussions and all written materials dealing with interviews and observations.

No interview or observation will be accepted or used by the doctoral student unless this consent form is signed by the subject and researcher.

Research procedures being utilized are not experimental, and present no known risks or discomfort to the subject. There are no known alternatives to the research procedure that would be advantageous to the subject.

C. SUBJECT UNDERSTANDING

I understand my participation in this interview and/or observation is voluntary, and that there is no penalty for refusal to participate. I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time without penalty after notifying the doctoral student/researcher and/or the project director (dissertation advisor, Adrienne Hyle, Ph.D., Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma).

I understand that the interview and/or observation will be conducted according to commonly accepted research procedures and that information taken from the interview and/or observation will be recorded in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, to the greatest extent possible.

I understand the interview and/or topics will not cover topics that could reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subject's financial standing or employability, or deal with sensitive aspects of the subject's own behavior, such as illegal conduct, drug use, sexual behavior or use of alcohol.

I may contact the project director (dissertation advisor) Professor Adrienne Hyle, Ph.D., Department of EAHED, College of Education, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma: Telephone (405-744-7244) should I have any questions or wish to obtain further information about the research being conducted. I may also contact Sharon Bacher, IRB Executive Secretary, Oklahoma State University, 203 Whitehurst, Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078. Phone: 405-744-5700.

I have read and fully understand this consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. I acknowledge a copy has been given to me.

DATE: _____

TIME: _____

Signed: _____

Witness(es) if required _____

I certify that I have personally explained all elements of this form to the subject or his/her representative before requesting the subject or his/her representative to sign it.

Signed _____
Richard Bishop

APPENDIX C
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FORM

Oklahoma State University

Institutional Review Board

Protocol Expires: 2-3-93

Date: Monday February 04, 2002

IRB Application No Eco274

Proposal Title: IMPLEMENTING INCLUSION IN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: A CASE STUDY

Principal
Investigator(s);

Richard Bishop
15125 E Marlar Road
Claremore, Ok. 74017

Adrienna Hyle
314 Willard Hall
Stillwater, Ok. 74078

Reviewed and
Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Dear PI :

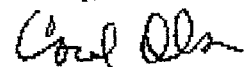
Your IRB application referenced above has been approved for one calendar year. Please make note of the expiration date indicated above. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

- 1 Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
- 2 Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
- 3 Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
- 4 Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Sharon Bacher, the Executive Secretary to the IRB, in 203 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, sbacher@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,



Carol Olson, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA 2

Richard Paul Bishop

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: IMPLEMENTING INCLUSION IN AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:
A CASE STUDY OF WHO CREATES CHANGE

Major Field: Educational Administration

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Skiatook, Oklahoma, on June 9, 1947

Education: Graduated from Skiatook High School, Skiatook, Oklahoma, in May, 1965; received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma in May, 1969; received a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, in May, 1972; received a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, in May, 1991; received a Master of Education degree in Educational Administration from Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, in May, 1992. Completed the requirements for the Doctorate of Education degree with a major in Educational Administration at Oklahoma State University in May, 2002.

Experience: Employed as a special education teacher by Broken Arrow Schools, 1990-1991; and Tulsa Public Schools, 1991-1996; employed by Tulsa Public Schools as Special Services Coordinator, 1997-1999; currently employed as Director of Special Services, Claremore Public Schools, 1999 to present.

Professional Memberships: Phi Delta Kappa: Board of Directors, Tulsa Chapter, Kappa Delta Pi, Council for Exceptional Children, Oklahoma Association of School Administrators, Children's Advocacy Center, Claremore, Oklahoma: Board of Directors.