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The Integration of Exceptional Children in Ontario Schools

by

Susan Letcher, B.A.

A thesis submitted to

the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

in partial fulfilment of

the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Psychology

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

August 29, 1995

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in partial fulfilment of the requirements for

the degree of Master of Arts

Thesis Supervisor

Chair, Department of Psychology

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Abstract

A survey of 189 elementary school principals, regular educators and special educators assessed perceptions regarding the suitability of regular class placement for exceptional students with varying types and degrees of exceptionality, as well as perceptions concerning existing practices and services within the regular classroom. The results indicated that all respondents felt strongly that a service delivery model that provided a continuum of placement options should be available, however, the appropriateness of the regular classroom setting is dependent upon the type and severity of student exceptionality. Responses to items concerning student programming were relatively positive. Perceptions regarding support service availability were less positive. Although most respondents perceived an increase in workload with the practice of integration, respondents were less confident about the availability of preparation time, in-service training, and resource support. Regular classroom teachers were less confident about the availability of these services than were administrators as seen in teacher's less positive attitude toward integration.

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Introduction

This study represents a review and assessment of the delivery of special education services to students with special needs. First, there is an attempt to examine educator perceptions regarding existing integration practices and services. Secondly, there is an effort to assess the perceived suitability of regular class placement for exceptional children with varying types and degrees of exceptionality. This review will be based on teacher, principal and special educator responses to a semi-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to establish educator satisfaction with the current service delivery model, and to elicit the perceptions regarding suitability of regular class placement for children with varying exceptionalities. Furthermore, there was an effort to elicit the perceptions of educators regarding their evaluation of current integration practices and services, and an attempt to explore the implications of these variables with respect to teacher attitude toward integration.

Literature Review

History of Mainstreaming

The treatment of the disabled in education has evolved dramatically over the years. Aristotle's description of a deaf person as "incapable of reason and unteachable" reflects how society regarded these individuals many years ago (Weber, 1988). The 19th century witnessed the first beginnings of special

schools for the handicapped. Ronald McDonald opened a school for the deaf in Quebec in 1831. This was Canada's first special education project. Schools for the blind were later opened in Toronto (1872) and Halifax (1873) (Weber, 1988). The opening of these services sparked an interest in special education services and initiated many 20th century developments (Weber, 1988).

At the end of World War I, society took on a more custodial responsibility of the handicapped. Although there were some special schools for the blind and deaf, the handicapped were still considered poor candidates for education.

During the 1960's the philosophy of dealing with the handicapped evolved from a custodial responsibility to a willingness and need to educate these individuals. The conclusion of two important movements helped bring about this change. First, the wide use and acceptance of intelligence testing was questioned on ethical grounds. It was argued that these practices often resulted in unnecessary labelling and disregard for those with lower intelligences. Secondly, the abandonment of the eugenics movement motivated a change in the treatment of the handicapped. The view that society somehow required genetic protection from people with disabilities was exchanged for a much more positive view that people with disabilities were valuable individuals that could be integrated into society.

The recognition of the qualities and potential of people with disabilities

(rather than the handicaps) helped eliminate the view that handicapped individuals were somehow abnormal and had to be protected from society. The concept of normalization soon gained momentum and ultimately led to the dissolution of institutionalization. The "medical model" approach to treating exceptional individuals was challenged by a more progressive view that focused on an individual's strengths rather than disabilities or weaknesses. No longer were efforts focused on fixing or curing the handicapped individual; rather, emphasis was placed on educating these individuals to cope within and contribute to mainstream society. Therefore, the movement toward normalization brought about widespread recognition that exceptional individuals should be provided with an education and a lifestyle as close to normal as possible.

Such a change in attitude toward people with disabilities brought about the formation of various advocacy groups that focused on protecting the rights of these individuals. This increase in political activism ultimately led to legislation that not only recognized, but guaranteed the educational rights of handicapped individuals. In 1975, the United States implemented a piece of legislation called The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142) that was landmark for the rights of handicapped children to receive adequate education. This law guaranteed handicapped children placement in the least restrictive environment appropriate to each student's needs, and mandated appropriate screening procedures, consultation with parents, and the

development of Individual Education Plans (IEP'S) according to a student's individual needs (Weber, 1988).

Prior to this piece of legislation, the majority of children with disabilities received their education in segregated classes or special schools. It was generally thought that in these settings, exceptional children would receive the specialized education they required, and by specialized educators as well. Perhaps though, a more hidden agenda was at the root of such segregation. Special class placement also kept handicapped children away from those children who were considered "more likely to succeed".

Over the past two decades, however, there has been a gradual change in such views toward what is now called the regular education initiative. Research began to show that segregated settings had many negative consequences, and was not producing the academic gains that had been predicted. Moreover, segregated classrooms were becoming considered "catchalls" for the unwanted (more specifically, the handicapped and disadvantaged) (Ensher, Winschel & Blatt, 1976; Winzer, 1989). It was discovered that between 68 and 75 percent of children in special classes had been unfairly classified and placed, and that many of these children came from minority groups as well (Winzer, 1989). Therefore, there was a push away from such exclusionary practices and a move toward total integration. Integration, the practice of placing handicapped children into regular classrooms is also commonly referred to as mainstreaming.

The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to provide each child with an environment that is most conducive to social rehabilitation and academic progress. This movement marks a drastic change in an entire educational philosophy; efforts are being refocused from the segregation of exceptional children to the integration into the entire school community. This includes participation in regular classes, in extra-curricular activities and all other facets of school life.

Changes to American legislation with respect to exceptional children brought mainstreaming into the forefront where today in Canada, every child has the right to publicly supported education. In 1980, the province of Ontario amended its legal structure and passed Bill 82 (The Education Amendment Act) which prescribed specific principles regarding programming and practices in the education of exceptional students. Legislation in Ontario is similar to American law, however, it does not mandate mainstreaming. Instead, it states that children with special needs must be provided with a range of placements, so that "suitable programming" is guaranteed. Therefore, school boards are encouraged to offer a continuum of services that include a number and variety of placement options. Such placements include instruction in a special setting (e.g., hospital, jail), school correspondence instruction in special schools (e.g., for the blind and deaf), in a full-time special class, part-time special class, in a regular class with opportunities for withdrawal, and full integration in a regular class with special support available.

Service Delivery Models

The Cascade Model is a philosophical model which outlines the range of placements possible whereby exceptional students are placed in the least restrictive environment. Exceptional students may progress from one educational setting to another, according to their individual needs and levels of performance. Ideally, exceptional children are placed in the regular classroom with the necessary support services. Realistically though, such support services may not be available, or the child may simply require more intensive individualized programming. Therefore an exceptional child may be withdrawn from the regular class and meet periodically or regularly with a special education teacher in a resource room, while still maintaining regular class placement. Alternatively, the exceptional child's needs may require a more specialized learning environment, and a self-contained class or a special school may be most appropriate. Moreover, a child may simply not respond well to traditional methods of instruction, and may require more complex services than is provided in a community school. In these cases instruction in a specialized setting, where both therapeutic and educational interventions can be combined may be recommended.

The Cascade model is based on the premise of maximum integration possible. Therefore, a child is ideally placed in a regular classroom, and is moved to a more specialized learning environment only to the extent considered necessary. The Cascade Model (commonly referred to as

Reynold's Model), however, has been criticized for being inflexible and interfering with the development of individualized programming. An alternative model, used by the Waterloo Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board has been suggested to be a more progressive alternative (Barker, Kazmierski, Bowes & Perks, 1988). This model focuses on the regular classroom as the central curriculum for all students. According to this model, the regular program can be modified in a variety of ways depending on the needs of each exceptional child. This model is advocated by those educators who regard regular class placement as the only form of integrated education.

One can see that various rationales motivated the move toward educational integration. Mainstreaming was brought about as a result of moral and human rights issues. It was a highly relevant move at a time when individual rights and equality were a political and social concern. Mainstreaming was also motivated by societal and ethical reforms brought about by the civil rights movement in the 1960's. The move toward normalization sought to remove the stigmas associated with the mentally and physically disabled and bring about acceptance and integration into wider society. In addition, mainstreaming was initiated for obvious educational and legal reasons as evident in American legislation (Public Law 94-142). In combination with the above conditions, mainstreaming seemed like a reasonable response to increasing financial cutbacks and restraints. Cutting special education classes meant saving dollars, and what better a time to make such a move when there

existed both legal and social support.

Definitions of Integrated Education

Although the philosophy of mainstreaming is widely accepted by many of the participants involved, the actual practice of integration presents various problems and has been highly controversial. The controversy seems to exist not over integration versus segregation, as most educators would agree integration is a desirable goal. Instead, it seems to revolve around exactly how this concept is put into practice. The most staunch advocates of mainstreaming regard it as the total integration of a handicapped child into the school community; special education is still valued, however, only if it is provided within the mainstream setting (Weber, 1988).

Proponents of mainstreaming cite various benefits associated with such an integrated approach. It is argued that full integration enhances the social status of exceptional children by providing increased opportunities for socialization. It has also been argued that integration provides greater opportunity for modelling of appropriate behaviour by non-exceptional peers, and provides for a more stimulating and competitive environment for exceptional students. It has also been suggested that integrating exceptional students into regular classrooms is cost-effective in comparison to traditional approaches (Sattler, 1988). By far, one of the most driving forces behind the philosophy of mainstreaming is the assumption that the integration of exceptional students into regular classrooms will help eliminate the stigmas

that are associated with being handicapped, and eliminate unnecessary or negative labels (Sammel, Abernathy, Buthera & Lesar, 1991).

Proponents of mainstreaming have also cited educational gains for handicapped students functioning in regular classrooms (Wang & Birch, 1984). Furthermore, it is argued that integration can be valuable for non-disabled children as well. Those children without disabilities can gain positive attitudes, values and social skills in interaction with handicapped peers (York & Vandercock, 1991). In fact, most would agree that integration enables all students to understand disabilities and to develop respect for others.

Most educators advocate the best possible education for all children; however, there are a growing number of educators who argue that full integration is not the most realistic alternative for all handicapped children. It is argued that the philosophy behind the mainstreaming movement is largely misunderstood. Although there is agreement that exceptional students should be integrated into the least restrictive environment, it is often widely assumed that full integration represents this ideal environment. Undoubtedly, for some children, the least restrictive environment may well be full integration, for other children, however, the least restrictive environment may be a self-contained class. It is often forgotten that Bill 82 encourages a continuum of services for exceptional children, with full integration representing only one option. It is quite possible that regular class placement may simply not be the most appropriate alternative for all exceptional children. It seems a model of full

integration may be supported by many parents and advocacy groups, however, the concept is not widely accepted among the educators themselves. Recent studies have assessed educator perceptions regarding full integration and have revealed that teachers do not favour this approach and prefer practices that offer exceptional students a continuum of placement options (Sammel et al., 1991; Coates, 1989).

There is not an easy resolution to this debate. More and more educators, however, are arguing that a more progressive approach would base the success of any style of mainstreaming on the willingness and ability of both teachers and students to make the placement succeed. In addition, factors such as type of exceptionality, availability of supportive services, student-teacher ratios, parental support for placement and perhaps most importantly, the individual needs of the exceptional student are crucial to the placement outcome.

Carlberg and Kavale (1980) conducted a meta-analysis in order to re-assess the literature regarding the efficacy of special versus regular class placement. The authors concluded that regular class placement appeared to be a superior option as opposed to special class placement, regardless of variables such as a student's level of achievement, personality, intelligence, and the duration of a student's placement. Interestingly, however, the authors found differential placement effects. The type of exceptionality appeared to make a difference with respect to success of placement in a regular or special

class. The findings showed that low-IQ children (slow learners and educable mentally retarded) did not receive benefit in specialized classes. In contrast, learning disabled and behaviour/emotional disordered children experienced more positive gains on both academic and social variables as a result of special class placement. It seems reasonable to assume that students with different exceptionalities possess different needs, and therefore require unique programming. Lower student-teacher ratios and class size, often characteristic of special education classrooms, may better meet the attentional and individual needs of the learning disabled child. Undoubtedly, more research in this area is warranted. The results of this study demonstrate the need to determine what characteristics of exceptional children are the best predictors of academic and social adjustment in the mainstream. Whatever the reasons may be, this study was important in demonstrating that mainstreaming may not be the most appropriate alternative for certain groups of exceptional children.

Further support for such differential placement effects was revealed by the U.S. Department of Education in its seventh annual report to Congress on the implementation of PL 94-142. It reported that children with more severe exceptionalities (such as mental retardation and multiple handicaps) are less likely to be placed in regular class settings. It reported that even students with learning disabilities and speech impairments, (groups where mainstreaming was the most common practice) required more intensive, specialized services in special classes and special schools (Lewis & Doorlag, 1987).

Impediments to Effective Integration

Undoubtedly, much of the controversy surrounding mainstreaming involves not the philosophy behind it, but the mechanics of just how it is being implemented. In addition to the concern suggested above, many teachers and principals are becoming concerned with other issues such as time constraints, inadequate training of personnel, and lack of available resources due to recent financial cutbacks. In terms of support personnel, it has been found that most teachers feel support is presently inadequate (Larrivee & Cook, 1979; Pudlas, 1993). Undoubtedly, if exceptional students are to be successfully integrated into the mainstream, the regular educator will require resource support in order to ensure that appropriate program modifications are made. Furthermore, the exceptional student may also require support in the form of an educational assistant or specialized equipment in order to benefit from the educational program. Indeed, the provision of supportive services within the regular classroom is a fundamental tenet of mainstreaming philosophy. A lack of support may ultimately result in an increased workload for regular teachers, and thus create a less positive attitude toward integration. Undoubtedly, teacher attitudes will affect the educational experiences of the exceptional child. It has been found that a teacher's attitude toward integration will have a significant impact on the effectiveness of the special education program (Rieck & Knight, 1992; Walsh & Kompf, 1990).

Interestingly, it has been found that the availability of supportive services

positively influences teacher attitude toward integration. It seems that teachers do express a willingness to mainstream exceptional children when necessary support services are provided. Furthermore, it has also been found that the type of support available to teachers is a crucial factor. It seems the presence of support services in the form of consultants, resource rooms or counsellors has a positive impact on teacher attitudes toward mainstreaming (Larrivee et al., 1979).

Another concern often expressed by both parents of exceptional children and teachers themselves involves appropriate training of school personnel. Ideally, teachers should be provided with some form of special training and preparation in order to adequately accommodate exceptional children in the regular classroom. More often than not, however, teachers are simply informed of the placement and are then expected to make their own accommodations. As a result, many teachers feel they have been inadequately trained to deal with exceptional students.

There is some literature which reports that teachers often doubt their expertise in dealing with handicapped children (Evans, Bird, Ford, Green, & Bischoff, 1990). As a result, there has been a move in some boards to implement in-service training programs. Research has shown that programs designed to provide information on exceptionalities, as well as a forum for discussion of reactions to integration, personal experiences and discussion of solutions and strategies can be quite successful (Hannah & Pliner, 1983).

Other research has suggested that teachers express a strong need for in-service training which includes direct experience with exceptional children (Walsh et al., 1990). Furthermore, it would seem important that such training and experience occur before the exceptional student is placed in the integrated setting.

Other studies have found that teachers possessed more favourable attitudes toward the practice of mainstreaming as the number of special education courses, and college credit in the area increased (Hannah et al., 1983; Yuker, 1988). Caution is suggested in the interpretation of such results. This finding presents the original "chicken and egg" problem. For example, is it an increased knowledge that leads to development of a positive attitude, or rather a positive attitude that causes teachers to seek out more knowledge? Furthermore, more research is required to determine exactly how much special training is necessary in order to transform behaviour patterns and attitudes (Gottlieb, 1981).

Another concern often expressed by mainstream educators is the general lack of involvement and passivity felt during the policy-making process. For many educators, integration is seen as just another "top-down" policy attempt by school administrators. It has been argued that the perceptions of special education practices held by the policymakers may be radically different from the perceptions of those called on to implement the policies. As Semmel (1991) points out, this causes considerable concern because if the views of the

service providers are not recognized, integration initiatives "...will be little more than a set of remote and unsupported policy slogans" (p. 21).

Administration has been criticized for wasting time in endless formal meetings and conferences, when such time and energy could be better spent in the classrooms, assisting teachers, observing, talking, listening and giving advice. Instead of holding meetings and discussions involving themselves, it is felt that efforts should be refocused to expending such time and money in ways that better address the needs of the students (Shaw, 1990). Furthermore, regular educators feel as though they are being burdened with the results of budget cutbacks; that special education services are simply being passed down to them as a method to save dollars (Evans et al., 1990). Reducing special education services may be a cost-effective measure, however, it has been argued that such measures are often taken at the expense of the student.

Quality of Education

Yet another concern often voiced by both teachers and parents is the quality of instruction received in regular classrooms. Undoubtedly, integration is about more than just placing an exceptional child in a regular classroom; it also requires that these children make curricular progress as well. One important study examined the instructional arrangements of regular education teachers. The teaching practices, structural arrangements, and modified instruction provided for exceptional children were considered as important

variables. It appears that although teachers indicated that curricular modifications were necessary and important, ratings of ability to carry out these modifications were underrated (Ysseldyke, Thurlow, Wotruba & Nania, 1990). Although not reported in this study, it is now important to examine why regular classroom teachers experience difficulty adapting instruction for exceptional students. Would factors such as level of support services or teacher training in the area augment a more positive placement outcome? Similarly, would more appropriate placement matches between the characteristics of the student and exceptionality with the classroom environment result in a more positive placement outcome?

Another study examined the quality of integration into regular classrooms as experienced by exceptional students (Hilton & Liberty, 1992). It was found that instructional plans were inadequate, and objectives of the individual education plans were often not met. Furthermore objectives of the IEP's were not directed toward a child's individual needs and individual level of performance, rather the goals tended to be generalized to all identified students.

In addition, instructional routines were found to be often meaningless and administered at inappropriate times. For example, a student was taught to wash one's face at 10:15 AM, but not before or after lunch. Another child was observed to walk around the school during a "walking program", but then was wheeled around the track in a wheelchair during physical education.

Undoubtedly, students were learning important skills for functioning in daily life; however, the skills were not practiced at natural times. As a result, the meaning and overall generalizability to real life situations was significantly reduced. Furthermore, analysis of the identified students progress reports over a period of five years showed that eight students had not progressed on most subtests of the assessment, five had made slight progress and one student had actually lost skills.

Like most research in mainstreaming issues, research into the academic progress made in mainstreamed and segregated settings has produced inconclusive findings. While there is some research that suggests exceptional students make academic gains in mainstream classrooms (Lewis et al., 1987), as suggested in the findings above, there is a significant amount which suggests the opposite. Furthermore, there is some research which has failed to indicate achievement differences between placements in segregated and regular classes (Gottlieb, 1981). Such differences in research results raise an important question. Is it possible to rate the efficacy of one placement over another for all exceptional students? Perhaps it is more reasonable to conclude that the superiority of any placement over another will depend on the individual and unique needs of the exceptional student. While regular class placement may be appropriate for one student, a more specialized environment may be necessary for another.

Social Impact

Perhaps one of the most driving forces behind the move toward mainstreaming is the social integration of exceptional students with their non-exceptional peers. Many teachers and parents argue that the social benefits of integration is possibly the most rewarding aspect of the mainstreaming movement. Research regarding the social implications of educational integration, however, is relatively mixed. Therefore it is difficult to establish whether exceptional students do in fact make social gains, or whether integration simply places them at further risk for ridicule and alienation from peers. Recent evidence suggests that the social benefits received by both exceptional and non-exceptional students will depend upon the presence of training programs which focus on enhancing social relationships (Sasso & Rude, 1988).

One important study examined the educational and social outcomes of children with severe-profound mental retardation who experienced either a segregated or integrated education. Interestingly, it was found that there were no differences in educational outcomes between the segregated and integrated groups. Over a two year period, there were no significant differences found between the two groups in the areas of self-help skills, gross and fine motor coordination, communication and adaptive behaviour. In the domain of social competence, however, significant differences were reported. Students from the integrated group improved in their ability to manage their own behaviour in

social situations, in ability to provide feedback to others, accept assistance from others, cope with negative social circumstances and terminate social contact. In contrast, the children in the segregated group regressed in these domains (Cole & Meyer, 1991). A similar study found that when full-time mainstreamed versus part-time mainstreamed classrooms were compared, handicapped children in the full-time class rated their cognitive and social competence and self-esteem higher than the later group (Wang & Birch, 1984).

Such results indicate positive integration experiences for exceptional students, however, there is a substantial portion of literature which reports poor social outcomes of integration. The impact of integration experiences on multiple handicapped students within public high-schools was recently examined (Hilton et al., 1992). The results showed that identified students interacted most often with the teacher and teacher's aide in comparison to peers and peer tutors. It was also noted that the nature of these interactions were instructional, rather than social. When classroom schedules were analyzed, they appeared to be structured so as to minimize student interaction with non-disabled peers. For example identified students moved to different classrooms within the school when the halls were empty, and when other students were already in their respective classes. Identified students arrived and departed from school at different times and locations than non-disabled students, assemblies were not attended with other students and identified students ate lunch at segregated tables in the cafeteria.

Another study evaluated teacher perceptions regarding the practice of integration. Results indicated that with respect to expected social outcomes of integration, teachers were under the belief that full-time regular class placement of students with mild exceptionalities will not result in positive social experiences (Semmel et al., 1991). The author makes the important point that it is still unclear whether stigmatization originates from the categorical label and placement, or whether it results from the experience of repeated academic failure. Regular class placement may in fact place exceptional students at greater risk for academic failure, as opposed to special class placement where the student may receive more individualized attention.

Other researchers warn that positive social experiences cannot be arbitrarily assumed with the practice of integration. Greasham (cited in Walsh et al., 1990) argues that mainstreaming is based on faulty assumptions that placement in regular classrooms will result in increased social acceptance and social integration between exceptional and non-exceptional peers. Furthermore, the author claims that it is falsely assumed that exceptional students will naturally model the behaviour of their non-exceptional peers because of increased exposure to them. Greasham maintains that social integration will not simply occur through integrated physical placement, but must be facilitated. It is suggested that students can make social gains with the implementation of appropriate social skills training programs.

Several strategies have in fact been found to be effective in increasing and

maintaining positive social interaction among exceptional students and non-exceptional peers. Peer tutoring for example, has proven to be a particularly successful technique that appears to benefit both the handicapped and non-handicapped student. It may involve the handicapped child as the tutor and the able-bodied child as the tutee, or vice-versa. Research suggests that peer tutoring can be used as an effective integration device (Blackbourn & Blackbourn, 1993).

Other programs include curricular infusion, which involves dispersing information to non-handicapped students about various disabilities to help students gain a better understanding and awareness of the needs of handicapped students; "special friends" programs have also been developed and require a non-handicapped child to be paired with a handicapped child to serve a helping or "buddy" relationship. Similarly, peer initiation interventions have been implemented in order to encourage social interaction. Such programs are aimed at teaching non-handicapped children to initiate social interactions with their handicapped peers. Such programs have been found to be quite successful in changing attitudes and social behaviour of non-handicapped students (Sasso et al., 1988). It would be valuable to conduct additional research to assess whether the positive outcomes of these programs are temporary or long-term, or whether they are simply due to the increased attention received by participating in such programs.

Research Limitations

There is a large body of literature that tends to emphasize the negative aspects of integrated education. Indeed, integration poses many practical concerns, but, further research is required in order to adequately assess this new movement in education. Research thus far has been criticized on the basis of a number of methodological flaws, therefore empirically sound conclusions regarding the outcomes of mainstreaming are difficult to make.

One drawback associated with most research regarding mainstreaming is the tendency to either focus on only one specific disability or to erroneously group various types of exceptionalities under one label. Undoubtedly, one cannot generalize the findings of a scale designed for the mentally retarded to all handicapping labels, nor should a scale be considered valid if the different types of exceptionalities are not considered. As discussed above, more recent research in fact, suggests that benefits of mainstreaming may be received by only certain populations of exceptional students (Carlberg et al., 1980). It seems that children with different types of exceptionalities have different kinds of experiences in integrated settings. The literature in this area is extremely limited, and those studies that have been published are considerably dated. Therefore, more research into the effects of regular class placement on different kinds of exceptional children is greatly needed.

Furthermore, not only should factors such as type of handicap, but severity of handicap should be considered as well in mainstreaming studies. It appears

the majority of research concentrates on the experiences of severely handicapped or mentally retarded individuals. It is important to assess the experiences of these children, yet it is just as important to assess the integration experiences of higher functioning handicapped children as well.

Not only must research control for differing types and severity of handicaps, but the social and personal characteristics of the child outside the handicap should be considered as well. Many studies assume that all children with a particular handicapping label are identical. Social and individual variables such as age, developmental level, socioeconomic status, race, personality and sex of the child may also play a role in the adjustment to integration. Research in this area for non-disabled children has been done; it is now important to extend such research to children with exceptionalities as well.

More research is required regarding specific issues such as support service availability, length and type of in-service training, and quality of instruction with respect to programming and placement procedures. Ontario legislation encourages the availability of a wide range of placements so that the best possible alternative can be provided for each exceptional child. The evaluation of service availability and placement practices are limited in number, as well as analyses of the satisfaction and success of different program delivery models. Literature suggests that these areas represent critical issues and are persistent concerns as expressed by many of the participants involved.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly, the general philosophy of mainstreaming is a giant step forward for the rights of handicapped individuals to quality education and greater opportunity in wider society. Unfortunately, there appears to be a rift between its theory and practice. It has been argued that there has been more attention given to placing exceptional children in the least restrictive environment than with educating them in the least restrictive environment. It is imperative that the practice of mainstreaming move beyond mere satisfaction of a legal requirement, and more importantly, concentrate on satisfaction of curricular requirements. In many cases, the practice of mainstreaming has involved the use of existing services without consultancy, specialized support, individualized programming, and evaluation of programming. It seems mainstreaming has been implemented without consideration of important factors such as teacher-student ratios, ratios of exceptional-to-non-exceptional children, classroom layout, and appropriate developmental matches between student and placement.

Undoubtedly, mainstreaming has hit the educational system at a time when it is least financially prepared. Teachers are becoming burdened with increasing student populations and are being pressured with higher academic expectations; thus they are enduring much frustration. As one author points out, "The emphasis on higher achievement scores brought on by the effective schools movement may dampen the enthusiasm of service providers for

implementing a full-time mainstreaming model" (Semmel et al., 1991, p.19).

This is not to say however, that mainstreaming should be abandoned, nor put on the backburner. Instead, it is more important than ever that methods of special education delivery be reviewed and re-evaluated. While many educators promote full inclusion as the best alternative, there seems to be a need requiring school boards to offer a variety of alternatives; where placement depends on appropriate matches between student needs and proper educational setting.

It has been just over ten years since the implementation of Bill 82, yet the integration movement is still dominated by much controversy and debate. The controversy has shifted; however, and exists not with the philosophy behind it, but with the nature in which it should be implemented. In spite of widespread agreement that children with special needs should be included in general education to a greater extent than they have been in the past, there continues to be concern expressed over how much inclusion is appropriate. Furthermore, the concern of many is that the wellbeing of both the exceptional and non-exceptional student as well as the classroom teacher will be compromised if integration is implemented hastily or with inadequate development of necessary supports.

Importantly though, many of the problems and concerns that have plagued the movement in the past have been realized, and efforts are being made to better meet the needs of students and teachers. It is now important to

better meet the needs of students and teachers. It is now important to assess whether this realization has resulted in effective change. It seems the question for future research no longer involves an issue of 'if' exceptional children should be integrated, but requires an examination of 'how' exceptional children should be integrated.

Purpose

In 1980, the Education Amendment Act proposed a restructuring of the current model of special education. It mandated that every child has the right to publicly supported education, regardless of his or her special needs. However, planning for implementation of the law was left to the interpretation of the individual boards of education. In fact, fourteen years after the introduction of this new law there exists a diverse set of delivery models unique to each provincial board of education. Although the Ministry of Education's Handbook (1984) implies that suitable programming can be best achieved if a continuum of services is offered, many boards have developed and implemented very different philosophies (Weber, 1988). The Waterloo and Hamilton Catholic Boards of Education, for example, have implemented a delivery model known as "full inclusion" (Shaw, 1990). This particular model challenges the traditional Cascade Model suggested by the Ministry of Education, and considers placement in the regular classroom as the only form of integrated education. Thus, the continuum between segregation and integration in essence is removed.

While the practice of full inclusion in Ontario is unique to the Waterloo and Hamilton school boards, it is a movement which is gaining momentum. The province of New Brunswick for example, possesses legislation (Bill 85) which strongly supports full integration. It requires that to the maximum extent possible, students are to be educated with their age-appropriate peers in the

least restrictive environment in which their academic needs can be satisfactorily met (Shaw, 1990). There is also increasing public pressure from parents and advocacy groups calling for full integration in the regular classroom accompanied by the complete elimination of special education classes altogether. Such groups are pressing for further amendments to the Education Act which would bring in a clear legal requirement for full integration, similar to the practices of Hamilton and Waterloo Boards of Education (Shaw, 1990). While other boards of education have not yet reached this state, it is apparent that the traditional Cascade Model, originally proposed by the Ministry of Education is becoming the centre of controversy. The model has been completely discarded in Hamilton and Waterloo, and is only practiced to a minimal degree in other school boards. Many boards offer a very limited continuum of services, with the majority of exceptional students being integrated into the regular classroom.

Current trends toward full inclusion have caused considerable concern among many educators. It is feared that this approach will leave many children with special needs *unserved* and/or *mis-served*. Many educators argue that increased pressure to educate exceptional students in the regular classroom has resulted in an inappropriate selection of students for the mainstream. Perhaps in the overzealous attempt to educate students in the regular classroom, there has been a lack of regard for the child's education, and the amount of extra burden being placed on the regular classroom

teacher. It has been argued that too many exceptional students are simply being dumped back into the regular classroom, without adequate levels of support and without consideration of the child's individual needs. In fact, many educators maintain that 'full inclusion', or placement in the regular classroom, may not be most conducive to academic success for certain groups of exceptional children. It certainly seems unreasonable to assume that all exceptional children will receive the benefits of a regular classroom environment.

It is hypothesized that factors such as type and severity of exceptionality, school environment, classroom environment, availability of support, teacher/parental attitude toward integration, etc. are often neglected in placement selection practices; yet these are factors which must be carefully considered in placing a child in the most appropriate educational environment. Furthermore, perhaps educators should look even beyond a child's handicapping label, and carefully assess the unique learning needs, styles, and interests of that student when determining suitability for the mainstream environment.

Thus it is evident an evaluation of a current model of special education service delivery is necessary. Undoubtedly, integration has been firmly entrenched in our educational system, however, there now exists a need to determine exactly how this philosophy is being interpreted by educators and put forth into action. While the practice of integration has been widely

accepted throughout the educational community, there still exists considerable controversy surrounding its definition and underlying assumptions. More specifically, is the regular classroom the most appropriate form of integrated education for all children, or is there still a need for a range of placement options? Is the outcome of regular class placement dependent on the type and severity of the exceptionality? Are there careful selection procedures for students placed in the regular classroom? Are factors such as class size, exceptional-to-non-exceptional student ratio, teacher and parental support for placement, classroom environment, availability of support services etc. typically considered in placement decisions?

In assessing the perceived appropriateness of regular class placement, it is important to address integration practices as they exist in regular classrooms. For example, are individual education plans developed for each exceptional child, and are these plans systematically monitored and reviewed? Are regular classroom teachers adequately prepared to accommodate exceptional students in terms of support services and in-service training? Moreover, how do the above conditions affect the attitude toward integration expressed by the teacher? Undoubtedly, the answers to these questions are highly relevant to the suitability of the mainstream environment for certain exceptional students.

Therefore this study is intended to assess the delivery of special education services to students with special needs. More specifically, it represents an effort to examine educator perceptions regarding existing integration practices

and the suitability of regular class placement for exceptional children with varying types and degrees of exceptionality. This review will be based on principal, regular and special educator responses to a semi-structured questionnaire. Specific issues that will be addressed include perceptions toward: (a) an appropriate service delivery model; (b) the adequacy of regular class placement (as a function of type and severity of exceptionality); (c) integration practices within the regular classroom (program planning, placement selection procedures, support services); (d) regular teacher attitude toward integration; and (e) recommendations for improvement.

The results of this study will show whether the efficacy of regular class placement is experienced by all children, or whether it varies with the type and severity of a child's exceptionality. Furthermore, this study will be of value in assessing the perceived effectiveness and satisfaction with the practice of integration, and may help uncover important variables that may play a role in the success or failure of regular class placement.

Method

Sample

The respondents were randomly selected from 82 elementary schools in a board of education within Ontario; subjects represented urban, suburban, and rural areas of the province. The board of education involved in this study was chosen for several reasons. A large school board (82 elementary schools) was desired so that an adequate selection of subjects could be attained. In addition, this school board is diverse in terms of socioeconomic status and geographic location which ensures its generalizability. Three groups of respondents were included in the study, including regular teachers, resource personnel, and administrative staff. The teacher group included regular classroom teachers from kindergarten through grade eight. The resource group consisted of resource teachers, special education teachers, and itinerant teachers. The administrative group consists of school principals at the elementary level.

In total, 300 questionnaires were distributed, and a total of 189 were returned to the principals of each school involved. This represents a response rate of 63%. Some basic descriptive information on the entire sample is presented in Table 1. Demographic information for each group is also reported in Tables 2, 3, and 4. The mean age of the entire sample was within the 41-45 age bracket ($SD=1.6$). Of the total respondents, 68% were female, and 32% male. Fifty-nine percent of the respondents were regular classroom

Table 1

Demographic Data for the Entire Sample (Total N = 189)			N
1. Age	Mean=41-45 years, SD=1.6, Range=20-60		185
2. Gender	68% Female, 32% Male		189
3. Years of Teaching Experience	Mean=11-20 years, SD=1.04, Range=0-20+		187
4. Position	Regular Classroom Teacher	58.7%	189
	Special Education Teacher	25.4%	
	Administration	15.9%	
5. Highest Degree Earned	Incomplete Degree	0.5%	186
	Bachelor Degree	32.8%	
	Masters Degree	4.8%	
	Diploma	3.2%	
	Bachelor of Education	45.5%	
	Master of Education	11.6%	
6. Special Education Experience	Any Special Education Training	85.7%	189
	University Courses	85.7%	
	Personal Experience	48.0%	
	In-service Training	43.9%	
	Related Educational Degree	6.3%	
	Other	6.3%	
	Ministry Courses		189
	Part I	55%	
	Part II	34.9%	
	Specialist	29.5%	
7. Region	Urban	40.2%	189
	Suburban	26.5%	
	Rural	33.3%	

Table 2

Demographic Data for Regular Classroom Teachers (N = 111)			N
1. Age	Mean=41-45 years, SD=1.6, Range=20-60		108
2. Gender	77% Female, 23% Male		111
3. Years of Teaching Experience	Mean=11-20 years, SD=1.03, Range=0-20+		111
4. Highest Degree Earned	Incomplete Degree	1%	108
	Bachelor Degree	39%	
	Masters Degree	2%	
	Diploma	3%	
	Bachelor of Education	51%	
	Master of Education	4%	
5. Special Education Experience	Any Special Education Training	78%	111
	University Courses	28%	
	Personal Experience	41%	
	In-service Training	34%	
	Related Educational Degree	3%	
	Other	5%	
	Ministry Courses		111
	Part I	43%	
	Part II	24%	
	Specialist	19%	
6. Region	Urban	45%	111
	Suburban	23%	
	Rural	32%	

Table 3**Demographic Information for Special Education Teachers (N = 48) N**

1. Age	Mean=41-45 years, SD=1.6, Range=26-60		47
2. Gender	67% Females, 33% Males		48
3. Years of Teaching Experience	Mean=11-20 years, SD=1.12, Range=0-20+		47
4. Highest Degree Earned	Incomplete Degree	0	48
	Bachelor Degree	30%	
	Masters Degree	2%	
	Diploma	4%	
	Bachelor of Education	54%	
	Master of Education	10%	
5. Special Education Experience	Any Special Education Training	100%	48
	University Courses	63%	
	Personal Experience	50%	
	In-service Training	56%	
	Related Educational Degree	17%	
	Other	4%	
	Ministry Courses		48
	Part I	92%	
	Part II	67%	
	Specialist	58%	
6. Region	Urban	27%	48
	Suburban	38%	
	Rural	35%	

Table 4

Demographic Data for Principals (N = 30)			N
1. Age	Mean=46-50 years, SD=1.3, Range=20-60		30
2. Gender	37% Females, 63% Males		30
3. Years of Teaching Experience	Mean=20+ years, SD=0.65, Range=1-20+		29
4. Highest Degree Earned	Incomplete Degree	0	30
	Bachelor Degree	20%	
	Masters Degree	20%	
	Diploma	0	
	Bachelor of Education	17%	
	Master of Education	43%	
5. Special Education Experience	Any Special Education Training	90%	30
	University Courses	20%	
	Personal Experience	73%	
	In-service Training	60%	
	Related Educational Degree	3%	
	Other	10%	
	Ministry Courses		30
	Part I	40%	
	Part II	23%	
	Specialist	23%	
6. Region	Urban	43%	30
	Suburban	20%	
	Rural	37%	

teachers, 25% were special education teachers and 16% were principals. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents had received bachelor degrees, 3% had completed a college level diploma, and 16% of the sample possessed graduate degrees.

Table 1 also presents the distribution of educational experience (teaching and special education training) for the entire sample. The average number of years respondents had been teaching was within the bracket of 11-20 years ($SD=1.04$). Eighty-five percent of the respondents had specific training in special education. The breakdown of special education training is also displayed in Table 1. Most respondents (86%) possessed university courses in special education, and just over half (55%) of the respondents had obtained Part I of the Ministry of Education Specialist in Special Education. Percent distributions by region are also presented in Table 1. Forty percent of the respondents were working in an urban centre, 27% in an suburban region and 33% in a rural location.

Measure

The questionnaire was developed by the author through a review of the literature identifying major issues and persistent concerns regarding the practice of integration. The final product was obtained as a result of an initial pilot study which confirmed the face validity of the instrument. Some questions, however, were revised so that language was appropriate to the board of education under study. The test-retest reliability of the questionnaire

was also determined from the pilot study (N=10). Using an interval of 2 weeks, scores were compared on 2 occasions establishing a reliability coefficient of .82.

The questionnaire was designed to assess the delivery of special education services to elementary school children with special needs. More specifically, it represents an effort to examine the adequacy of regular class placement for children with different types of exceptionalities. First, this involves an examination of the perceived appropriateness of different delivery alternatives for various exceptional students. Second, it involves an examination of teacher perceptions regarding integration practices as they are happening in the respective schools.

The questionnaire is composed of two sections. The first section (Part A) requests information regarding specific integration procedures that are being practiced within the regular classroom. It also elicits the general perceptions and attitudes toward integration held by those involved in the educational process. The second section (Part B) is designed to obtain educator perceptions regarding the adequacy of different delivery alternatives for students with different kinds of exceptionalities. The questionnaire was developed by the author through a review of the literature in order to identify the needs and persistent concerns regarding the practice of integration. It contains both multiple-choice, and open-ended questions so as to be easily self-administered and not too demanding of respondent's time. A copy of the

questionnaire is included in Appendix B.

1) Part A. The first section consists of 26 statements arranged in a semi-structured format. In addition to multiple-choice statements, open-ended questions were also included in order to provide room for written comments. The questions request information regarding integration practices and procedures within the board and the respective school. Questions are intended to elicit educator perceptions regarding the development and review of individual education plans, availability of in-service training, as well as the availability and utility of both human and physical resource support. Questions were also included in order to elicit respondent's general perceptions of integration and the perceived benefit to both exceptional and non-exceptional students. Several questions were designed to obtain educator perceptions as to the appropriateness of various educational placements for students with certain exceptionalities.

2) Part B. The second section consists of seven questions arranged in a semi-structured format. The purpose of this final section was to obtain respondent's ratings of the most appropriate delivery alternative with respect to specific types and varying levels of exceptionalities. Questions were also included in order to obtain information regarding the factors commonly considered by the school with respect to educational placement decisions. The remaining two questions were included in order to establish which procedures/practices require further improvement, revision or change in order

to better meet the needs of exceptional students.

Procedure

In total, 300 questionnaires were distributed to the three sample groups belonging to six identified regions within the board of education under study. Five schools were randomly selected from each area, comprising a total of 30 participating schools. A covering letter was included with each questionnaire explaining the selection procedures, proposed use of the information supplied, and assuring the respondents of the confidentiality in which their responses will be treated. Postcards were mailed two weeks after the questionnaires were initially delivered to serve as a reminder to respondents to return the questionnaires.

Data was examined through use of descriptive, correlational and regression analyses to determine relationships among variables, and to establish the parameters of practice in educational mainstreaming. The specific needs, views and attitudes were elicited for all three groups involved in the educational process.

Results

The results are presented in several sections: (a) information on the range of placements available in the board of education under study, and opinions regarding service delivery; (b) opinions regarding student placement as a function of type and severity of exceptionality; (c) integration practices occurring within the classroom; (d) attitude toward integration; and (e) opinions concerning improvements to service delivery and priority areas for action in the future.

The results section includes quantitative analyses of ratings gathered from the survey as well as qualitative summaries of the open-ended comments of the respondents. The most frequently cited comments are summarized in tables throughout the text. The comments were selected for the frequency in which they occurred, as well as for their centrality to integration issues.

Descriptive information (frequency, mean, standard deviation) for each item of the questionnaire is presented in Appendix A. This includes overall ratings and group ratings for each question.

Board of Education's Service Delivery Model

Information concerning the range of placements available to exceptional students within their respective schools was determined through analysis of principal responses to relevant items on the identification sheet. Table 5 presents the range of special education services offered to exceptional students throughout

Table 5**Special Education Services offered by the Board of Education (N=30)**

Range of Services	f	%	N
1. Withdrawal Option	30	100	30
2. Full Integration	30	100	30
3. Comprehensive Special Education Classes	24	80	30

Types of Special Education Classes

1. Home School Model	20	66	30
2. Social Skills Class	6	21	30
3. Class for Learning Disabilities	6	19	30
4. Class for the Gifted	4	12	30
5. Class for Developmental Disabilities	3	9	30
6. Other (not specified)	2	5	30

the schools sampled.

The results reveal that all schools offered a continuum of special education services rather than an exclusive model of full integration. It also seems that efforts are made to integrate into the regular classroom as much as possible; 67% of principals responded that exceptional students 'always' or 'almost always' participate in the regular classroom for the majority of the school day.

Table 5 shows that almost all schools offer a combination of withdrawal and full integration for exceptional students. A withdrawal model is a method of providing direct (one-on-one) instruction to exceptional students in a resource room for part of the school day. This method eliminates the stigma of a special class while still providing specialized services for students with special needs. Full integration represents an effort to place exceptional students in the regular class environment with the assistance of specialized services for remediation and support.

All schools offered a withdrawal option for exceptional students, and all schools offered the option of full integration in the regular classroom. The mean number of exceptional students integrated on a part-time and full-time basis in the regular classroom was 1.5. It should be noted, however, that this figure may be a low estimate as students are not typically identified until the later part of grade one or grade two. Therefore students in the early primary years may possess special needs, but may not be formally identified with such. The average size of a regular class was between 26-30 students.

Most schools (80%) also offered at least one comprehensive special education class. The types of special education classes offered throughout the schools varied; a homeschool model (includes varying types and levels of exceptional students) was provided in 66% of the schools, social skills (emotional/behavioral) class offered in 21% of the schools, class for the learning disabled was offered in 19% of the schools, class for the gifted in 12% of the schools, and class for the developmentally disabled (trainable mentally retarded) in only 9% of the schools. It should also be noted that certain schools possessed more than one type of special education class. The mean number of comprehensive classes for each school was 2.0.

Opinions about Special Education Service Delivery

Three questions were included in the survey that addressed respondent's general opinions regarding the delivery of special education services to students with special needs. More specifically, the questions addressed the issue of whether schools should provide a continuum of special education services for exceptional students or whether the full integration model was more favourable. The mean response scores and frequency distributions are reported in Table 6.

The findings reveal that there is a high level of agreement among respondents that there continues to be a need for a range of placement options, and that the regular classroom (full integration) is not the most appropriate placement for all exceptional students. These perceptions were

Table 6**Respondent Opinions of Special Education Service Delivery****1. Integration means that every exceptional student should be placed in the regular class on a full-time basis (#18).**

Strongly Agree	2	3	4	Strongly Disagree	Mean	SD	N
1				5			
5	11	6	42	35	3.92	1.14	188
Regular Class Teacher					3.97	1.10	110
Special Education Teacher					3.60	1.28	48
Principal					4.23	0.94	30

2. School boards should provide a continuum of placement options for exceptional students (#19).

Strongly Agree	2	3	4	Strongly Disagree	Mean	SD	N
1				5			
54	38	5	2	1	1.59	0.76	188
Regular Class Teacher					1.71	0.85	110
Special Education Teacher					1.46	0.62	48
Principal					1.33	0.48	30

3. There continues to be a need for self-contained classrooms for some exceptional students (#24).

Strongly Agree	2	3	4	Strongly Disagree	Mean	SD	N
1				5			
60	33	4	1	2	1.54	0.82	188
Regular Class Teacher					1.48	0.69	110
Special Education Teacher					1.63	0.94	48
Principal					1.60	1.07	30

elicited through the question: "Integration means that every exceptional student should be placed in the regular classroom on a full-time basis" (question #18). Responses were scored on a five point scale from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree), therefore a low score indicates agreement and a high score indicates disagreement. Seventy-seven percent of the respondents disagreed with this statement, 6% were undecided, and only 16% agreed with the statement (mean=3.92, SD=1.14).

Responses were scored similarly for the question: "School boards should provide a continuum of placement options for exceptional students" (question #19). Subjects responded quite positively to this statement suggesting a high level of agreement with a continuum of placements model. Ninety-two percent of respondents agreed with the statement, 5% were undecided, and only 3% disagreed with the statement. The responses for the third item were scored using the scale outlined above. As indicated in Table 6, scores were highly clustered around 'agree' and 'strongly agree'. Ninety-two percent of respondents agreed with the statement that "There continues to be a need for self-contained classrooms for some exceptional students" (#24). Only four percent of the respondents were undecided, and 3% disagreed.

A one-way Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was done using the above three items as dependent variables in order to determine similarities or differences in overall responses for the three groups. The independent variable for this procedure was group membership (regular teachers, special education

teachers, and principals). The results indicate that there were no significant differences of perception among the three groups. Therefore, it appears that most respondents regardless of group membership, were strongly in favour of a service delivery model that offered students a continuum of placement options.

A final question was included in order to elicit written comments from respondents concerning the appropriateness of regular class placement. Consistent with the results reported above, the majority of respondents (86%) disagreed that the regular classroom was an optimal learning environment for all exceptional students (question 1b). The most frequently cited comments are displayed in Table 7.

Generally, comments suggested that regular class placement was not favourable under present workload and resource conditions. Many respondents commented that exceptional students require one-on-one support and individualized attention which can not be provided in the regular classroom with high student-teacher ratios, and insufficient levels of support. Respondents appeared to perceive this situation as detrimental to exceptional students functioning in the regular classroom, as well as for their non-exceptional peers. Many felt that regular class placement hindered the education received by the average student, as much teacher time was directed toward supporting the exceptional student. Among those respondents who perceived regular class placement as an optimal learning environment for

Table 7

**Full Integration as an Alternative for all Students
Most Frequently Cited Comments**

f	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
46	Exceptional students need one-on-one instruction where they can receive proper academic and emotional support. This is difficult to provide in regular classrooms with high student-teacher ratios.	
22	We must balance service, effects and cost of integration for <u>all</u> individuals, not just exceptional ones. Full integration hinders the education received by the average student.	
21	The regular classroom is not appropriate for students with behavioral exceptionalities.	
19	Depends on the individual needs of the students.	
16	Current conditions within the regular classroom (e.g. high student-teacher ratio, inadequate amount of support) make it a poor learning environment for exceptional students.	
14	No single service delivery option is optimal for all exceptional students.	
13	The regular classroom is not appropriate for students with severe exceptionalities.	
9	Depends on the attitude of the regular classroom teacher.	
7	Exceptional students in the regular classroom experience low self-esteem due to high failure rate. These students require a small class with individualized attention in order to gain confidence and strategies to deal with the learning difficulty.	
		<u>Strengths</u>
7	Social benefits of the regular classroom environment are important for exceptional and non-exceptional students.	
2	The regular classroom environment is the closest representation of the real world we have. It is the best place for them develop and practice the skills they will need outside of school.	

exceptional students, the social benefits of integration were commonly cited as an explanation.

Student Placement as a Function of Type and Severity of Exceptionality

As discussed above, respondents strongly agreed that regular class placement was not the most appropriate learning environment for all exceptional students. The findings revealed that educators rate the 'continuum of service' model as more favourable than a model of 'full integration'. Therefore, the purpose of this section was to uncover the factors that may explain a student's suitability or non-suitability for the regular classroom. It was hypothesized that the respondent's rating of placement suitability was dependent on the type and severity of the student's exceptionality.

Severity of Exceptionality. The issue of the effect of the severity of a student's exceptionality on student placement was assessed in three separate questions. The first two questions required the sample to respond to a statement indicating their level of agreement or disagreement. Responses were scored on a five point scale from "1" (Strongly Agree) to "5" (Strongly Disagree). Therefore, a low score reflected strong agreement, and a high score reflected low agreement with the statement. The first item elicited respondents perceptions of the appropriateness of regular class placement for students with mild exceptionalities (question #22). Scores for this item were highly clustered around 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree'. Eighty-eight percent of

all respondents agreed that students with mild exceptionalities should be placed in the regular classroom, 3% indicated disagreement, and 9% were undecided.

The scores on the second question, which elicited respondent's perceptions regarding the appropriateness of regular class placement for students with severe exceptionalities (question #23) were more evenly distributed across the scale. Twenty-nine percent of the respondents felt that students with severe exceptionalities should be placed in the regular classroom, 24% were undecided, and 47% of the respondents felt that students with severe exceptionalities should not be placed in the regular class. Therefore it seems respondents were more likely to consider students with mild exceptionalities as acceptable candidates for regular class placement as opposed to students with more severe exceptionalities.

In order to assess the differences in mean scores across groups, a one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed. The above two items were used as dependent variables, and position (regular classroom teachers, special education teachers, principals) was used as the independent variable. With the use of Wilks' criterion, the combined DVs were significantly affected by position, $F(4,356)=2.58, p<.05$. Analysis of univariate F's showed a significant effect of position on item #23 (appropriateness of regular class for severe exceptionalities) $F(2,179)=4.92, p<.01$, but not on item #22 (appropriateness of regular class for mild exceptionalities). Using the

Bonferonni Split criterion an alpha level of .025 was considered satisfactory. Post hoc comparisons were done in order to further explore group differences for item #23. At $p < .01$ there were no statistical differences found between the three groups.

The above two questions reveal that, overall, respondents tend to agree that regular class placement is appropriate for students with mild exceptionalities, but do not think that it is favourable for more severely handicapped students. The third question looks more closely at the effects of severity of exceptionality with respect to various types of exceptionality. This question required respondents to choose a placement alternative for certain types of exceptional students, according to the severity of the disability (question #2B). Each respondent provided this rating with respect to both academic and social progress. The six placement alternatives in the original question (special school, correspondence, full-time special class, part-time special class, regular class with withdrawal, regular class with special support) were recoded to result in an outcome of two placement alternatives (regular class placement or special class placement). Figure 1 presents the respondents ratings regarding the suitability of regular class placement by the severity of the student's exceptionality in terms of academic progress. Figure 2 represents the same ratings in terms of social progress. The exceptionalities marked by an asterisk in both tables are represented by only one bar. In these cases (gifted, visual impairment, multiple handicap), the severity level was not

Figure 1:

Rating of Regular Class Placement Academic Progress

Note. Beh.=Behavioral; HLS=Hearing/Language/Speech; Aut.=Autism; Dev.=Developmental; Phys.=Physical; Vis.=Visual; Mult.=Multiple.

Figure 2:

Rating of Regular Class Placement Social Progress

Note. Beh.=Behavioral; HLS=Hearing/Language/Speech; Aut.=Autism; Dev.=Developmental; Phys.=Physical; Vis.=Visual; Mult.=Multiple.

considered. Therefore, the single bar represents the overall rating for academic progress (Figure 1) and social progress (Figure 2).

For both academic and social progress, the respondent's ratings of the appropriateness of regular class placement was dependent on the severity of the student's exceptionality. Respondents were more likely to rate the regular class as appropriate for mild-moderate levels of a handicap as opposed to more severe levels. This was consistent for all types of exceptionalities.

The most significant difference between ratings as function of severity level were noted for students possessing learning disabilities and behavioral exceptionalities. In terms of academic progress (Figure 1), 66% of respondents rated the regular class as the most appropriate placement for students with mild-moderate behavioral difficulties. This figure decreased to 20% when the condition was considered severe. The percent distributions were similar in terms of the student's social progress (Figure 2). Seventy percent of respondents rated the regular class as the most appropriate learning environment at the mild-moderate level, however, this figure decreased to 20% when the condition was considered severe. This pattern was evident for students with learning disabilities as well. In terms of academic progress, as the severity of the exceptionality increased, the distribution of respondents who rated regular class as most appropriate dropped significantly. For example, 83% of the cases considered the regular class as suitable for students with mild-moderate disabilities, but only 29% felt this was true when the condition

was considered severe. Ratings of social progress mirrored those reported for academic progress. Clearly, the number of respondents (85%) who regarded the regular class as the most suitable placement decreased significantly (41%) as the severity level increased.

Further inspection of Figures 1 and 2 revealed that this pattern was evident at varying degrees for students possessing hearing/language/speech disorders, physical disabilities, developmental disabilities, and autism. These findings are consistent with the written comments reported in Table 7. A number of respondents considered the severity of a student's exceptionality as a condition upon the suitability of regular class placement.

Type of Exceptionality. Inspection of Figure 3 reveals that respondent's rating of the appropriateness of regular class placement varied with the type of a student's exceptionality. Over 50% of respondents rated the regular class as the most appropriate academic learning environment for students with communication disorders (hearing/language/speech and learning disabilities), and for students who have physical and visual exceptionalities. On the other hand, over 50% of respondents considered the special class as the most appropriate educational environment for students possessing behavioral difficulties, developmental delays, intellectual giftedness, autism and multiple exceptionalities.

With respect to the exceptional student's social adjustment, over 50% of respondents rated the regular class as the most suitable environment for

Figure 3:

Rating of Regular Class Placement Social Versus Academic Progress

Note. Beh.=Behavioral; HLS=Hearing/Language/Speech; Aut.=Autism; Dev.=Developmental; Phys.=Physical; Vis.=Visual; Mult.=Multiple.

students with communication disorders (hearing/language/speech and learning disabilities), intellectual giftedness, physical disabilities and visual impairments. Consistent with the results for academic progress, most respondents considered children with behavioral disorders, autism, developmental delays and multiple exceptionalities to be best suited for special class placement. It is interesting to note that gifted students were considered candidates for regular class placement by most respondents when social progress was considered, but when the student's academic progress was considered the placement rating became more restrictive.

It should also be pointed out that, in general, the percent distributions for ratings in favour of regular class placement increased slightly for each type of exceptionality when social as opposed to academic progress was considered. That is, subjects were more likely to rate regular class placement as more conducive to a student's social adjustment than to the student's academic progress.

Integration Practices in the Regular Classroom

In assessing the appropriateness of regular class placement for certain exceptional students, it is important to address integration practices as they exist in regular classrooms. It is hypothesized that respondent's perceptions of the appropriateness of regular class placement will be affected by the immediate practices and characteristics of the classroom environment.

Undoubtedly, the presence or absence of certain factors may affect the suitability of the mainstream environment for various exceptional students. If the regular classroom teacher's needs are not being met, it is unlikely the student's needs will be met. These conditions may well explain their particular perceptions toward special education program delivery.

It was first necessary to establish the kinds of practices/modifications being made for exceptional students, secondly to establish the kinds of supports being offered to the teacher in order to carry out these expectations; finally, it is important to determine whether these factors are typically considered when a placement decision is made.

Student Programming. The responses to items concerning student programming characteristics were scored on a five point scale which indicated the frequency of occurrence for each characteristic. Scores were recoded so that high mean scores represent high frequency of occurrence, and low mean scores indicate low frequencies. The mean response scores are presented in Figure 4. Percent Distributions for these items are displayed in Table 8.

With respect to student programming and instruction, the results clearly show that respondents feel their workload has increased with the practice of integration. Seventy percent of the sample reported that this was 'always' or 'almost always' the case. Twenty-five percent claimed this was sometimes the case and only 5% claimed it was 'never' or 'almost never' the case (mean=4.00, SD=0.93). With the assumption that workload had increased

Figure 4:

Ratings of Programming Characteristics

Frequency of Occurrence :

Note. High mean indicates high frequency of occurrence.

Note. Dev.=IEPs are developed; Impl.=IEPs are implemented; Rev.=IEPs are reviewed; Mod.=IEPs are modified; Chge.=Placements are changed; Workl.=Regular teacher workload; Plan.=Planning time is scheduled.

Table 8

Respondent Ratings of (A) Programming Characteristics and (B) Educational Services: Percent Distributions and Means/SDs

(A) Perceptions of Programming Characteristics

	Never			Always				
	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD	N
IEPs are Developed	2	2	8	11	77	4.60	0.87	185
IEPs are Implemented	1	1	10	46	42	4.25	0.80	185
IEPs Reviewed Regularly	2	3	15	32	48	4.20	0.95	185
Ineffective IEPs Modified	1	1	12	39	47	4.29	0.82	186
Inappropriate Placements Changed	2	3	14	39	42	4.15	0.91	175
Workload has Increased	1	4	25	34	36	4.00	0.93	186
Planning Time Scheduled	13	22	36	17	12	2.93	1.18	188

(B) Educational Services Provided to Teachers

	Never			Always				
	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD	N
In-service Training	9	29	44	16	2	2.73	0.91	188
Resources/Equipment	2	7	48	36	7	3.38	0.81	183
Informed of Available Resources	2	14	47	28	9	3.29	0.88	184
In-classroom Support	2	10	24	39	25	3.77	0.98	183
In-classroom Support is Effective	3	8	35	46	8	3.46	0.89	181

Note. IEP=Individual Education Plan.

significantly for teachers, a question was included in order to determine whether preparation or planning time was provided as a form of compensation. The scores were evenly distributed across the scale, with 29% responding 'always' or 'almost always', 36% claiming it was offered 'sometimes' and another 35% claiming it was 'never' or 'almost never' provided (mean=2.93, SD=1.18). Therefore it seems that the practice of integration requires regular teachers to spend more time on programming and instruction, however, it appears that additional preparation time is not always provided in order to accommodate for this increase.

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance was done using the above two items (workload and preparation time) as dependent variables and position (regular classroom teachers, special education teachers, principals) as the independent variable. The combined DVs were significantly affected by position, $F(4,363)=6.30$, $p<.001$. Analysis of univariate F-tests showed a significant effect of position on item 8 (workload), but not item 9 (preparation time), $F(2,183)=9.34$, $p<.001$. Using the Bonferonni Split criterion, an alpha level of .025 was determined to be satisfactory for significance of univariate F-tests. From the results of post hoc comparisons (Tukeys $p<.01$), it appears that regular classroom teachers (mean=1.78) were more likely to perceive an increase in workload than were special education teachers (mean=2.44).

It appears however, that although workload has increased for regular classroom teachers, with little or no planning time provided to accommodate

these conditions, program modifications are still being made for exceptional students. The responses to items concerning the development and implementation of individual education plans for exceptional students was quite positive. As Figure 4 indicates, the mean response scores for all items concerning program planning was above 4. This indicates that these practices are 'almost always' carried out.

Seventy-seven percent of the sample responded that individualized education plans were 'always' developed, and 87% claimed that such plans were "always" or "almost always" implemented. Similarly, when questioned regarding outcomes of individual education plans (IEP's), 80% were confident that the program plans were reviewed regularly, and 86% were confident that such plans were modified if necessary. It should also be noted that once a student's educational placement was determined, it was not necessarily considered 'permanent'. Eighty-one percent of respondents were confident that a placement could be changed if found to be inappropriate or ineffective.

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance was done using position as the independent variable and item #3 (IEP's are implemented), item #4 (IEP's are reviewed), and item #5 (ineffective IEP's are modified) as the dependent variables. The equality of variance assumption was not satisfactory for item #2 (IEP's are developed) and therefore could not be included in this analysis. The results indicated that this combination of variables was significantly affected by position, $F(6,358)=2.15$, $P<.05$. Using the Bonferonni Split criterion, an alpha

level ($p < .017$) was deemed to be satisfactory for significance of univariate F-tests. At this level, no two groups were significantly different for item #3, item #4, or item #5, therefore group differences could not be explored further.

Educational Services. Four items dealt with the levels of supportive services received by teachers. The responses to these items were scored on a five point scale which indicated the frequency with which each service was received. The mean response scores are displayed in Figure 5. Scores were recoded so that a high mean score reflects high levels of service and a low score indicates low levels of services. The frequency distributions for each item are reported in Table 8.

Generally, responses to items concerning supportive services provided to teachers of exceptional students were relatively neutral. With the exception of in-service training, the mean response scores for all services were slightly above 3, indicating that these services were provided some of the time. The mean response score for level of in-service training was slightly below 3.

When asked whether appropriate resources and special equipment were available to the regular classroom teacher, 43% claimed that this was 'always' or 'almost always' the case, but another 48% responded that this was only 'sometimes' the case. Nine percent responded negatively to the question. Results were similar when asked whether teachers were well informed of the availability of community and board resources). Thirty-seven percent of the sample responded that this occurred 'always' or 'almost always', another 47%

Figure 5:

Ratings of Educational Services

Frequency of Occurance

Note. High mean indicates high frequency of occurrence.

Note. Trn.=In-service training received; Res.=Resources/Special equipment are available; Inf.=Informed of available resources; Sup.=In-classroom support is provided; Efft.=Support is effective.

reported that this occurred 'sometimes', and 16% of respondents responded negatively to the question.

The remaining two questions (item #13 and item #14) dealt with the level and effectiveness of human resource support received by the regular classroom teacher. Responses to the question "In-classroom support is provided on a regularly scheduled basis for exceptional students functioning in the regular classroom" were relatively positive. Sixty-four percent of the sample were confident that support was "always" or "almost always" received, and 24% claimed that support was "sometimes" received. Twelve percent of respondents claimed that in-classroom support was not often received by regular classroom teachers.

Interestingly, those respondents who claimed in-classroom support was received to at least some degree, were only moderately satisfied with its effectiveness (question #14). Fifty-five percent of this sample perceived support to be effective "always" or "almost always", yet another 35% felt that such support was effective on only some occasions. Ten percent perceived the support to be ineffective. Therefore, it seems that although most respondents reported that regular classroom teachers received some level of support, a significant portion felt that this support was not always effective. This finding raises questions as to the level and quality of in-service training that is received. Certainly if monies are being allocated to ensure support is allocated, it is essential to ensure that such support is providing an effective

result.

Perceptions of in-service training were attained through the item "Teachers receive adequate in-service training (e.g. special workshops, presentations, visitation of other schools, etc.) with respect to dealing with exceptional students". Only 18% of the respondents reported that adequate in-service training had 'always' or 'almost always' been received. Forty-four percent of respondents claimed adequate in-service training was received some of the time, and another 38% claimed it was 'never' or 'almost never' received. Therefore, it appears educators are expected to integrate exceptional students in the regular classroom, yet the results show that many have not been provided with the training to effectively do so. A question was included to elicit what types of in-service training respondents felt were necessary. A listing of the most frequently cited comments are reported in Table 9.

The written comments provided by respondents outlined the need for teacher training to assist teachers with understanding specific exceptionalities, and with developing appropriate programs and adapting existing programs to meet the needs of exceptional students. Respondents were also concerned with the availability of in-service training. Many commented that professional development had been reduced as a result of budget cutbacks. In fact, it was suggested that such training was offered on an optional basis, and was scheduled after school hours. Many respondents felt this was an unreasonable expectation, as much of this time was already occupied with participation in co-

Table 9**Type of In-service Training Perceived to be Necessary
Most Frequently Cited Comments**

f	<u>Comment</u>
22	Overview of all exceptionalities, teaching strategies, and classroom management techniques.
13	Specific instruction on when and how to provide program modifications.
16	Workshops should be provided within school hours and with coverage.
14	Provision of in-service training should be regular and ongoing.
10	Visitation of other schools and classrooms is necessary.
8	Require information on how to deal effectively with students possessing behavioral exceptionalities.
4	Regular classroom teachers should possess a Specialist in Special Education. This should be part of the teacher training program.

curricular activities and program planning. Others suggested that school boards and faculties of education should make special education courses mandatory. If teachers are expected to teach students with special needs, than this should be a required element of the training process.

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance was done with position as the independent variable (regular teachers, special education teachers, and principals), and item #10 (adequate in-service training), item #11 (resources provided), item #12 (informed of available resources), and item #13 (provision of in-classroom support) as dependent variables. The assumption of equality of variances was not satisfied for item #14 (effectiveness of in-classroom support) and therefore was not included in this analysis. The results showed a significant effect of position on the combination of dependent variables, $F(8,346)=3.89$, $p<.001$. Analysis of univariate F-tests revealed a significant effect of position on item #11, $F(2,176)=4.80$, $p<.01$, on item #12, $F(2,176)=7.36$, $p<.001$, and on item #13, $F(2,176)=5.31$, $p<.01$. There was no significant effect of position on item #10. Post hoc comparisons were then done to further explore group differences.

Results of post hoc comparisons (Tukey's $p<.01$) for item #11 (provision of resource material) revealed a significant difference between the mean response of regular classroom teachers (mean=2.75) and principals (mean=2.27). It appears that principals perceived that appropriate resources were available to regular classroom teachers more frequently than did regular teachers

themselves.

This discrepancy in opinion was also present for item #12 (informed of available resources). Multiple comparison procedures ($p < .01$) revealed that principals were more likely to consider teachers to be well informed as to the availability of community, school and board resources, than were regular classroom teachers and special education teachers. A similar pattern is evident for item #13 (level of in-classroom support). Post hoc comparisons ($p < .01$) showed that principals perceived in-classroom support to be provided more frequently than did regular classroom teachers. Therefore, it appears that in general, principals rate the level of educational services provided to teachers more positively than do regular class teachers.

Placement Selection Practices. It is important to explore the practices within the regular classroom, and the educational services received, yet it is also important to assess the weight these factors hold when placement decisions are made. Not only are the classroom characteristics important considerations, but it is hypothesized that student characteristics such as type and severity of exceptionality, achievement level, developmental level and personality are important considerations in determining the appropriateness of the student's educational placement. Therefore, a question was included in the survey to assess the extent to which respondents felt their board considered such factors when determining a pupil's educational placement. Respondents were required to rate each item on a five point scale from "1" (not at all) to "5"

(very much). Therefore, a high score on an item indicates that it is often considered, whereas a low score indicates that it is not often considered. The results are presented in Table 10 and are arranged in order, from factors most considered to factors least considered.

Analysis of Table 10 shows that the school/board places much emphasis on factors such as the severity of the student's exceptionality (mean=4.35), the type of a student's exceptionality (mean=4.31), the individual needs of the student (mean=4.16) and parental support for the placement (mean=4.01) when determining placement suitability. These findings support the results presented in section 2. Respondent's perceptions of the appropriateness of regular class placement was heavily influenced by the type and severity of the student's exceptionality. The finding that parental support is weighted heavily in placement decisions may be explained by the fact that parental approval must be obtained before a placement recommendation is granted.

Factors such as student achievement level (mean=3.90), student characteristics (mean=3.85), and developmental level of student and class placement (mean=3.80) are also perceived as having relative importance in placement decisions. Most respondents perceived these factors to be considered 'very often' in such decisions. On the other hand, inspection of percent distributions (Table 10) indicates there was little agreement upon the extent to which the board considered factors such as school environment (mean=3.35), availability of support (mean=3.32), appropriate training of

Table 10**Ratings of Factors Considered in Placement Decisions**

	Extent of Consideration					M	SD	N
	Not at all				Very Much			
	1	2	3	4	5			
Severity of Exceptionality	1	3	9	37	50	4.35	0.76	183
Type of Exceptionality	1	0	15	37	47	4.31	0.76	183
Individual Needs of Student	1	4	15	40	40	4.16	0.86	183
Parental Support for Placement	3	5	18	35	39	4.01	1.02	182
Student Achievement Level	2	5	21	46	26	3.90	0.91	182
Student Characteristics	3	4	24	44	25	3.85	0.95	181
Developmental Level of Student and Placement	2	4	31	38	25	3.80	0.93	178
School Environment	6	15	34	28	16	3.35	1.09	183
Availability of Support	3	20	32	31	14	3.32	1.05	183
Appropriate Training of Support	6	18	33	28	15	3.27	1.10	181
Teacher Support for Placement	8	19	27	34	12	3.24	1.14	183
Student-Teacher Ratio	14	20	29	22	15	3.04	1.26	181
Exceptional-to-non-Exceptional Student Ratio	15	23	37	18	7	2.80	1.13	180
Classroom Layout	18	35	27	13	7	2.57	1.15	181

support personnel (mean=3.27), teacher support for placement (mean=3.24), and student-teacher ratio in class (mean=3.04). Scores were more widely spread across the scale in terms of these factors; the mean response tended to cluster around "sometimes considered".

Exceptional-to-non-exceptional student ratio (mean=2.80) and classroom layout (mean=2.57) were factors that respondents felt were considered the least in determining educational placements. Inspection of Table 10 shows that scores on these items were more heavily clustered around the lower end of the scale. The ratio of exceptional-to-non-exceptional students in a regular classroom was a concern that was supported by written comments. It was reported that although regular classrooms have a student cap, this does not include the students who are integrated into the regular class on a part-time basis. Exceptional students may be 'officially' enrolled in a special class, but may participate for much of the school day in the regular class. Therefore, a regular classroom may have reached it's cap, but have one or more exceptional students in addition to this maximum. It was also suggested that since some classes contain students with higher needs, the cap size should reflect the needs of the students within the regular class, rather than just the size of the class. It was suggested that an exceptional student count as 2-3 students when classroom caps are determined in order to allow all students the opportunity to receive adequate instructional time.

It should also be noted that respondents felt the teacher's advice and/or

recommendation concerning the appropriateness of regular class placement should be given more consideration as well. Many respondents commented that schools too often succumb to parental pressure when placement decisions are made; that what the parent wants is not always in the best interest of the student.

Educator Attitude Toward Integration

In order to assess the overall attitude toward integration, a composite score was formed from the scores for all groups on items #15, #16, and #17 of the questionnaire. Intercorrelations between these variables were positive and statistically significant. A reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) for the above items resulted in a reliability coefficient of 0.82.

These items were scored on a five-point scale with low scores indicating a more positive attitude, and high scores reflecting a negative attitude. The overall attitude toward integration for the entire sample was moderately positive (mean=2.47, SD=0.83). A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was then done on the mean scores to determine similarities or differences in responses for the three groups. The results showed a significant difference between the groups $F(2,184)=13.15$, $p<.001$. Post hoc comparisons (Tukey's $p<.01$) revealed that special education teachers (mean=2.12) and principals (mean=2.14) had a more positive attitude toward integration than did regular classroom teachers (mean=2.71).

Faced with the result that regular classroom teachers possess less positive attitudes toward integration, it was necessary to explore the variables that may influence this result. The findings reported earlier suggested that there are different perceptions among groups with respect to changes in workload as a result of integration and with level of supportive services provided to regular classroom teachers. It was hypothesized that intergroup discrepancies among these variables may explain the attitude toward integration held by these groups. It was also hypothesized that factors such as training in special education, level of in-service training and amount of preparation time offered to teachers may also affect teacher's attitude.

Table 11 presents the intercorrelations among the seven variables considered above, as well as their correlations with regular classroom teacher attitude. The response categories for each variable were assigned values from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating a positive response and 5 indicating a negative response. For the special education training variable, a value of 0 indicated a positive response and a value of 1 indicated there was no special education training. Therefore, a positive correlation means that as one variable increased, teacher attitude increased as well. A negative correlation means that as one variable increased, teacher attitude decreased.

The data indicates that the seven predictor variables exhibit varying degrees of relationship. It should also be noted that each of the seven institutional variables was significantly related to the outcome variable attitude

Table 11

Intercorrelations Between Outcome and Predictor Variables for Regular Classroom Teachers

Variable name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Effective Support	--	.66***	.47***	.37***	-.07	.25**	-.11	.37***
2. Availability of Support		--	.37***	.31***	.03	.23**	-.06	.23**
3. Availability of Resources			--	.29***	-.11	.30***	-.13	.28**
4. Planning Time				--	.07	.33***	.09	.24**
5. Workload					--	-.11	.15	-.29**
6. Availability of In-service						--	-.10	.19*
7. Special Education Training							--	.18*
8. Attitude								--

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Six of the predictor variables were positively correlated with attitude and one predictor variable was negatively correlated with overall attitude. Table 11 shows that as the level of support, the effectiveness of support, the level of in-service training, presence of resource material, and frequency of preparation time increased, the overall attitude of regular classroom teachers increased as well. Similarly the presence of special education training was related to a more positive attitude toward integration. On the other hand, as workload increased for regular classroom teachers, attitude toward integration became more negative. The variable correlating most highly with teacher attitude was perceived effectiveness of in-classroom support ($r=.37$). This variable also exhibits a moderate positive correlation with the frequency of in-classroom support ($r=.66$), availability of resource material ($r=.47$), and frequency of planning time ($r=.37$). As can be expected, availability of resource material and availability of in-classroom support also exhibit a moderate positive correlation ($r=.37$).

Hierarchical regression was used to further examine the relationship among these variables with regular classroom teacher's attitude. This method was employed in order to determine whether additional information regarding teacher's perception of changes in workload and level of supportive services received improved prediction of overall attitude beyond that afforded by teacher training in special education.

Table 12 displays the standardized regression coefficients (B), R , R^2 , the

increment of change in R^2 , and F value after entry of each block of variables.

After step 3, with all IVs in the equation, $R^2=.30$, $F(7,93)=5.70$, $p<.001$.

After step 1, with the block of variables concerning special education training in the equation, $R^2=.08$, $F(2,93)=4.09$, $p<.05$. After step 2, with workload and preparation time added to prediction of attitude by special education training, $R^2=.21$, $F(2,93)=7.85$, $p<.001$. Addition of workload and preparation time (block 2) resulted in a significant increment in R^2 . After step 3, with frequency and effectiveness of support (block 3) added to prediction of attitude by block 1 (special education training) and block 2 (workload and preparation time), $R^2=.30$, $F(2,93)=4.13$, $p<.01$. Addition of frequency and effectiveness of support also resulted in a significant increment in R^2 .

Opinions Regarding Needed Improvements to Current Model of Delivery

The questionnaire provided an opportunity for respondents to rate the need for revisions/improvements in a variety of areas concerning the board of education's current model of special education service delivery (Table 13). Respondents were required to rate the need for each area on a five point scale with "1" corresponding to most needed, and "5" corresponding to least needed. Therefore, a high score reflects the opinion that a change is less necessary, whereas a low score reflects the opinion that a change is very necessary (or highly needed). The only score that exceeded a rating of "3", was the elimination of categorization of students. This indicates that all other

Table 12

**Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting
Regular Teacher's Attitude Toward Integration**

Variable	B	β	R^2	(incremental) R^2	F
Step 1					
Special education training	.41	.20			
In-service training	.19	.21	.08	.08	4.09 *
Step 2					
Workload	-.28	-.33			
Preparation Time	.14	.21	.21	.13	7.85 ***
Step 3					
Resource material	.10	.11			
Support	-.01	-.02			
Effective support	.25	.30	.30	.09	4.13 **

Note. $R=.28$ for Step 1; $R=.45$ for Step 2; $R=.55$ for Step 3.

* $p<.05$

** $p<.01$

*** $p<.001$

Table 13**Needed Improvements to Current System of Delivery**

	Most Needed				Least Needed			
	1	2	3	4	5	M	SD	N
Reduction of class size	76	17	4	2	1	1.37	0.78	186
Increased support serv.	45	38	13	3	1	1.76	0.84	184
Early intervention	37	39	20	4	1	1.92	0.87	182
Collaboration Time	40	36	19	4	2	1.92	0.94	185
Speed referral, testing and placement process	35	34	21	8	2	2.07	1.02	181
Increased teacher training	29	39	26	4	2	2.12	0.94	186
Observ. of other classes	27	40	24	6	3	2.18	1.00	186
Required support equip.	31	32	27	9	2	2.20	1.02	180
Earlier identification	29	33	22	12	3	2.27	1.11	183
Increased prep. time	28	29	28	11	4	2.33	1.11	184
More input from RCT	18	36	34	9	3	2.42	0.98	182
RCT receives record of student's academic past	19	27	34	12	8	2.64	1.16	183
Expand special classes	23	24	28	16	10	2.66	1.26	178
Increased parental involv.	16	28	33	20	3	2.66	1.05	184
Careful consideration in matching student/plmnt.	15	25	35	21	4	2.75	1.07	179
Eliminate categorization of students	4	6	39	33	18	3.55	0.99	174

Note. RCT=Regular Classroom Teacher

areas considered in the questionnaire were perceived as areas of relatively high need.

The areas that were considered most needed were reduction of class size (mean=1.37) and increased support services in regular classrooms (mean=1.76). Notably, 76% of respondents indicated that reduction of class sizes was "most needed". Other areas that were considered to be highly needed were time allowances for collaboration among regular and special education teachers (mean=1.92), and early intervention practices (mean=1.92). Early intervention is considered a proactive, rather than reactive response to a student's learning difficulty. If the problem can be recognized at an early age, than necessary modifications and strategies can be offered in order to help deal effectively with the exceptionality. It is a method to help eliminate or narrow the academic gap experienced later on. Not surprisingly, respondents also rated quicker referral, testing and placement processes (mean=2.07) as highly needed. Identification, Placement and Review Committees typically meet twice a year, therefore a student's educational placement may be determined long after the initial detection of a learning problem. This may be considered further reason and/or support for high need ratings with respect to early intervention practices. Increased teacher training was another area considered to be of relatively high need. This finding is supported by many written comments suggesting a decrease in board initiated professional development.

Many respondents chose to offer written comments in the space provided for additional changes to the board of education's service delivery model. A few respondents provided positive remarks concerning the board's effort at program delivery. Some were understanding of the board's financial position, and directed blame toward the government. For example, one respondent stated "Talk to the taxpayers coalition and those who have decided to reduce the amount of support schools receive due to monetary problems". Another added that high teacher-pupil ratios, and decreases in supportive services were "out of the control of the board" and the result of government decisions. One respondent summarized the situation in the following statement:

At present the process of integration for integration sake does not benefit anyone. If the real purpose of integration is help the child, more careful screening and increased supportive services must be provided. To dump a child in a regular classroom just to satisfy the parents, the "specialists" and the board is unfair to everybody. But of course, all of this costs money, money which the board does not have.

Other respondents provided very specific suggestions such as the provision of counselling services for both parents of special needs students and for the students themselves, increased professional assistance accompanied by decreased caseloads so as to provide effective support. It was also suggested that there was a need for greater collaboration with outside agencies such as the police, children's aid societies, and shelters. Similarly, it was recommended that treatment centres remain an alternative for students who are unable to function adequately in the school system. There were also many

comments which emphasized the need for increased teacher training and supportive services. One respondent wrote:

The board continues to eliminate educational support in the schools yet mandate integration. This conflict serves to pit teacher against teacher and negatively affect a positive learning environment. Regular classroom teachers are going to have negative attitudes toward integration if they cannot get the necessary support.

Discussion

The present study represents an effort to assess educator perceptions regarding the delivery of special education services to students with special needs. The perceptions of 189 principals, regular educators and special educators revealed some informative findings regarding existing services and practices, and placement preferences for students with different types and degrees of exceptionality.

Conclusions based on this sample suggest that a continuum of special education services as opposed to a model of full inclusion is considered an important option; however, the adequacy of regular class placement appears to depend on the type and severity of the exceptionality. Moreover, if regular class placement is considered a viable option, it is necessary to improve current supportive services available to regular classroom teachers as these factors appear to influence the attitude toward integration expressed by the educator.

The results clearly show that the board of education under study offers an integrated model of education within the context of a range of placement options. The majority of schools offer a continuum of services including regular class placement, a withdrawal (resource room) option, and at least one comprehensive special class. Although there is inconsistency among school boards with respect to special education service delivery, this particular model

is in line with Ministry of Education recommendations.

There are some boards of education which favour a fully integrated model of education and regard regular class placement as the only form of integrated education. Parents and various advocacy groups are placing increased pressure on school boards to adapt to this proposed model of educational delivery, arguing that resource rooms and special classes are unnecessary and ineffective. The Ministry of Education, however, maintains that a range of service options will continue to be needed, that where enrolment in a regular class is not possible or appropriate, it is intended that partial integration will be provided as an alternative. Therefore, the Ministry recognizes that the regular class may not be appropriate for all exceptional students and that the decision of where to provide special education is to be individually determined.

The results of this study indicate that respondents show overwhelming support for this particular model of service delivery. Most respondents felt that full-time placement in the regular classroom was not an appropriate learning environment for all exceptional students, and that self-contained classrooms continue to be needed for some exceptional students. Subjects unanimously agreed that school boards should provide a continuum of placement options for exceptional students. These findings are consistent with the results reported by Semmel (1991) and Coates (1989) that educators perceive a continued need for pull-out programs (withdrawal), conceding that the regular class program may be inadequate in addressing the academic needs of certain

exceptional students.

This argument is also supported by certain organizations representing people with disabilities. For example, the Learning Disabilities Association of America stated in its position paper on Full Inclusion that it "does not support 'full inclusion' or any policies that mandate the same placement, instruction, or treatment for all students with learning disabilities" (1993). Similarly, the Canadian Council for Exceptional Children recognized in its policy that, whenever possible, exceptional students should be educated in a general education classroom; however, a continuum of services must also be available for all children and adults (1993).

These findings support the hypothesis that successful integration necessitates a continuum of services from placement in a regular class environment to placement in a special class or special school. Proponents of a model of 'full inclusion' should take heed of such results. Although it is important to integrate exceptional students to the maximum extent possible, it must be recognized that the regular classroom does not necessarily represent an ideal learning environment for all students.

A policy that proposes such an inclusive model of integration is a policy that fails to recognize the uniqueness of each student. Just as it is unfair to expect that all exceptional students be placed in a special class or special school, it is also unfair to expect that all exceptional students be placed in the regular classroom. Appropriate placements can only be determined when the

student's individual needs are considered. Full inclusion may be supported by the parents of exceptional students and by some professional organizations; however, the results of this study provide evidence to suggest that educators do not share the same beliefs. Therefore, when school boards seek to reform special education delivery systems, such initiatives should be considered after recognizing not only the views of the parents, but the perceptions of the service providers as well.

As the results of the study suggest, respondents strongly believed a 'continuum of services' was preferable and contended that regular class placement was not appropriate for all exceptional students. Therefore, it was also the purpose of this study to uncover the factors that may explain the perceived suitability for regular class placement. For this particular sample, the findings provide support for the hypothesis that ratings of placement suitability are dependent on the type and severity of the student's exceptionality.

The results of the study show that educators are more likely to perceive the regular class as an appropriate placement for students with mild exceptionalities as opposed to students possessing more severe exceptionalities. This finding was consistent for all types of exceptionalities. These results are consistent with a study reported by Howarth (cited in Walsh & Kompf, 1990) which found that the more serious the handicap, the more negative the teacher's attitude toward mainstreaming (1981). Similarly, Fulk and Hirth (1994) reported that when teachers evaluated their skill level in working

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with exceptional students, they were most comfortable with learning disabled students and least comfortable working with students with severe exceptionalities.

Evidence for differential placement ratings as a function of the severity of a student's exceptionality are not surprising. Undoubtedly, students with more severe handicaps present an increased challenge to educators. These students will possess special needs which may be difficult to accommodate in the regular classroom. Students with more severe handicaps may require individualized attention, ongoing monitoring, health care assistance, and specialized equipment, which may not always be possible to provide nor accessible within the regular classroom. Large class sizes and a lack of available support services may affect the suitability of regular class placement for higher needs students.

Teachers may also feel less confident in their ability to instruct students with more severe disabilities. There is a substantial amount of literature which suggests that teachers feel they have been inadequately trained and doubt their own expertise in dealing with exceptional children (Walsh & Kompf, 1990; Evans et al., 1990). It would be reasonable to assume that a lack of confidence could be more pronounced for teachers interacting with more severely handicapped pupils, thus explaining their reluctance to integrate these students in the regular class. One study, in fact, found that teachers' confidence in their ability to educate exceptional children is highly

predictive of willingness to integrate students with exceptionalities (Yuker, 1988).

The results of this study also indicated that, for this sample, the rated suitability of regular class placement was influenced by the type of the student's exceptionality. When both academic and social progress were considered, over 50% of respondents rated the regular class as an appropriate learning environment for students with hearing, language and speech disorders, and for students with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and visual disorders. Students with behavioral disorders, developmental delays (educable and trainable mentally retarded), multiple handicaps, and autism were considered by most respondents to be best suited for special class placement.

It is difficult to explain such findings as research regarding differential placement ratings as a function of type of exceptionality is limited. Consistent with the findings of this study, Carlberg and Kavale (1980) found that behavioral/emotional disordered children experience more positive effects from special class placement as opposed to regular class placement. Unlike the results of this study, however, this outcome was reported for students with developmental delays and learning disabilities as well. Another study reported that an interdisciplinary school team was more likely to recommend special class placement for students with emotional disorders, and more likely to recommend more restrictive learning environments for students with language

disorders (Sinclair & Alexson, 1992). Therefore, there appears to be some support for the theory that behavioral disordered students are more likely to be recommended for special class as opposed to regular class placement. There does, however, appear to be some inconsistency with respect to placement recommendations for students with hearing, language, and speech disorders as well as students with developmental delays.

It is interesting to compare the perceptions of the present sample with respect to placement suitability, with the number of exceptional students actually placed in integrated and segregated settings in Canada. In comparison to data from a Survey of Special Education in Canada (cited in Winzer, 1989), respondent's ratings of the suitability of regular class placement were slightly lower than those actually reported to be placed in integrated settings. According to Winzer, 23% of mentally handicapped students, 76% of learning disabled students, 54% of behavioral disordered students, 97% of students with speech impairments, 63% of hearing impaired students, 80% of visually impaired students, 63% of physically handicapped students and 16% of students with multiple exceptionalities are represented in integrated settings.

With the exception of students with developmental and multiple handicaps, respondents rated the appropriateness of regular class placement for exceptional students lower than the number that is actually represented in integrated settings. Therefore, regardless of whether or not educators perceive the regular class to be an appropriate placement, it seems that the majority of

exceptional students are still being placed in integrated settings. In fact, exceptional students continue to be placed in regular classrooms, despite funding restrictions which make it difficult to provide both teachers and students with adequate supports. Perhaps these conditions may help explain the discrepancy between educator opinion and actual practice.

Another interesting result was found with respect to students possessing intellectual giftedness. It seems that gifted students were considered candidates for regular class placement by most respondents when social progress was considered, but when the student's academic progress was considered, the placement rating became more restrictive. Perhaps respondents felt that academically, these students would benefit from a special class where they could receive more individualized attention and be challenged by their gifted peers. In general, subjects were more likely to rate regular class placement as more conducive to a student's social adjustment than to the student's academic progress. These findings are not surprising as the social benefits of integration is perhaps the predominant force behind the mainstreaming movement. There is much research which supports the view that students make social gains within integrated settings (Wang et al., 1984; Cole et al., 1991); however, there is also some evidence that suggests otherwise (Hilton et al., 1992). More research in this area is needed before any definitive conclusions can be made.

The results of this particular study do reveal a common theme with respect

to placement ratings according to the type of a student's exceptionality. Most respondents rated regular class placement as preferable option for those exceptionalities which are not identified with having intellectual deficits. In contrast, students with developmental delays, giftedness, autism, and multiple exceptionalities (typically associated with intellectual discrepancies) were more often recommended for special class placement. Perhaps respondents considered the benefits of special class placement (smaller student-teacher ratio, individualized attention etc.) as more conducive to learning for children challenged intellectually. In fact, one study found that the exceptional child's ability to achieve academically influenced teacher's willingness to educate in the regular classroom. It seems teachers preferred to teach students that did not possess a learning impairment (e.g. retardation), and were more likely to recommend special class placement for students with intellectual deficiencies (Hannah et al., 1983).

Caution must be used in the interpretation of the above results. Due to a significant amount of missing data for the item addressing the effect of type of exceptionality, descriptive results were only reported; therefore, these results may not be generalizable. Furthermore, much feedback from the respondents indicated that it is difficult to generalize and recommend placements for certain types of exceptional students. It may be more conducive to consider the individual, rather than the exceptionality, when placement decisions are made.

It is also hypothesized that respondent's perceptions of regular class

placement will be affected by not only the type and severity of an exceptionality, but also the immediate practices and characteristics of the classroom environment. It is argued that current class sizes and levels of support have increased workload significantly, thus inhibiting a positive learning environment. Results of this study would tend to support the notion that the practice of integration has increased the workload of regular classroom teachers. Most respondents agreed that integration requires that regular teachers spend significantly more time on student programming and instruction. Interestingly, regular teachers were more likely to perceive such an increase than were special education teachers. This finding may be explained by the fact that the move to place exceptional students in the least restrictive environment has resulted in an increase in the number of students integrated in the regular class, which places an increased burden on teachers who already must deal with large class sizes.

Although teachers perceive an increase in workload, it is surprising to find that almost 3/4 of the sample claimed they did not receive planning time in order to compensate for these increases. Similar results were reported by Fulk and Hirth (1994) who found that regular education teachers strongly supported a change which allowed more time for collaboration between regular and special educators and for instructional planning. Undoubtedly, if regular teachers are expected to educate an increased number of exceptional students in the regular classroom, appropriate planning time is necessary in order to

accommodate these changes.

Such results cause one to question the quality of the educational program received by the exceptional student. Surprisingly, although workload has increased for regular classroom teachers with little planning time in return, educators are generally confident that program modifications are being made for exceptional students. Seventy-seven percent of the sample claimed that individual education plans were always developed, and at least 80% of the respondents were confident that such program plans were frequently implemented, regularly reviewed, and modified if necessary. These results reflect positive programming practices and would suggest that educators are indeed putting forth the effort to accommodate and individualize educational programs for exceptional students. It does not, however, adequately assess whether or not teachers are satisfied with the instruction provided to exceptional students, nor whether exceptional students actually benefit from the program received in the regular class. More research in this area is warranted.

There has been some research that has suggested that the levels of educational support provided to the regular classroom teacher are insufficient and may impede positive integration experiences (Larrivee & Cook, 1979). The results of this study with respect to the level of supportive services was generally neutral, indicating that respondents were receiving educational support some of the time. Forty-three percent of the sample claimed appropriate resources and special equipment were always or almost always

available to the regular classroom teacher; however, an even greater number responded that this was only 'sometimes' the case. Similarly most respondents claimed that teachers were only 'sometimes' informed of the community, school and board resources available to them.

Results were somewhat more positive when level of in-classroom support was considered. Sixty-four percent of the sample claimed in-classroom support was provided on a regularly scheduled basis for students functioning in the regular classroom. It is interesting to note, however, that respondents were less likely to consider the support as effective. Almost half of the respondents claimed that in-classroom support was effective on only some occasions, whereas 10% considered support to be never or almost never effective. Therefore, it appears that although most respondents claimed some level of in-classroom support was received, a significant portion suggested that this support was not always effective in providing an appropriate program for exceptional students. Although it is difficult to explain such a result without further probing, such a finding does raise an important question: Is the level and quality of in-service training received satisfactory? Undoubtedly, if monies are being allocated to ensure support is provided, it is necessary to ensure that such support is providing positive outcomes.

When perceptions concerning the level of in-service training was elicited, the results were relatively negative. Most respondents claimed that adequate in-service training was received only some of the time, and just over 1/3 of the

respondents claimed that such in-service training was 'never' or 'almost never' received. Similar findings are supported throughout the literature on integration. For example, Howarth (1981) found that teachers feel they have been inadequately trained to deal with any exceptionalities (cited in Walsh et al., 1990). It was reported that teachers feel a strong need for more in-service training. The Ministry of Education also recognized the need for teacher training and in-service programs in its Consultation Paper on the Integration of Exceptional Pupils (1992). Furthermore, it specifically outlined the various areas in training that should be targeted. The results of this study, however, would suggest that these initiatives have not been carried out.

Undoubtedly, funding cutbacks have left schools boards with difficult choices. Perhaps it is considered more important to allocate funding in other needed areas, rather than in-service training programs. Written comments, indeed, suggested that professional development had been reduced significantly and that most training sessions were offered after school hours when attendance was voluntary. Educators responded negatively to this situation as reported in written comments. It was argued that this was an unreasonable expectation, since much of this time was already spent with various other school activities (e.g. co-curricular events, planning time etc.). Undoubtedly, a solution to this problem is strongly needed, as many educators are unconfident in their ability to deal with exceptional students (Evans et al., 1990). How can we expect the integration movement to succeed if the service

providers are not adequately prepared to deal with the changes involved? As increases in funding seem unrealistic, perhaps a reallocation of resources is necessary. Another alternative may be to require mandatory participation in special education courses as part of teacher training programs. Currently, the Ministry of Education requires that certified teachers have at least Part I of special education qualifications in order to teach exceptional students in a special class or resource setting. Perhaps the same expectations should be required of regular education teachers. This expectation would be in line with current integration practices, as regular education teachers are now expected to instruct more and more exceptional students into their regular classrooms. Undoubtedly, changes in the area of teacher training are important, especially in light of recent research which suggests that as training in special education increases, the attitude toward integration becomes more positive (Walsh et al., 1990).

The perceptions toward the level of in-service training received was fairly consistent for all three groups sampled. Interestingly, however, significant differences were found between groups with respect to availability of resource material, level of in-classroom support provided, and degree to which teachers are informed as to the community, school and board resources available to them. The results indicate that regular teachers perceive these practices to be happening less frequently than do administrators. Administrators felt that teachers were informed of available community, board and school resources

more frequently than did both regular and special educators. Furthermore, administrators felt that resource material/special equipment and in-classroom support were more frequently available than did regular education teachers. These results are consistent with a study conducted by Walsh and Kompf (1990) who found that administrators perceived that placement selection practices, availability of resource material and equipment, availability of in-service training to regular teachers, and availability of support personnel were happening more frequently than did teachers or parents .

Such findings would suggest that there may be a lack of communication between school administrators and school teachers. These results also cause considerable concern as administrators are involved in the school decision-making which may be directly or indirectly related to educational support issues.

When assessing the integration practices within the regular classroom, and the educational services received, it is also important to consider the weight these factors hold when placement decisions are made. Not only are the classroom characteristics important considerations, but it was also hypothesized that certain student characteristics are important factors in determining the appropriateness of the student's educational placement. Overall, it appears that, for this sample, factors such as type and severity of exceptionality, individual student needs and characteristics, student achievement and developmental level, availability of support, teacher and

parental support for placement, school and classroom environments and student-teacher ratios in class are all considered to some degree when placement decisions are made. It is certainly encouraging to find that these factors are given consideration and that placement recommendations are based on meaningful evaluations of student and classroom characteristics. It is a concern, however, that some of these factors may not be given sufficient consideration.

Interestingly, high emphasis was placed on factors such as the type and severity of exceptionality, the individual needs of the student, and parental support for the placement when placement decisions are made. The finding that the type and severity of the exceptionality were often considered in placement decisions support the results reported earlier that these factors may play a role in perceptions toward placement suitability. The finding that parental support is weighted heavily in placement decisions may be explained by the fact that parental approval must be obtained before a placement recommendation is granted.

Student-teacher ratio, exceptional-to-non-exceptional student ratio and classroom layout appear to be the factors which are considered least in placement decisions. The student-teacher ratio in the regular class was a common concern expressed by respondents throughout written comments. It was suggested that classroom caps be adjusted so as to recognize those exceptional students who are partially integrated into the regular class. It

seems that exceptional students may be officially enrolled in a special class but may be integrated for a large proportion of time in the regular class. Therefore, a regular classroom may have reached its cap but may have one or more exceptional students in addition to this maximum. Not only is the size of the class important to consider, but also the number of exceptional students in the regular class must be considered. Undoubtedly, a class with a large number of exceptional students will significantly increase the workload of the regular teacher. As a result, this may reduce the amount of instructional time received by both the exceptional and non-exceptional students in the class. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to consider the class composition and specific needs of the class when determining classroom caps. It may not only be the class size that is important, but also the instructional demands the students place on the regular classroom teacher.

There appear to be certain trends in educator perceptions toward integration. As discussed above, educators expressed concern with issues such as professional development, availability of educational support and increased workloads. Some research has reported that such variables may influence the attitude toward integration held by educators. The results of this study show that the overall attitude toward integration held by educators was moderately positive. Interestingly, though, regular education teachers appear to possess a more negative attitude than do special educators or administrators, perhaps the result of an increased workload experienced by

regular education teachers. There is undoubtedly more expectations placed on regular teachers as a result of integration, and current financial cutbacks have certainly made working conditions more difficult. This is an important finding which must be explored as research has shown that differential attitudes ultimately lead to different patterns of interaction and different expectations for non-exceptional students (Rist, 1970). Further evidence suggests a similar pattern for exceptional students as well. It has been found that a teacher's attitude toward integration will have a significant impact on the effectiveness of the special education program (Rieck et al., 1992; Walsh et al., 1990).

This study sought to test the hypothesis that the regular classroom teacher's attitude would be affected by certain institutional variables. The variables chosen were teacher-perception variables that were considered to be areas of concern, which were consistent with the literature regarding teacher attitudes. It was hypothesized that variables such as background in special education and level of in-service training, teacher workload and availability of preparation time, and finally the level and effectiveness of supportive services may predict the attitude held by the regular classroom teacher.

In general, the correlational results support the link between these variables and teacher attitude. Each of the seven variables exhibited a significant correlation with teacher attitude. As the level of support, effectiveness of support, level of in-service training and presence of special education

background, presence of resource material, and frequency of preparation time increased, attitude toward integration became more positive.

Not surprisingly, as workload increased for regular classroom teachers, attitude toward integration became more negative. Similar results are reported by Rieck and Knight (1992) who reported that teacher and administrator attitudes became more negative as workload increased. Furthermore, it was reported that provision of support services, classroom composition, grade level, and experience in integrated experiences also affected the attitude held by the educator. Along the same lines, Walsh and Kompf reported that negative attitudes toward integration appear to be attributed to inadequacies in pre-service and in-service training (1990).

The regression analyses supported the hypothesis that teacher's workload and level of preparation time, and the level and effectiveness of support improved prediction of attitude beyond that already afforded to special education training. This finding emphasizes the importance of balancing workload with appropriate and effective support services. These results also provide direction as to possible initiatives that can be undertaken in order to help improve teacher attitudes toward integration. The variables included in the analyses are not fixed; therefore, efforts can be made in order to better accommodate workload increases and thus improve the attitude expressed by regular classroom teacher.

Although the results of this study reveal some important findings regarding

current integration practices, it must be recognized that limited validity information is available for the instrument. The results of the pilot study, however, would indicate that the questionnaire does possess face validity; this sample confirmed the relevance and appropriateness of the items included. The reliability of the instrument was also established to be satisfactory.

Undoubtedly, the results of this study provide clear evidence that educators view the continuum of service model offered by the board of education under study as a valuable and positive component of the integration movement. It was recognized that a model of 'full inclusion' will not effectively meet the needs of all students, and that placement decisions may depend on the type and severity of the exceptionality, as well as various other student and classroom characteristics. Several areas, however, appear to require further attention in order to improve existing practices and make integration a more workable goal. These are:

- (1) Class size must be reduced or balanced.

Respondents rated a reduction in class size as the most needed improvement to the current system of service delivery. This point seems paramount as it was recently reported by the Council for Exceptional Children that students with disabilities were less likely to be retained in grade and less likely to have high absenteeism if regular education classes were small (1994). Although a reduction in class sizes may be unrealistic under the current economic climate, class compositions

should be balanced so as to reflect the needs of the students within the regular class. Consideration should be given to optimal ratios of exceptional-to-non-exceptional students.

- (2) Adequate supports must be provided for teachers dealing with exceptional students. Administrators must ensure a reasonable workload balance among regular teaching staff. Resources in the form of both physical (materials and special equipment) and human support (educational assistants, resource personnel) should be provided. This point is crucial, as it has been found that students who received individual attention such as tutoring or counselling were more likely to stay in school. Furthermore, the exceptional child was more likely to succeed in the regular class if help was received from an instructional aide (Council for Exceptional Children, 1994). Where an increase in support cannot be provided, more effective allocation of resources is warranted. For example, resources could be more effectively allocated to schools based on need rather than on student populations. Boards must recognize that some schools possess higher proportions of 'at risk' and exceptional students, regardless of the size of the school.
- (3) Planning and collaboration time must be provided regularly. Planning time is needed in order to effectively modify programs for exceptional students. Collaborative planning time is also necessary in

order for regular teachers, special teachers, parents and principals to meet on a regular and ongoing basis to discuss the student's educational program and progress. Such practices may also help to dissipate discrepancies found between teacher and administrator perceptions toward support issues. Undoubtedly, scheduled preparatory times are becoming increasingly difficult for school boards to provide due to current fiscal restraints, therefore administrators may have to be innovative in their attempt to meet this goal. Some school boards have developed a 'master planning schedule' where the special education teacher's planning time is coordinated with the regular teacher's planning time. Therefore, planning for the exceptional student can be done during a portion of the teacher's regularly scheduled planning time. Before/after school planning is another possibility, where teachers may receive some form of compensation (e.g. ability to arrive leave early or arrive late on another day etc.) for planning after school hours. Early dismissal is another strategy that has been suggested. This could be made possible by subtracting 5 minutes from each period one day per month and all students are dismissed early so that teachers have time for instructional planning.

- (4) Early intervention and identification practices should be encouraged.

It has been suggested that proactive initiatives be practiced where

- learning difficulties can be targeted in the primary years in order to help prevent academic gaps experienced later on. This may involve expanding special education services in primary divisions. Similarly, referral, testing, and placement practices should be accelerated in order to prevent long waiting periods resulting in inappropriate placements and educational programs.
- (5) Support in the form of professional development and in-service training should be provided to all teachers. Development and adaptation of educational programs, instructional strategies for teaching exceptional students, and an understanding of the specific types of exceptionalities are areas that need to be addressed. It is also suggested that in-service training programs target ways to address the educational needs of students with severe exceptionalities, as teachers appear less comfortable integrating these students into the regular class. Teacher training programs must also be timely (before an exceptional student is integrated), regular and ongoing. Furthermore, such programs may be more effective if offered during school hours, and with supply coverage. Programs offered after school hours may be inconvenient and impractical due to previous school-related commitments.
- (6) Teacher judgement and recommendations should be given adequate consideration with respect to integration efforts. It appears educators are concerned that their opinions are being overlooked due to parental

pressures. Undoubtedly, the teacher support for the placement will have an impact on the exceptional student's experience in the integrated setting. It must also be recognized, however, that the parent's knowledge and opinions are important in evaluating the student's specific needs. Therefore, there exists a need to develop programs that promote communication between parents and teachers regarding all aspects of the student's education.

As the Ministry of Education explains in its Consultation Paper on the Integration of Exceptional Pupils, "Successful integration takes time: it is accompanied by a comprehensive plan, well prepared teachers, and positive attitudes" (1992). Undoubtedly, it will also involve continued use of a range of placement options with carefully planned placement decisions based on both student and classroom characteristics. Furthermore, successful integration necessitates a solid infrastructure of resources that accommodate workload increases and generate more positive attitudes of the service providers directly involved.

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Appendix A

Respondent's Rating of each Item: Frequency, Percent Distribution, Mean, Standard Deviation.

1. Students formally identified as 'exceptional' participate in the regular classroom for the majority of the education program.

	Always		Sometimes		Never	Mean	SD	N
	1	2	3	4	5			
f	46	88	42	6	3			
%	25	47	23	3	2			
Entire Sample						2.61	7.15	186
Regular Classroom Teachers						3.00	9.36	108
Special Education Teachers						2.04	0.82	48
Principals						2.13	1.07	30

2. Individual Education Plans are developed for each formally identified student who is integrated into the regular classroom.

	Always		Sometimes		Never	Mean	SD	N
	1	2	3	4	5			
f	143	20	15	3	4			
%	77	11	8	2	2			
Entire Sample						1.40	0.87	185
Regular Classroom Teachers						1.53	0.91	107
Special Education Teachers						1.23	0.78	48
Principals						1.23	0.82	30

3. After an Individual Education Plan has been developed, it is routinely implemented.

	Always 1	2	Sometimes 3	4	Never 5	Mean	SD	N
f	77	85	18	2	3			
%	42	46	10	1	1			
Entire Sample						1.75	0.8	185
Regular Classroom Teachers						1.88	0.88	107
Special Education Teachers						1.60	0.71	48
Principals						1.53	0.57	30

4. The outcomes of individual education plans are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

	Always 1	2	Sometimes 3	4	Never 5	Mean	SD	N
f	89	59	28	5	4			
%	48	32	15	3	2			
Entire Sample						1.79	0.95	185
Regular Classroom Teachers						1.90	1.06	107
Special Education Teachers						1.80	0.80	48
Principals						1.40	0.56	30

5. When Individual Education Plans are found to be ineffective, necessary modifications are made.

	Always 1	2	Sometimes 3	4	Never 5	Mean	SD	N
f	87	72	22	3	2			
%	47	39	12	1	1			
Entire Sample						1.72	0.82	186
Regular Classroom Teachers						1.80	0.88	103
Special Education Teachers						1.67	0.75	48
Principals						1.48	0.63	29

- 6. If upon review the Identification Placement Review Committee finds a student's placement to be inappropriate, the student's placement is changed.**

	Always		Sometimes		Never	Mean	SD	N
	1	2	3	4	5			
f	73	68	25	6	3			
%	42	39	14	3	2			
Entire Sample						1.85	0.91	175
Regular Classroom Teachers						2.04	0.99	100
Special Education Teachers						1.62	0.83	45
Principals						1.53	0.51	30

- 7. A placement change to a more restrictive environment (if necessary) is carried out as easily as a move to the least restrictive environment.**

	Always		Sometimes		Never	Mean	SD	N
	1	2	3	4	5			
f	21	52	64	22	4			
%	13	32	40	13	2			
Entire Sample						2.61	0.96	163
Regular Classroom Teachers						2.54	0.95	91
Special Education Teachers						2.73	1.06	44
Principals						2.64	0.83	28

- 8. The practice of integration requires that regular teachers spend significantly more time on student programming and instruction.**

	Always		Sometimes		Never	Mean	SD	N
	1	2	3	4	5			
f	67	63	47	7	2			
%	36	34	25	4	1			
Entire Sample						2.00	0.93	186
Regular Classroom Teachers						1.78	0.99	108
Special Education Teachers						2.44	0.74	48
Principals						2.10	0.71	30

9. Planning time is scheduled during the school day for the collaboration of regular classroom teachers and resource personnel, colleagues, parents, etc.

	Always 1	2	Sometimes 3	4	Never 5	Mean	SD	N
f	22	33	67	42	24			
%	12	18	36	22	12			
Entire Sample						3.07	1.18	188
Regular Classroom Teachers						3.25	1.26	110
Special Education Teachers						2.85	1.01	48
Principals						2.73	0.98	30

10. Teachers receive adequate in-service training (e.g. special workshops, presentations, visitations of other schools, etc.) with respect to dealing with exceptional students.

	Always 1	2	Sometimes 3	4	Never 5	Mean	SD	N
f	4	30	83	54	17			
%	2	16	44	29	9			
Entire Sample						3.27	0.91	188
Regular Classroom Teachers						3.41	0.93	110
Special Classroom Teachers						3.04	0.87	48
Principals						3.10	0.80	30

How often was in-service training received?

	Never 1	2	Annually 3	4	Regularly 5	Mean	SD	N
f	37	37	29	27	29			
%	23	24	18	17	18			
Entire Sample						2.84	1.43	159
Regular Classroom Teachers						2.34	1.23	95
Special Education Teachers						3.34	1.36	41
Principals						3.65	1.47	23

11. Appropriate resources and any necessary equipment are available to the regular teacher of an integrated classroom.

	Always		Sometimes		Never	Mean	SD	N
	1	2	3	4	5			
f	13	65	88	13	4			
%	7	36	48	7	2			
Entire Sample						2.62	0.81	183
Regular Classroom Teachers						2.75	0.87	105
Special Education Teachers						2.54	0.62	48
Principals						2.27	0.74	30

12. All Teachers are well informed as to what community, school, and board resources are available to their school.

	Always		Sometimes		Never	Mean	SD	N
	1	2	3	4	5			
f	17	52	86	26	3			
%	9	28	47	14	2			
Entire Sample						2.71	0.88	184
Regular Classroom Teachers						2.76	0.89	107
Special Education Teachers						2.89	0.76	47
Principals						2.17	0.83	30

13. In-classroom support is provided on a regularly scheduled basis for exceptional students functioning in the regular classroom.

	Always		Sometimes		Never	Mean	SD	N
	1	2	3	4	5			
f	46	72	44	19	3			
%	25	39	24	10	2			
Entire Sample						2.25	1.00	184
Regular Classroom Teachers						2.42	1.03	108
Special Education Teachers						2.08	0.94	46
Principals						1.83	0.79	30

Type of in-class support received:

(a) <u>Presence of Educational Assistant</u>	f	%	N
Entire Sample	125	68	185
Regular Classroom Teachers	60	55	109
Special Education Teachers	40	87	46
Principal	25	83	30
(b) <u>Presence of Special Education Teacher</u>	f	%	N
Entire Sample	103	56	185
Regular Classroom Teacher	46	42	109
Special Education Teacher	33	72	46
Principals	24	80	30
(c) <u>Presence of Resource Teacher</u>	f	%	N
Entire Sample	132	71	185
Regular Classroom Teacher	70	64	109
Special Education Teacher	37	80	46
Principals	25	83	30
(d) <u>Presence of Itinerant teacher</u>	f	%	N
Entire Sample	42	23	185
Regular Teacher	18	17	109
Special Education Teacher	14	30	46
Principals	10	33	30
(e) <u>Presence of Special Equipment</u>	f	%	N
Entire Sample	48	26	185
Regular Teacher	14	13	109
Special Education Teacher	19	41	46
Principals	15	50	30
(f) <u>Presence of Health Care Professional</u>	f	%	N
Entire Sample	51	28	185
Regular Teacher	23	21	109
Special Education Teacher	15	33	46
Principals	13	43	30

14. The in-classroom support received by the regular classroom teacher is effective in providing an appropriate program for exceptional students.

	Always		Sometimes		Never	Mean	SD	N
	1	2	3	4	5			
f	16	81	64	15	6			
%	9	45	35	8	3			
Entire Sample						2.53	0.89	182
Regular Classroom Teachers						2.68	1.00	108
Special Education Teachers						2.38	0.68	45
Principals						2.21	0.56	29

15. Integration has been beneficial to the education of exceptional students.

Academically:					Mean	SD	N
Strongly Agree		Undecided		Strongly Disagree			
1	2	3	4	5			
f	26	69	62	18	12		
%	14	37	33	10	6		
Entire Sample					2.58	1.05	187
Regular Classroom Teachers					2.84	1.09	110
Special Education Teachers					2.92	4.54	48
Principals					2.07	0.70	29

Socially:

	Strongly Agree		Undecided		Strongly Disagree	Mean	SD	N
	1	2	3	4	5			
f	56	85	36	6	3			
%	30	46	19	3	2			
Entire Sample						2.01	0.88	186
Regular Classroom Teachers						2.20	0.93	109
Special Education Teachers						1.69	0.75	48
Principals						1.79	0.68	29

16. Integration has been beneficial to the education of non-exceptional students.

Academically:					Mean	SD	N
Strongly Agree	Undecided		Strongly Disagree				
1	2	3	4	5			
f	20	58	46	40	22		
%	11	31	25	21	12		
Entire Sample					2.93	1.20	186
Regular Classroom Teachers					3.23	1.19	110
Special Education Teachers					2.40	1.08	47
Principals					2.62	1.05	29
Socially:					Mean	SD	N
Strongly Agree	Undecided		Strongly Disagree				
1	2	3	4	5			
f	33	82	47	15	8		
%	18	44	26	8	4		
Entire Sample					2.37	1.01	185
Regular Classroom Teachers					2.57	1.12	109
Special Education Teachers					2.06	0.76	47
Principals					2.07	0.70	29

17. It is preferable to educate exceptional students with their non-exceptional peers.

					Mean	SD	N
Strongly Agree	Undecided		Strongly Disagree				
1	2	3	4	5			
f	33	71	48	24	9		
%	18	38	26	13	5		
Entire Sample					2.49	1.08	185
Regular Classroom Teachers					2.75	1.15	109
Special Education Teachers					2.06	0.87	47
Principals					2.17	0.80	29

18. Integration means that every exceptional student should be placed in the regular classroom on a full-time basis.

	Strongly Agree 1	2	Undecided 3	4	Strongly Disagree 5	Mean	SD	N
f	9	21	12	80	66			
%	5	11	6	43	35			
Entire Sample						3.92	1.14	188
Regular Classroom Teachers						3.97	1.10	110
Special Education Teachers						3.60	1.28	48
Principals						4.23	0.94	30

19. School boards should provide a continuum of placement options for exceptional students.

	Strongly Agree 1	2	Undecided 3	4	Strongly Disagree 5	Mean	SD	N
f	101	71	10	5	1			
%	54	38	5	2	1			
Entire Sample						1.59	0.76	188
Regular Classroom Teachers						1.71	0.85	110
Special Education Teachers						1.46	0.62	48
Principals						1.33	0.48	30

20. There is an appropriate placement available in this board of education for almost every child.

	Strongly Agree 1	2	Undecided 3	4	Strongly Disagree 5	Mean	SD	N
f	22	67	41	36	22			
%	12	35	22	19	12			
Entire Sample						2.84	1.21	188
Regular Classroom Teachers						3.01	1.23	110
Special Education Teachers						2.73	1.11	48
Principals						2.37	1.19	30

21. Before a student's placement is determined, there is careful consideration taken in matching the exceptional student's academic, physical and social needs with an appropriate learning environment.

	Strongly Agree 1	2	Undecided 3	4	Strongly Disagree 5	Mean	SD	N
f	37	102	26	18	4			
%	20	55	14	9	2			
Entire Sample						2.20	0.94	187
Regular Classroom Teachers						2.39	0.98	109
Special Education Teachers						2.02	0.89	48
Principals						1.80	0.66	30

22. Students with mild exceptionalities should be placed in a regular education classroom.

	Strongly Agree 1	2	Undecided 3	4	Strongly Disagree 5	Mean	SD	N
f	62	102	16	6	0			
%	33	55	9	3	0			
Entire Sample						1.82	0.72	186
Regular Classroom Teachers						1.88	0.65	109
Special Education Teachers						1.72	0.80	47
Principals						1.73	0.83	30

23. Student with severe exceptionalities should not be placed in a regular education classroom.

	Strongly Agree 1	2	Undecided 3	4	Strongly Disagree 5	Mean	SD	N
f	52	34	44	42	11			
%	28	19	24	23	6			
Entire Sample						2.60	1.28	183
Regular Classroom Teachers						2.36	1.27	109
Special Education Teachers						2.93	1.34	45
Principals						2.97	1.35	29

24. There continues to be a need for self-contained classrooms for some exceptional students.

	Strongly Agree 1	2	Undecided 3	4	Strongly Disagree 5	Mean	SD	N
f	112	62	7	3	4			
%	60	33	4	1	2			
Entire Sample						1.54	0.82	188
Regular Classroom Teachers						1.48	0.69	110
Special Education Teachers						1.63	0.94	48
Principals						1.60	1.07	30

Part B: Levels of Service

1. Do you feel the regular classroom is an optimal learning environment for all exceptional students?

	Level of Agreement		
	f	%	N
Entire Sample	26	14	187
Regular Classroom Teachers	9	8	110
Special Education Teachers	8	17	48
Principals	9	31	29

2. Please choose a delivery model which you feel best serves the exceptional child with respect to both academic and social progress.

- 1 Special School
- 2 Correspondence
- 3 Full-time Special Class
- 4 Part-time Special Class
- 5 Regular Class (Withdrawal)
- 6 Regular Class with Support

Mild-moderate Behavioral Disorder - Academic Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	1	0	8	52	60	58			
%	1	0	4	29	34	32			
Entire Sample							4.92	0.94	179
Regular Classroom Teachers							4.90	0.94	103
Special Education Teachers							4.87	0.86	47
Principals							5.07	1.03	29

Mild-moderate Behavioral Disorder - Social Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	1	0	7	45	71	55			
%	1	0	4	25	40	31			
Entire Sample							4.96	0.90	179
Regular Classroom Teachers							4.89	0.92	103
Special Education Teachers							5.06	0.87	47
Principals							5.00	0.89	29

Severe Behavioral Disorder - Academic Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	28	2	77	35	19	16			
%	16	1	43	20	11	9			
Entire Sample							3.36	1.40	177
Regular Classroom Teachers							3.31	1.34	102
Special Education Teachers							3.50	1.41	46
Principals							3.28	1.62	29

Severe Behavioral Disorder - Social Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	29	1	71	40	21	15			
%	16	1	40	23	12	8			
Entire Sample							3.38	1.41	177
Regular Classroom Teachers							3.39	1.37	102
Special Education Teachers							3.54	1.50	46
Principals							3.10	1.42	29

Mild-moderate Hearing/Language/Speech Disorder - Academic Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	0	0	5	28	74	68			
%	0	0	3	16	42	39			
Entire Sample							5.17	0.80	175
Regular Class Teachers							5.18	0.76	101
Special Education Teachers							5.15	0.82	46
Principals							5.14	0.93	28

Mild-moderate Hearing/Language/Speech Disorder - Social Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	0	0	3	26	68	78			
%	0	0	2	15	39	44			
Entire Sample							5.26	0.77	175
Regular Classroom Teachers							5.26	0.74	101
Special Education Teachers							5.26	0.80	46
Principals							5.29	0.85	28

Severe Hearing/Language/Speech Disorder - Academic Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	18	0	36	46	35	36			
%	11	0	21	27	20	21			
Entire Sample							4.10	1.49	171
Regular Classroom Teachers							4.01	1.56	99
Special Education Teachers							4.02	1.47	45
Principals							4.56	1.19	27

Severe Hearing/Language/Speech Disorder - Social Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	17	0	25	41	41	48			
%	10	0	14	24	24	28			
Entire Sample							4.36	1.51	172
Regular Classroom Teachers							4.26	1.55	100
Special Education Teachers							4.33	1.62	45
Principals							4.74	1.10	27

Mild-moderate Autism - Academic Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	4	2	30	52	40	43			
%	2	1	18	30	24	25			
Entire Sample							4.47	1.21	171
Regular Classroom Teachers							4.29	1.23	98
Special Education Teachers							4.64	1.00	45
Principals							4.82	1.36	28

Mild-moderate Autism - Social Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	4	1	22	51	41	52			
%	2	1	13	30	24	30			
Entire Sample							4.64	1.19	171
Regular Class Teachers							4.47	1.20	98
Special Education Teachers							4.87	1.01	45
Principals							4.86	1.35	28

Severe Autism - Academic Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	47	0	58	33	14	14			
%	28	0	35	20	9	8			
Entire Sample							3.10	1.67	167
Regular Class Teachers							2.86	1.53	96
Special Education Teachers							3.51	2.01	43
Principals							3.29	1.46	28

Severe Autism - Social Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	44	1	57	33	13	19			
%	26	1	34	20	8	11			
Entire Sample							3.16	1.61	167
Regular Class Teachers							3.04	1.62	97
Special Education Teachers							3.36	1.68	42
Principals							3.29	1.46	28

Mild-moderate Learning Disability - Academic Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	0	0	5	25	83	63			
%	0	0	3	14	47	36			
Entire Sample							5.16	0.77	176
Regular Class Teachers							5.15	0.78	102
Special Education Teachers							5.11	0.71	46
Principals							5.29	0.85	28

Mild-moderate Learning Disability - Social Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	0	0	6	20	73	77			
%	0	0	3	11	42	44			
Entire Sample							5.26	0.79	176
Regular Class Teachers							5.23	0.78	102
Special Education Teachers							5.30	0.79	46
Principals							5.29	0.85	28

Severe Learning Disability - Academic Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	8	0	50	66	30	21			
%	5	0	28	38	17	12			
Entire Sample							3.99	1.17	175
Regular Class Teachers							3.86	1.30	102
Special Education Teachers							4.22	0.93	45
Principals							4.07	0.94	28

Severe Learning Disability - Social Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	7	0	39	58	29	42			
%	4	0	22	33	17	24			
Entire Sample							4.30	1.28	175
Regular Class Teachers							4.14	1.39	102
Special Education Teachers							4.71	1.01	45
Principals							4.25	1.08	28

Gifted - Academic Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	10	0	44	48	34	40			
%	6	0	25	27	19	23			
Entire Sample							4.22	1.35	176
Regular Class Teachers							4.30	1.40	101
Special Education Teachers							4.17	1.23	46
Principals							4.07	1.36	29

Gifted - Social Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	7	1	30	44	36	58			
%	4	1	17	25	20	33			
Entire Sample							4.56	1.33	176
Regular Class Teachers							4.54	1.34	101
Special Education Teachers							4.74	1.18	46
Principals							4.34	1.51	29

Educable Mentally Retarded - Academic Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	0	0	35	62	52	25			
%	0	0	20	36	30	14			
Entire Sample							4.38	0.97	174
Regular Class Teachers							4.42	1.00	100
Special Education Teachers							4.33	0.93	45
Principals							4.34	0.94	29

Educable Mentally Retarded - Social Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	0	0	26	48	57	42			
%	0	0	15	28	33	24			
Entire Sample							4.67	1.01	173
Regular Class Teachers							4.60	0.99	100
Special Education Teachers							4.80	1.01	45
Principals							4.68	1.06	28

Trainable Mentally Retarded - Academic Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	21	0	88	38	11	16			
%	12	0	51	22	6	9			
Entire Sample							3.38	1.28	174
Regular Class Teachers							3.39	1.35	100
Special Education Teachers							3.53	1.30	45
Principals							3.10	1.01	29

Trainable Mentally Retarded - Social Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	18	0	72	35	17	31			
%	10	0	42	20	10	18			
Entire Sample							3.73	1.45	173
Regular Class Teachers							3.64	1.41	99
Special Education Teachers							4.18	1.54	45
Principals							3.34	1.32	29

Mild-moderate Physical Disabilities - Academic Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	0	0	7	26	38	97			
%	0	0	4	15	23	58			
Entire Sample							5.34	0.89	168
Regular Class Teachers							5.37	0.91	99
Special Education Teachers							5.29	0.77	42
Principals							5.30	0.99	27

Mild-moderate Physical Disabilities - Social Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	0	0	6	20	37	106			
%	0	0	3	12	22	63			
Entire Sample							5.44	0.84	169
Regular Class Teachers							5.44	0.87	100
Special Education Teachers							5.47	0.67	42
Principals							5.37	0.97	27

Severe Physical Disabilities - Academic Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	20	0	39	38	22	50			
%	12	0	23	22	13	30			
Entire Sample							4.14	1.61	169
Regular Class Teachers							3.89	1.67	99
Special Education Teachers							4.38	1.53	42
Principals							4.64	1.42	28

Severe Physical Disabilities - Social Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	14	0	35	37	20	64			
%	8	0	20	22	12	38			
Entire Sample							4.42	1.55	170
Regular Classroom Teachers							4.14	1.6	100
Special Education Teachers							4.90	1.27	42
Principals							4.68	1.44	28

Visual Impairment - Academic Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	31	0	20	30	28	57			
%	19	0	12	18	17	34			
Entire Sample							4.18	1.83	166
Regular Class Teachers							4.09	1.87	96
Special Education Teachers							4.28	1.68	43
Principals							4.30	1.94	27

Visual Impairment - Social Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	25	0	16	27	27	72			
%	15	0	10	16	16	43			
Entire Sample							4.48	1.77	167
Regular Class Teachers							4.40	1.80	97
Special Education Teachers							4.72	1.55	43
Principals							4.37	1.96	27

Multihandicapped - Academic Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	39	3	47	41	12	22			
%	24	2	29	25	7	13			
Entire Sample							3.31	1.63	164
Regular Classroom Teachers							3.05	1.60	94
Special Education Teachers							3.52	1.61	44
Principals							3.85	1.62	26

Multihandicapped - Social Progress

	1	2	3	4	5	6	Mean	SD	N
f	37	3	38	38	15	34			
%	22	2	23	23	9	21			
Entire Sample							3.56	1.75	165
Regular Class Teachers							3.28	1.70	95
Special Education Teachers							3.95	1.83	44
Principals							3.92	1.67	26

3. From your experience, please circle the number which indicates the extent to which your school and/or board considers the following factors in arriving at a placement decision.

	not at all 1	2	3	4	very much 5	M	SD	N
Severity of Exceptionality	1	3	9	37	50	4.35	0.76	183
Type of Exceptionality	1	0	15	37	47	4.31	0.76	183
Individual Needs of Student	1	4	15	40	40	4.16	0.86	183
Parental Support for Placement	3	5	18	35	39	4.01	1.02	182
Student Achievement Level	2	5	21	46	26	3.90	0.91	182
Student Characteristics	3	4	24	44	25	3.85	0.95	181
Developmental Level	2	4	31	38	25	3.60	0.93	178
School Environment	5	15	34	28	16	3.35	1.09	183
Availability of Support	3	20	32	31	14	3.32	1.05	183
Appropriate Training of Support	6	18	33	28	15	3.27	1.10	181
Teacher Support for Placement	8	19	27	34	12	3.24	1.14	183
Student-teacher Ratio	14	20	29	22	15	3.04	1.26	181
Exceptional-to-non Exceptional Student Ratio	15	23	37	18	7	2.80	1.13	180
Classroom Layout	18	35	27	13	7	2.57	1.15	181

5. Please number the following statements on a five point scale which you feel would best improve the current system of delivery offered by your board of education.

	Most Needed 1	2	3	4	Least Needed 5	M	SD	N
Speed up referral, testing and placement process	35	34	21	8	2	2.07	1.02	181
Earlier identification	29	33	23	12	3	2.27	1.11	183
Earlier intervention	36	39	20	4	1	1.92	0.87	182
More input from regular teacher	18	36	34	9	3	2.42	0.98	182
Increased parental involvement	16	28	33	20	3	2.66	1.05	184
Increased teacher training	29	39	26	4	2	2.12	0.94	186
Observation of other classrooms	27	40	24	6	3	2.18	1.00	186
Increased teacher preparation time	28	29	28	11	4	2.33	1.11	184
Regular teacher receives record of student's academic past	19	27	34	12	8	2.64	1.16	183
Time for collaboration with resource staff	39	36	19	4	2	1.92	0.94	185
Reduction of class size	76	17	4	2	1	1.37	0.78	186
Eliminate categorization of students	4	6	39	33	18	3.55	0.99	174

	Most Needed				Least Needed	M	SD	N
	1	2	3	4	5			
More careful consideration in matching student and placement	15	25	35	21	4	2.75	1.07	179
Increased support services in regular classroom	45	38	13	3	1	1.76	0.84	184
Provision of necessary support equipment	30	32	27	9	2	2.20	1.02	180
Expand special education classes	23	24	27	16	10	2.66	1.26	178

Department of Psychology
Carleton University
1122 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa, Ontario
K1S 5B6

Dear Principal:

Following consultation with the Educational Research Advisory Committee of Simcoe County Board of Education, I have received approval to proceed with a study to assess the practices used in the integration of exceptional children in the public school system. This involves an examination of the appropriateness of different delivery alternatives for various exceptional children, as well as an examination of educator perceptions regarding integration practices as they are happening in the respective schools.

I am now seeking your permission to distribute the survey questionnaire in your school. Absolute anonymity of all participants and of all schools involved in this study is guaranteed in this endeavour. Enclosed please find a brief description of the study. As indicated in the following pages, the data obtained from the survey will be very useful to your school and board.

Thank you for your cooperation and participation.

Sincerely,

Susan Letcher
Principal Investigator

Department of Psychology
Carleton University
1122 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa, Ontario
K1S 5B6

Dear Participant:

Following consultation with the Educational Research Advisory Committee of Simcoe County Board of Education I have received approval to proceed with a study to assess the practices used in the integration of exceptional children in the public school system. While this in no way obligates your participation, your responses will not only assist my personal understanding, but will provide meaningful information to your own school system.

The study involves an examination of the appropriateness of different delivery models for various exceptional children, as well as an examination of educator perceptions regarding integration practices as they are happening in the respective schools. The information gathered will be helpful in identifying the specific needs, views and attitudes of those involved in the education process. A technical report summarizing the results will be submitted to the Simcoe County Public Board of Education and as recommended by the board, conclusions may be presented at a board workshop. Please be assured of the anonymity and confidentiality with which your responses will be treated.

I would very much appreciate having your cooperation and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Susan Letcher
Principal Investigator

Appendix B**Identification Sheet****Position/Title:** _____**Date:** _____**Personal History****Gender:** ___Male ___Female**Years of Teaching Experience:** _____**Grade Level Now Teaching:** _____**Age:** ___20-25

___26-30

___31-35

___36-40

___41-45

___46-50

___51-55

___56-60

___61+

Highest Degree Attained:

___BA/BSc

___MA/MSc

___Professional Diploma

___B. Ed.

___Ph.D/Ed. D.

___Other _____

**Training in Special Education:
(Check all that apply)**

___None

___University Courses

___Personal Experience

___In-service

___Educational Degree
(in related area)

___Ministry Courses

___Part I

___Part II

___Specialist

___Other _____

School Information**Type of School:**

JK/K - 8

JK/K - 6

Other _____

School Composition:

___No. of Grade Levels

___No. of Students

___No. of Teachers

___No. of Special Educators

___No. of Educational
Assistants

Special Education Services: (check all that apply)

- ☐ Withdrawal Program
☐ Full Integration
☐ Comprehensive Special Education Class
☐ No. of Special Education Classes _____
☐ Type of Special Education Classes _____
☐ Other _____

Language Program:

- ☐ English Only
☐ French Only
☐ French Immersion
☐ Other _____

Geographic Location:

- ☐ Urban
☐ Suburban
☐ Rural

Classroom Information (Teachers Only)**Type of Class:**

- ☐ Regular Class
☐ Special Class (please describe) _____
☐ Other _____

Class Size:

- ☐ 1-10
☐ 11-15
☐ 16-20
☐ 21-25
☐ 26-30
☐ 31-35
☐ 36+

Gender Enrollment:

- ☐ No. Males
☐ No. Females

Ability Distribution:

- ☐ No. of High
 Functioning
☐ Average
☐ No. of Low
 Functioning

Number of Formally Identified Students in Class:**(As identified by the Identification Placement and Review Committee)**

- ☐ No. of Part Time
☐ No. of Full Time

Number of students from the following categories presently integrated into your classroom

(As determined by the pupil's Needs Statement listed in the Program Plan or from information provided in the pupil's Ontario School Record). If the student possesses more than one exceptionality, please check the category that is most dominant.

Behaviour	Communication	Intellectual	Physical	Multiple
☐	☐ Autism	☐ Gifted	☐ Orthopaedic	☐ Multi -
	☐ Hearing	☐ Educable	☐ and/or	handi-
	☐ Language	☐ (Slow Learner)	☐ physical	capped
	☐ Speech	☐ Trainable	☐ Visual	
	☐ Learning Disability			

Special Instructions

In this questionnaire, the following terms have these definitions:

Exceptional Pupil: A pupil whose behavioral, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he/she is considered to need placement in a special education program as determined by the Identification Placement and Review Committee.

Itinerant Teacher: Itinerant personnel move from school to school to provide specialized instruction, either to individual exceptional students, or to small groups, and also to serve as a resource for regular classroom teachers.

Resource Teacher: Resource personnel work with individuals or with small groups on improving skills, remediating specific deficits, and completing class assignments across various curricular areas. This instruction may be offered in the regular classroom or in a designated resource room.

Special Education Teacher: Special Education personnel are responsible for a designated self-contained classroom (comprehensive class) which may serve one specific type of exceptionality or various exceptional children ranging from mild to severe. Special Education teachers may also serve as a resource for regular classroom teachers.

Educable Mentally Retarded Pupil (Mildly Intellectually Disabled): A learning disorder where students are generally capable of basic academic subjects up to advanced elementary levels. General achievement ranges from second to fifth grade. A potential for independent social adjustment and economic self-support.

Trainable Mentally Retarded Pupil (Developmentally Disabled): A severe learning disorder where students are generally capable of attaining self-help skills, self-protection and social adjustment. Very limited achievement in academic areas.

Assessment of Integration Practices in Ontario Schools

Part A: Integration Practices

Most questions have five possible responses. If none of the choices matches your perception exactly, use the one that is closest to it.

Please indicate the degree to which you feel these integration practices are happening in your school:

1. **Always**
2. **Almost Always**
3. **Sometimes**
4. **Almost Never**
5. **Never**

1. Students formally identified as 'exceptional' participate in the regular classroom for the majority of the educational program.

1 2 3 4 5

2. Individual Education Plans are developed for each formally identified student who is integrated into the regular classroom.

1 2 3 4 5

Which individuals are responsible for the development of these plans?
(Check all that apply)

- ☐ Regular Classroom Teacher
- ☐ Resource Teacher
- ☐ Itinerant Teacher
- ☐ Special Education Teacher
- ☐ Vice Principal / Principal
- ☐ School Psychologist
- ☐ Parents
- ☐ Exceptional Student
- ☐ Other _____

3. After an Individual Education Plan has been developed, it is routinely implemented.

1 2 3 4 5

1. Always
2. Almost Always
3. Sometimes
4. Almost Never
5. Never

4. The outcomes of Individual Education Plans are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis.

1 2 3 4 5

5. When Individual Education Plans are found to be ineffective, necessary modifications are made.

1 2 3 4 5

6. If upon review the Identification Placement Review Committee finds a student's placement to be inappropriate, the student's placement is changed.

1 2 3 4 5

7. A placement change to a more restrictive environment (if necessary) is carried out as easily as a move to the least restrictive environment.

1 2 3 4 5

8. The practice of integration requires that regular teachers spend significantly more time on student programming and instruction.

1 2 3 4 5

9. Planning time is scheduled during the school day for the collaboration of regular classroom teachers and resource personnel, colleagues, parents, etc.

1 2 3 4 5

1. Always
2. Almost Always
3. Sometimes
4. Almost Never
5. Never

10. Teachers receive adequate in-service training (e.g. special workshops, presentations, visitation of other schools, etc.) with respect to dealing with exceptional students.

1 2 3 4 5

Briefly describe the type of in-service training received.

How often was in-service training received?

- ☐ Never
☐ On one occasion
☐ Annually
☐ Semi- Annually
☐ On a regularly scheduled basis

What kind of professional in-service training do you feel is necessary?

11. Appropriate resources and any necessary special equipment are available to the regular teacher of an integrated classroom.

1 2 3 4 5

12. All teachers are well informed as to what community, school, and board resources are available to their school.

1 2 3 4 5

1. Always
2. Almost Always
3. Sometimes
4. Almost Never
5. Never

13. In-classroom support is provided on a regularly scheduled basis for exceptional students functioning in the regular classroom.

1 2 3 4 5

Type of in-class support received:

(please check)

- ☐ Educational assistant
☐ Special Education Teacher
☐ Resource Teacher
☐ Itinerant Teacher
☐ Principal/Vice Principal
☐ Special Equipment
☐ Health Care Professional
☐ Volunteers
☐ Other _____

How often does the regular classroom teacher receive the support indicated above?

14. The in-classroom support received by the regular classroom teacher is effective in providing an appropriate program for exceptional students.

1 2 3 4 5

What form of support do you feel is necessary within the regular classroom?

Service Delivery/Impact

Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- 1. Strongly Agree**
- 2. Agree**
- 3. Undecided**
- 4. Disagree**
- 5. Strongly Disagree**

15. Integration has been beneficial to the education of exceptional students.

Academically:

1 2 3 4 5

Socially:

1 2 3 4 5

16. Integration has been beneficial to the education of non-exceptional students.

Academically:

1 2 3 4 5

Socially:

1 2 3 4 5

17. It is preferable to educate exceptional students with their non-exceptional peers.

1 2 3 4 5

18. Integration means that every exceptional student should be placed in the regular classroom on a full-time basis.

1 2 3 4 5

19. School boards should provide a continuum of placement options for exceptional students.

1 2 3 4 5

1. **Strongly Agree**
2. **Agree**
3. **Undecided**
4. **Disagree**
5. **Strongly Disagree**

20. There is an appropriate placement available in this board of education for almost every child.

1 2 3 4 5

21. Before a student's placement is determined, there is careful consideration taken in matching the exceptional student's academic, physical and social needs with an appropriate learning environment.

1 2 3 4 5

22. Students with mild exceptionalities should be placed in a regular education classroom.

1 2 3 4 5

23. Students with severe exceptionalities should not be placed in a regular education classroom.

1 2 3 4 5

24. There continues to be a need for self-contained classrooms for some exceptional students.

1 2 3 4 5

Part B: Levels of Service

The purpose of this section is to obtain your views on the adequacy of different delivery alternatives for students with various kinds of exceptionalities. It is also intended to establish what is still needed in order to better meet the needs of all students.

1. Do you feel the regular classroom is an optimal learning environment for all exceptional students?

___ Yes ___ No

Please explain your answer.

2. Please choose a delivery alternative which you feel best serves the exceptional child with respect to both academic and social progress.

1. Special School
2. Correspondence
3. Full-time Special Class
4. Part-time Special Class
5. Regular Class with Withdrawal (Resource Room)
6. Regular Class with Special Support

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

A. BEHAVIORAL

mild - moderate
severe

B. COMMUNICATION

Hearing/Language/Speech Impairment

mild - moderate
severe

Autism

mild - moderate
severe

SOCIAL PROGRESS

1. **Special School**
2. **Correspondence**
3. **Full-time Special Class**
4. **Part-time Special Class**
5. **Regular Class with Withdrawal
(Resource Room)**
6. **Regular Class with Special Support**

Learning Disability

mild - moderate

severe

C. INTELLECTUAL

Gifted

Educable -Slow Learner

Trainable

D. PHYSICAL

Orthopaedic and/or Physical

mild - moderate

severe

Visual Impairment

E. MULTIPLE

Multihandicapped

3. From your experience, please circle the number which indicates the extent to which your school and/or board considers the following factors in arriving at a placement decision.

	Not at All			Very Much	
*Type of exceptionality	1	2	3	4	5
*Severity of exceptionality	1	2	3	4	5
*Individual needs of student	1	2	3	4	5
*Student characteristics	1	2	3	4	5
*Student achievement level	1	2	3	4	5
*Developmental level	1	2	3	4	5
*School environment	1	2	3	4	5
*Student-teacher ratio in class	1	2	3	4	5
*Exceptional-to-non-exceptional student ratio	1	2	3	4	5
*Classroom layout	1	2	3	4	5
*Availability of support	1	2	3	4	5
*Appropriate training of support personnel	1	2	3	4	5
*Parental support for placement	1	2	3	4	5
*Teacher support for placement	1	2	3	4	5

4. If any, which factors should be more carefully monitored when placement decisions are made? _____

5. Please number the following statements on a five point scale which you feel would best improve the current system of delivery offered by your board of education.

1. **Most needed**
 2. **Highly needed**
 3. **Needed**
 4. **Less needed**
 5. **Least needed**

	Most needed			Least needed	
*Speed up referral, testing & placement process	1	2	3	4	5
*Earlier identification	1	2	3	4	5
*Early intervention	1	2	3	4	5
*More input from regular teachers	1	2	3	4	5
*Increased parental involvement	1	2	3	4	5
*Increased teacher training in special education	1	2	3	4	5
*Provision of time for teachers to observe other classrooms	1	2	3	4	5
*Increased teacher preparation time	1	2	3	4	5
*Regular teacher receives record of information concerning child's abilities and academic past	1	2	3	4	5
*Time allowances for consultation/ collaboration with resource staff	1	2	3	4	5
*Reduction of class size when exceptional children are integrated	1	2	3	4	5
*Eliminate categorization of students	1	2	3	4	5
*More careful consideration in matching student and placement	1	2	3	4	5
*Increased support services in regular classroom	1	2	3	4	5
*Necessary support equipment available in regular classroom	1	2	3	4	5
*Expand special education classes	1	2	3	4	5

6. Are there any other changes to your board's service delivery that you would recommend to better meet the needs of exceptional students? _____

END

0 3-0 6-9/6

FIN