

Running Head: GIFTED EDUCATION AND INCLUSION

Gifted Education and the Inclusion Educational Approach

Sarah-Jane Granholm

Vancouver Island University

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	2-3
Abstract	4
Chapter 1: Problem to be Investigated	
A. Purpose of Study	5
B. Justification of Study	5-10
C. Research Question and Hypothesis	11-12
D. Definition of Terms	11-14
E. Brief Overview of Study	14-15
Chapter 2: Background and Review of Related Literature	
A. “Duck! Someone Said, ‘Inclusion!’: Reactions to a survey”. (Shiple)	16-21
B. “I’d Rather Pump Gas: Teachers’ View of Inclusion”. (Vaughn, et. al)	21-25
C. “Regular Education Teacher’s Attitude Toward Their Identified Gifted and Special Education Students”. (Moore & Siegel)	25-28
D. “Maximizing Student Potential Versus Building Community: An Exploration of Right-Wing Authoritarianism, Social Dominance Orientation, and Preferred Practice Among Supporters of Gifted Education”. (Cross, Cross & Finch)	28-31
E. “A National View of Promising Programs and Practices for Culturally, Linguistically, and Ethnically Diverse Gifted and Talented Students”. (Briggs, Reis, & Sullivan)	31-35
F. “Predictors of Parents’ Inclusion Decisions”. (Portfeli, Algozzine, Nutting & Queen)	35-38
Chapter 3: Procedures and Methods	
A. Research Design	39-40
B. Participants	40-41
C. Instrumentation	41-42
D. Procedures	42-43
E. Validity	43-44
F. Data Analysis	44-45
Chapter 4: Findings and Results	46-59
Chapter 5: Summary, Discussion and Conclusions	
A. Brief Overview of Study	60
B. Discussion of Findings and Implications	60-68
C. Limitations to the Study	68-69

D. Suggestions for Further Research and Recommendations for Policy	69-72
E. Conclusion	72

Appendix	73-81
----------	-------

References	82-86
------------	-------

Abstract

This Research Project sought to determine more about whether the needs of gifted students are being served successfully within the current educational approach of inclusion, and whether teachers are properly supported and professionally prepared to accommodate these types of learners (and other Special Education students in general) into their regular education (inclusion) classrooms. A mixed-methods survey gathered information from 24 regular education classroom teachers across four separate schools in two neighbouring school districts in British Columbia during the winter of 2012. The vast majority of Special Education students in surveyed teachers' classrooms were identified as having a learning disability, while few were identified as being gifted, echoing previous gifted education researchers' fear of a "quiet crisis" in this area. A strong majority of participants believed more students would benefit from a Special Education designation. Results also revealed that although the majority of participants had been involved in professional development directed related to Special Education at some point, they felt professional unprepared and improperly supported to address the needs of these students in their regular education (inclusion) classrooms. More, the entire range of Special Education students represented considerable challenges of incorporation to participants. The majority of teacher time on accommodations went to those with learning disabilities, while the least went to gifted students. This study concluded that a concentrated effort by school districts and the Ministry of Education alike needs to be undertaken in terms of focused professional development and support of its teachers in Special Education policies, ideologies, and strategies, whilst seriously addressing the gap between the policy and practice of inclusion in regular education classrooms.

Chapter One: Problem to be Investigated

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to add to the existing knowledge regarding the current Canadian educational approach of inclusion with regards to gifted learners. More specifically, it aimed to discover more about the experiences that teachers have had with identified gifted students under the current educational approach of inclusion, and whether or not there is a disconnect between the policy surrounding this approach and the practice that is found within actual classrooms.

The concept of “giftedness” has long been an object of intrigue and concern that has produced extensive exploration and debate; the shifting attitudes toward this concept throughout the past century reveal a distinct evolution of interest, philosophy, policy and, therefore, practice. How gifted students are defined, how they are educated, and how society receives them, has varied considerably across time (Gallagher, 1994). Currently, in British Columbia, gifted students are grouped into the category of “Special Education”, along with other types of students with various identifications, ranging from learning to physical disabilities, and are generally taught in ‘inclusion’ classrooms by regular education teachers. This study intended to discover more about how, and to what extent, gifted students are being served within the educational approach of inclusion, as well as to provide insight into the readiness of regular education teachers to teach these types of students, alongside a variety of other Special Education students, within this educational approach.

Justification of the Study

Educational approaches, the term “gifted”, and gifted education, have all evolved alongside each other significantly over the past several decades. Public understanding and support for gifted students, and thus, gifted education, has waxed and waned over the past half-

century in response to national interests and political pressures – gifted students have been directly affected by this pattern (Jolly, 2009). One of the very first researchers of the term “gifted”, Abraham Tannenbaum, insightfully noted that “no other special group of children has been so alternatively embraced and repelled with so much rigor by educators and laypersons alike” (Jolly, 2009). The type of education a gifted student received has always been influenced by the current educational approach that was present in society. During the Sputnik era (mid 1950’s to early 1960’s), the educational approach was inspired by a particular goal: to ensure the nation’s overall success when compared to their worldly counterparts. Gifted students were positively highlighted by this approach (Centre for Gifted Education & Society for the Advancement of Gifted Education, 1992) as the nation looked to their brightest students to ensure the future success of the nation. The more recent educational goal, however, is entirely different in focus; it now centers around issues of equity and inclusion. Unfortunately, the abandonment of one goal (which highlighted gifted students) for another (which highlights equity and inclusion) has caused what is referred to in the field of gifted education research as a “quiet crisis” (Renzulli & Reis, 1991). As equity has become the philosophical preference in Canadian society, gifted education is now seen as an elitist luxury and students within other subpopulations (i.e. within the now vast spectrum of Special Education) are being prioritized (Renzulli & Reis, 1991). The research in this field is clear: the unfortunate biases and ideologies that surrounded the term “gifted” have affected educational practice (and thus, educational approaches) as a whole. Now, instead of receiving prioritized educational attention, gifted students are receiving less adaptations to their education than their Special Education peers (Toth, 1999). Therefore, an investigation into the extent to which gifted students are now being served in the current educational approach of inclusion is not only justified, but in fact vital.

Modern research has shown that gifted students need to be taught with specific strategies and in particular environments, such as curriculum-compacting (Reis & Purcell, 1993), enrichment activities (Jolly, 2009), independent study (Baum, Hebert & Renzulli, 1999; Powers, 2008), cluster-grouping (Gentry & Owen, 1999), and differentiated instruction (Renzulli & Reis, 1991). These types of strategies actually reflect past educational approaches to serving gifted students; now they are being used to aid these students in the current model of inclusion. Before inclusion became the overall educational approach in North America (about 15 years ago), gifted students' learning needs were met with a variety of enrichment pull-out programs and special classes that incorporated a number, if not all, of these strategies as their primary learning models (Reis & Renzulli, 2010). Under the current educational approach of inclusion, gifted students are now taught together with other students who have learning or physical exceptionalities under the heading of "Special Education students", and with students who have no identifications. Although the current inclusion approach demands that the focus of education now be on fairness, equity and integration for all students, this has, unfortunately, too often translated into providing the same education to all students, regardless of individual needs (Moore & Siegal, 1994; Toth, 1999). Since the term "Special Education" now includes gifted students (whereas historically giftedness was a separate and distinct designation unto itself), this presents some interesting questions around whether or not gifted students are being properly served within the current educational approach of inclusion. Are gifted students being identified successfully? Are they receiving proper adaptations to their curriculum in order for their individual learning needs to be met? Are teachers spending the same amount of time addressing and preparing these adaptations for their identified gifted students as they are for their other identified Special Education students? Have teachers been given the proper tools, such as specialized training or professional

development in Special Education, as well as resources and support from their formal leaders, in order to address the needs of these identified learners in their classrooms?

Inclusion as an educational approach is defined by the Ministry of Education in British Columbia as “the value system which holds that all students are entitled to equitable access to learning, achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their education” (Ministry of Education, 2011). British Columbia educators have adopted a policy where every student is entitled to an appropriate education, and that students with special needs have a right to access an inclusionary public education system (Ministry of Education, 2011). All students, regardless of their individual learning styles, abilities, or challenges, are now educated in the exact same classroom and taught a very similar curriculum; this is done to ensure “equity” in education for all students. However, since gifted students have long been proven to learn in a significantly different way than other students (Reis & Renzulli, 2010), it follows that they should be instructed differently, too. Differentiated instruction is a common strategy that has been promoted within the inclusion educational approach that is supposed to allow each individual student to access a personalized curriculum within the same classroom so that success for each student can be fully realized (Reis & Renzulli, 2010). Curriculum is adapted or modified in some way, shape or form in order to meet each individual students’ needs (i.e. allowing gifted students to compact, or press together, certain units within the curriculum because their “giftedness” allows them to learn better this way and thus their educational success is improved). However, more and more studies are showing that little instructional or curricular differentiation is being made in regular classrooms (Centre for Gifted Education & Society for the Advancement of Gifted Education, 1992; Reis et al., 2004; Toth, 1999; Westberg et al., 1993). This has had particularly devastating results for gifted students, who, when finished their work,

are given similar activities or assignments that test the exact same skills (repetitive work), sent to help coach or tutor a weaker student, asked to perform a classroom errand for the teacher, told to read quietly, or other instructions that do nothing to enhance the skills or overall education of these students (Toth, 1999).

Modern research has shown that gifted students are also suffering from a “dumbed down” curriculum and less challenging textbooks (Renzulli & Reis, 1991; Toth, 1999; Reis et al., 2004). This “quiet crisis” is truly an alarming reality in education. Therefore, it is important to investigate whether gifted students are being served appropriately within the current inclusion educational approach. Are they having the curriculum accommodated (i.e. using adaptations and/or modifications) in an appropriate manner? Do teachers spend enough time making sure these changes are made for gifted students, especially in relation to the time spent doing the exact same task for other special education students? Are teachers appropriately prepared, in terms of resources, support, and skills, to address the needs of gifted Special Education students?

Although a large body of research, albeit American in context, regarding inclusion as an educational approach was created during the mid-1990’s when the approach was fully introduced in both the United States and Canada, there is a fairly significant void in the current body of research regarding this approach. The historical consensus on this topic was that research on the inclusion method of education needed to move from a philosophical and moral debate to empirical testing (Culcross, 1996; Renzulli & Reis, 1991; Vaughn & Others, 1994), but that has yet to materialize. The literature also revealed that most teachers and parents had strong, negative feelings regarding the inclusion approach (Shipley, 1995). Intriguingly, these negative feelings came from parents of *all* types of students, whether they were identified as Special Education or not (Portfeli, Algozzine, Nutting and Queen, 2006). The most consistent reason for

this reaction was that the individual students' needs would not be appropriately met (Shipley, 1995; Vaughn et al., 1994). Despite these initial feelings and reactions, the approach still exists today.

The majority of the current research that does exist on inclusion with regards to gifted students focuses on the types of strategies that can be used in inclusion classrooms in order to better serve these students. Instead of moving to actual empirical testing on whether or not inclusion actually works for gifted students, the research has instead focused on strategies that should be used so that they can learn within the inclusion system. Thus, current research does not address the possible success or failure that the inclusion educational approach has brought to gifted students. It also does not address teachers' support levels, resources, or professional preparation in terms of serving these students successfully within an inclusion educational approach. This study intended to shed light on these ideas from an entirely Canadian perspective.

Research Questions

The research questions driving this study were: "Are the needs of gifted students being served successfully within the current inclusion educational approach?" and "Are teachers properly supported and professionally prepared to accommodate gifted students in their classrooms within an inclusion educational approach?"

Research Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this study was that gifted students are not served successfully by the current inclusion educational approach. They do not receive adequate attention in the form of curriculum adaptations appropriate for gifted learners due to a) the increased identification and focus on the needs of their Special Education counterparts, and b) the lack of specialized teacher

training, appropriate support and resources concerning gifted learners and Special Education in general.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, there are several definitions that need clarification:

A. “Inclusion Educational Approach”

The term “inclusion educational approach” refers to the current educational approach that is mandated by law across Canada. The B.C. Ministry of Education defines this approach as the value system which holds that all students are entitled to equitable access to learning, achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their education (Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, 2011). The practice of inclusion transcends the idea of physical location, and incorporates basic values that promote participation, friendship and interaction. All students, regardless of any “Special Education” designation (which, again, now includes gifted students), now learn within an “inclusionary” educational setting – which is to say that they learn in the exact same classroom with a very similar, if not exact, curriculum as every other student in the regular public school system.

B. “Gifted”

This term has gone through a significant evolution over the past several decades and needs proper clarification in order to understand and appreciate this study. Leta Stetter Hollingworth and Lewis Terman, two of the most well-known early researchers of the term “gifted” (Jolly, 2009), began efforts in the early 1920’s to define this concept as an outgrowth of modern psychology and the study of individual differences. Hollingworth’s definition of “gifted” was defined as superior intelligence or an IQ of 130 and above, comprising only 1 in 100 or the top 1% of children (Jolly, 2009). Terman, a staunch supporter of intelligence tests, likened superior

intelligence to an IQ of 140. Both researchers were, however, hesitant to include any other factors in their definitions of “gifted” because intelligence, at that point of time in history, was really the only trait that could presumably be measured with any type of certainty (Jolly, 2009). Current research has expanded this definition significantly to include a multi-dimensional construction of giftedness that incorporates a variety of traits, skills, and abilities, which are manifested in multiple ways: rapid learning as compared to others in the population, attention control, memory efficiency and characteristics of perception, desire to develop one’s gifts, and task commitment (Reis & Renzulli, 2010). When compared to the definition originally presented by Hollingworth and Terman, the current description of what it means to be “gifted” represents a truly profound shift in ideology.

In Canada, each province carries its own, albeit similar, definition of what being “gifted” entails, as well as the ways in which students are officially identified. In British Columbia, a student is deemed gifted when they possess demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of exceptionally high capabilities in regards to intellect, creativity, or the skills associated with specific disciplines (Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, 2011). When this researcher mentions the term “gifted” in the current context, this is the definition that is being referred to.

C. “Identified” or “ Identification” (as a Special Education student)

In British Columbia public schools, students go through a specific five-step process in order to be ‘identified’ as “gifted” and to receive appropriate curriculum and instructional adaptations aimed at ensuring their educational success. This same process also occurs for all other types of Special Education students. First, identification is made by the classroom teacher through observing exceptionalities in learning and behaviour. The teacher responds to this initial

classroom identification by initiating an in-depth, systematic classroom observation and evaluation of the prospective “gifted” student, which entails a comprehensive assessment of their skills and needs. Second, the classroom teacher consults and collaborates with the school-based team (an on-going group of school personnel who have a formal role to play as a problem-solving unit in assisting with the development and implementation of instructional/management strategies and to coordinate support resources). Third, the student, parents and educational staff identify educational goals that are appropriate for the student and ways of attaining them. This part of the process results in an IEP (individual education plan) being developed for the gifted student, which identifies appropriate goals and objectives, while describing the nature of the commitments which the educational system will make to assist them in attaining these goals and objectives. Fourth, program support and implementation puts into practice the plans, strategies and support agreed upon in the IEP (such as an alternate approach to instruction and/or adaptation or modification to the curriculum content). Fifth, evaluation of student learning is performed. Whenever possible, gifted students are to be evaluated using standards established for other students and on all components of their program, including those that have been adapted or modified. It is stressed in this final step that the student take part in all aspects of the “regular classroom program”. This is what the inclusion educational approach dictates should happen for all Special Education students in the British Columbia public education system (Special Education Services, 2011).

D. “Accommodations” (in Special Education)

“Accommodations” is a term that refers to both the act of incorporating, and the tools by which the incorporation (or “accommodating”) is done, of Special Education students (or, in theory, differently-abled students in general) into regular education inclusion classrooms. When

a teacher is “accommodating” or incorporating a Special Education student into their regular education classroom, the terms “adaptations” and “modifications” are used to refer to the actual tools or strategies that are used in which to do so. According to British Columbia’s Special Education Services Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, “adaptations” are defined as teaching and assessment strategies especially designed to accommodate a student’s needs so that they can achieve the learning outcomes of the subject or course and to demonstrate mastery of concepts. Of note, adaptations do not represent unfair advantages to students; the opposite, in fact, is true. If appropriate adaptations are not used, students could be unfairly penalized for having learning differences, which can create serious negative impacts to their achievement and self-concept. Essentially, adaptations are considered “best practice” in teaching, and are the mode by which a number of gifted students are incorporated into regular education classrooms. “Modifications”, on the other hand, are instructional and assessment-related decisions made to accommodate a student’s educational needs that consist of individualized learning goals and outcomes which are different than learning outcomes of a course or subject. Using modifications for students without special needs is a very rare practice.

Brief Overview of Study

This study was conducted in the winter of 2012. The goal of the study was to determine if gifted students were being served successfully by the current inclusion educational approach, and to provide insight into whether regular education teachers are properly supported and professionally prepared to accommodate gifted students into their classrooms within this approach. The data was collected from a convenient and purposive sample of regular classroom teachers that had experience with identified Special Education students (including gifted students and other identified Special Education students) across four separate schools in British

Columbia; the total survey sample was 24 teachers. Two schools in School District #68, Nanaimo-Ladysmith, (one elementary school and one high-school) as well as two schools in School District #69, Qualicum, (again, one elementary school and one high-school) formed the target population of this study. This was done to ensure greater external validity to the study. Teachers were informed that the survey was regarding Special Education, but not told specifically that this researcher was looking at gifted students as a sub-population. This was done to ensure greater reliability of responses from the survey participants. The quantitative and qualitative results of the survey were then analyzed to provide insight into regular education teachers' experiences teaching identified gifted students, as well as other Special Education students. Also, data concerning teachers' feelings of support and preparedness were analyzed in order effectively address the research questions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Abstract:

Views of parents and teachers about inclusion of students of all learning abilities in regular education were surveyed in a small western Pennsylvania school district. Information was sought from 54 parents and 28 teachers of students needing learning support, students identified as gifted/talented, and students not identified as needing support or as gifted. Responses were obtained from 33 percent of parents, and 64 percent of teachers. Strong opinions for and against inclusion were expressed. Several teachers felt that the concept of "least restrictive environment" allows for leverage in placing the student. Teachers emphasized the importance of meeting the student's educational needs whether placement results in an excluded environment or the regular classroom. Other issues that were identified included: whether inclusion is detrimental to meeting the needs of all children; whether average children receive a watered-down curriculum due to time spent on adaptations of content; whether students who are gifted are bored by a slow pace; whether some students are held back from accelerating until the whole group masters the material; the idea that "regular" children learn to respect and accept others for who they are regardless of their limitations; and classroom teacher preparation for inclusion.

The problem investigated in Wesley W. Shipley's "Duck! Someone Said, 'Inclusion!'" study (1995) was the idea that in education the word "inclusion" elicits varying attitudes of frustration, confusion, apathy and anger – so much so that both teachers and parents have strong opinions about the appropriateness of inclusion in today's classrooms. This is clearly stated in the opening of the study's paper, and is linked to its overall purpose. The author feels that because inclusion seems to be the sweeping "wave of the future" in education, he should delve

deeper into what exactly these varying attitudes of both parents and teachers are on such a controversial issue.

The author used a qualitative research method of data collection and analysis and formulated a specific survey that he gave to all the subjects involved in the study. He surveyed a small school district in Western Pennsylvania with the intention of making sure that all of the attitudes, although varying, would reflect this same system of inclusion. He surveyed 18 parents of learning support children, 18 parents of gifted and talented children, and 18 parents of “regular education” children. He also surveyed 28 teachers from one elementary school, including learning support teachers, gifted and talented teachers, and “regular” classroom teachers. 64% of teachers responded while only 33% of all parents responded. Shipley is clear that although the response to this survey was less than enthusiastic, the opinions expressed were strong either in favour or not in favour of inclusion and thus confirms his original problem that there are varying attitudes towards the topic of inclusion in today’s school system.

The main results of this study were specifically connected to the language found in the Federal Law regarding education that stated that “all children have the right to a public school education, which includes: a free appropriate education, an individualized education program, special education services, and the least restrictive environment in which to learn” (Shipley, 1995). Both teachers and parents agreed that “appropriate” and “least restrictive environment” were the most important words of this Law (Shipley, 1995). The consensus of the study’s participants was that the idea of inclusion is in direct contrast to their overall desires for their children’s education. Everyone agreed that the educational needs of the individual students must come first, regardless of the educational program. Strong opinions were expressed to support a variety of educational classes and/or programs for different students depending on what

environment would allow them to be most successful on an individual basis. This included the idea that some children learn best in a “regular” classroom, while others learn best in a separate class or school setting (i.e. learning support children and gifted/talented children). Everyone agreed that the particular environment that is the “least restrictive environment” for each child was very different, and that the idea of inclusion does not allow for such variance. A large number of participants also noted that not all students should be learning the same curriculum and that what each child learns should depend on their individual needs to be ready for society as an adult – this could range from learning basic life skills, to advanced-level mathematics. The emphasis of the responses to the survey was clear: not all students need to learn the same curriculum, but inclusion demands that they do. This reality was shown in the study to evoke feelings of anger, frustration and confusion by a large number of both parents and teachers that participated.

Shipley also found that a large number of participants were in favour of schools allowing for acceleration and remediation when necessary for the individual students’ success (Shipley, 1995). The emphasis of the responses were, again, on the fact that each child’s potential needs to be recognized, and that children should be able to learn at their own speed – these strategies (acceleration and remediation) would allow them to do so. However, as the idea of inclusion does not allow or promote these types of strategies, again feelings of anger, frustration and confusion were evoked among both parents and teachers alike. Many participants identified a possible problem with individualized learning when inclusion is implemented. Many felt that in most cases, the right of the “learning support” children supersedes the rights of the other children. Teachers were unanimous in their response that every effort is given to meet the individual needs of each child, however inclusion does not allow the needs of all to be met.

More, the consensus of the participants was that too much time is being spent on adaptations of content for the “learning support” child that the other students suffer from a “watered-down” version of the curriculum. The notion that the curriculum content in inclusive education classrooms was getting thinned out or “watered-down” was a common theme in the participant’s responses, both from teachers and from parents. Most parents felt that inclusion is, in fact, detrimental to meeting the needs of all children. Examples were given with regards to gifted students (they are bored by the slow pace and few challenges) and average children (they receive a watered-down curriculum; they begin to resent the learning support children because of the many adaptations from which they do not benefit; they see others doing less work and making equal or better grades than them). According to parents, this reality is a source of great frustration to many children.

Most of the teachers who responded said that the biggest benefactors of inclusion are the parents of the “learning support” children, who may view their child as more “normal” because they spend greater time with other children (Shipley, 1995). More, the majority of both parents and teachers surveyed agreed that classroom teachers are not properly trained for inclusion to be successful, and are only taught to adapt material once it is already too late. The consensus from both parents and teachers was that teachers were directly hurt by inclusion because the approach makes a difficult job even harder. They agreed that most of a teacher’s time within inclusion is devoted to a small group of children, while the majority of students suffer. In a nutshell, this study found that the majority of teachers and parents were strongly against the idea of inclusion for the main reason that it does not allow each *individual* student the possibility to reach their potential success.

However, Shipley's survey did produce one possible positive outcome to the idea of inclusion: all children benefit socially from this type of educational environment. The example is given numerous times by participants that regular children learn to respect and accept others for who they are, regardless of their limitations, and that this reality will be a benefit to future societies because the idea of tolerance is being fostered.

There are several limitations within Shipley's study. Most obvious is that the data that he collects and then analyzes is entirely in the form of anecdotal responses from both parents and teachers. The questions in the survey have a great deal to do with the emotional responses of the participants to the idea of inclusion, and this could present a possible problem with any generalizations made from the answers obtained. He also does not explain his method or design of the study in appropriate detail, which leads the reader to wonder about which questions might have been asked of the participants to garner responses related to emotions of both teachers and parents. In addition, Shipley never gives exact percentages or amounts for each one of his assertions or conclusions based on the survey's responses; he uses the terms "most", "many", and "some" to introduce the responses from the participants, which can possibly mislead the reader. What the reader might think of as "some" or "many" may be entirely different than Shipley's definition of such terms. Greater specificity would have perhaps offered enhanced authenticity to the study's results.

Another obvious limitation is that the sample size is somewhat small, albeit concerning an entire district, and the author does not define the socio-economic particulars of his sample. It is possible that the socio-economic status of the participants plays a role in the particular responses to the survey, especially in relation to the parents that were surveyed. More, the study was performed a few years after the concept of inclusion was introduced into all regular

classrooms. It is possible that the responses reflect the “growing pains” of a new educational approach, and do not necessarily report the possible successes that this approach might have garnered over the past several years since its introduction. The current study, however, will examine teachers’ current attitudes about the effects of inclusion on gifted children in regular classrooms. The author does make note, too, that there needs to be a great deal more research done with respect to inclusion and its effects on both parents and teachers, as well as the students themselves (Shipley, 1995). He even states that the participants in his survey would not be completely sure of all the effects of inclusion on schools as a whole.

Shipley’s study of “inclusion” has elicited a number of relevant themes (curriculum thinning, emphasis on a minority rather than the majority, etc.) that will be examined in the current study, which will build on its results by examining classrooms several decades after inclusion has been in place in the Canadian context. The current study will also look specifically at a central issue that emerged from Shipley’s study: that gifted children are not well served by inclusion.

Abstract:

The issue of inclusion has been at the forefront of attention in education, and has been widely discussed and debated. Since teachers will be the primary service deliverers of whatever inclusion practices are adopted, this study was conducted in an attempt better to understand teachers' understanding and perceptions of inclusion. Focus group interviews were used to solicit teachers' views. Subgroups of teachers who were most likely to be directly affected by inclusion practices were targeted: special education teachers (N=25); general education teachers (N=25); Chapter I teachers (N=8); and teachers of the gifted (N=15). Interview results revealed passionate responses from teachers, the majority of whom had strong, negative

feelings. Teachers felt that decision-makers were out of touch with classroom realities. They identified factors that would affect the success of inclusion such as class size, inadequate resources, the extent to which all students would benefit, and lack of adequate teacher preparation. Two topics were identified as necessary if inclusion were to be successful-- communication among teachers and use of cooperative learning grouping. Informants' responses formed the basis for guidelines to implement school-based inclusion models.

The problem being addressed in Vaughn, Shay, Schumm, Jallad, Slusher and Saumell's (1994) study has to do with the lack of teachers' voice that is present in dialogue concerning the introduction of inclusion as an educational approach. The purpose of this study was to better understand teachers' understanding and perceptions of inclusion through the use of focus group interviews. Special Education (also known as Learning Support), gifted and regular/general education teachers were interviewed since their roles are likely to change considerably with the introduction of the inclusion educational approach. The authors were very detailed and descriptive in both their reasoning for and process of using focus groups as the means to collect qualitative data for this study. The idea behind using group interviews, rather than individual interviews, was the belief by the researchers that teachers would be more willing to reveal their true perceptions and feelings within a group setting while discussing a common issue. Subjects were chosen using procedures most frequently used for focus groups: purposive, non-probability, and non-randomly selected sampling in order to solicit involvement of individuals that represented the targeted groups for the research (Saumell, Schumm, Shay, Slucher, Jalled & Vaughn, 1994). All subjects were recruited from a large metropolitan school district in the South-Eastern United States. Participants in the study came from 27 elementary, 9 middle and 9 high schools and taught a variety of subjects. Two pilot focus groups were also conducted prior

to the actual implementation of the focus groups reported in the study in order to develop, field test and revise the questions and focus group procedures. The size of the actual focus group ranged from 4-12 people, with an average of 7.4 in a group. The length of the group interviews lasted approximately 60 minutes.

The most consistent response of teachers across all of the focus groups was strong feelings about inclusion that were largely negative. Many teachers even stated that if inclusion was imposed upon their classroom practices, it would be enough to get them to change jobs (Saumell et al., 1994). Many also expressed scepticism about the likelihood of inclusion's success for all students. There was a strong fear expressed by the teachers of not having any agency with regards to this approach. In their view, inclusion is being promoted by people who do not work in classrooms and who are unaware of the procedures and consequences of implementing practices that they establish. The inclusion policy was described as being "out of touch" and an idea that would "work in theory but not in practice" (Saumell et al, 1994). The majority of the participants also felt that money was one of the major reasons behind this educational approach. In addition, there was a common fear expressed regarding an increased workload: too many kids, too much paperwork and too much accountability. There were large concerns with the majority of participants regarding the idea that inclusion would deny gifted students' educational needs, and that regular/general education students would develop resentment towards Special Education students because so much extra attention would be given to them now. Practically all of the teachers were passionate about the idea that the needs of *all* students should be considered, and not just a minority. There was also concern that there is a severe lack of teacher preparation to meet the needs of students that are not "regular" education

students (i.e. Special Education and gifted) and that teacher training should be required before inclusion is introduced into a teacher's classroom.

There was one positive attribute, however, that most teachers highlighted with regards to inclusion and that had to do with the social aspect provided by the educational approach. Teachers stated that inclusion would aid in the future mainstreaming of differently-abled students into society and that social inclusion would be valuable (Saumell et al, 1994). In summary, the overall notion from the findings of this study is that a wide variety of teachers, on a whole, were deeply concerned that the educational needs of all students would not be met appropriately in inclusion classrooms, despite the best efforts of all involved.

There are a few limitations with this study; most notably perhaps is the fact that it was conducted several years ago, at the very beginning of the introduction of inclusion into regular education classrooms. In addition, the teachers involved in the study as the subjects of the data collection had never actually been directly involved with implementing inclusion into their classrooms yet, and thus their reactions could be merely preliminary scepticism and innocent ignorance of the educational approach itself. Since none of these teachers had ever had a successful experience with inclusion, perhaps their feelings and ideas are somewhat limited in scope. Also, this study was done in an area where there is a high concentration of ESL (English as a Second Language) students and thus teachers are already exposed to a wide variety of diverse learning needs and have a "full plate" as it is (Saumell et al., 1994). This last limitation was duly noted by the researchers themselves.

With regards to this researcher's Research Project, Saumell et al.'s study offers incredible insight into the initial reactions of seasoned teachers with regards to the inclusion educational approach. This researcher's project will delve deeply into the current feelings on this issue and

this could be used as a strong comparative study, reflecting on the past and present views of teachers towards inclusion itself. Do teachers, now that they have had over a decade of experience with inclusion, feel the same way about it? In addition, this study contains a number of themes that are quite prevalent in the literature field on this subject: the idea that inclusion does not properly serve *all* students is repeated in several other prominent studies (Shipley, 1995, 1992; Reis et al., 2004; Toth, 1999) and will inform the hypothesis of the current study. More, the fact that the study included all levels of teachers involved in the inclusion process (Special Education, gifted and regular education) is quite significant as it reveals that the negative view towards inclusion by teachers does not solely rest with one type of teacher – it is a common view held by all.

Abstract:

This study explored teachers' attitudes toward gifted students and students with learning problems integrated into their classrooms. A sample of 46 fourth and fifth grade teachers in a rural school district completed attitude questionnaires about all of their students and personal data forms about themselves. The teachers' attitudes toward their gifted, special education, and typical students were compared. Teachers were more rejecting toward special education students compared to typical and gifted students, but they also reported significantly higher levels of concern for their special education students. Teachers with inclusion programs reported more concern for their special education students than did teachers whose special education students were "pulled out" for service. The study concluded that, since teachers' general attitudes toward inclusion did not relate to teachers' specific attitudes toward actual students, teacher training should not necessarily focus on changing teachers' attitudes toward integration of identified groups of students.

The purpose of this study was to explore and evaluate teachers' attitudes toward the gifted (referred to as "GS"), Special Education (referred to as "SD") and non-identified (referred to as "NS") students with learning handicaps that had been integrated into their classrooms through the educational approach of inclusion. Previously, these students had been "pulled out" of the regular classroom to receive separate support and teaching from various specialist teachers, but were now being included fully in the regular education classroom. The researchers identified teacher attitudes as a major concern in exploring the effects of inclusion on various students (Moore & Siegal, 1994).

This quantitative research study involved 46 subjects, who were fourth and fifth grade teachers at elementary schools in one specific rural school district. The study took place in November of the 1993-1994 school year. These teachers had already implemented the inclusion educational approach, and thus all had both SD and GS in their classrooms, as well as NS. The 46 teachers completed attitude questionnaires about all of their students, as well as personal data forms about themselves. Their attitudes toward SD, GS and NS were compared. Teachers were told that this was a study of teachers' perceptions; they were *not* informed that their attitudes toward the mainstreamed (identified SD and GS) students in their classrooms were the focus of the study.

Teachers were asked about factors that were determined to have a significant effect on teachers' attitudes toward mainstreamed (SD and GS) students. There were no reliability or validity measures on either the questions in the personal data forms, nor the attitudes questionnaires, but they were modeled after previous research questionnaires (Moore & Siegal, 1994). Teachers' attitudes were assessed with four questions that addressed attitudes of

acceptance, indifference, concern, and rejection toward each type of student (SD, GS, NS). The ratings were on a six point Likert-type scale (1 being “not likely” and 6 being “very likely”).

The researchers’ hypotheses were as follows. First, that regular-education teachers will rate SD significantly higher for rejection than NS and GS, and that it will correlate negatively with various factors. Second, that regular-education teachers will rate GS significantly higher for attachment than SD and NS, and that it will correlate positively with various factors. Third, teachers’ attitudes toward SD and GS in inclusion programs would be significantly different than teachers’ attitudes towards SD and GS in pull-out programs.

The results of the study both proved and disproved the researchers’ original hypotheses. The study found that teachers were less attached to SD than GS or ND, and also more rejecting toward SD than GS and NS (as originally proposed). However, the study revealed that teachers show the greatest levels of concern for their SD and the lowest concern for their GS – this finding goes against previous research which assumed that teachers’ negative attitudes towards SD would lead to their rejection of them, and that teachers’ positive attitudes towards GS would lead to their acceptance of them. In other words, researchers previously believed that because teachers had a negative attitude towards their SD that they would in fact receive no attention at all, when in reality this study suggests that they receive the most attention of *all* students. More, this study found that teachers’ attitudes toward GS were no different than to NS.

There are a few important limitations to this study. The researchers themselves noted that there was a problem of “socially acceptable answers” (i.e. more politically correct) to express concerns versus rejection for students (Moore & Siegel, 1994). More simply, it is possible that the teacher respondents did not want to be entirely honest in their answers regarding having concern or rejecting certain types of students – they might have altered their answers to

sound more politically correct (i.e. if a teacher felt that they, in fact, did reject their SD students, it is possible that they did not answer so on their questionnaire for fear that it would not be socially acceptable to do so). In addition, the study is quite limited in scope with regards to its sample size. Only 46 teachers were involved, and they represented merely one school district out of an entire country who is involved in this educational approach of inclusion. As the researchers made specific note that they were trying to dispel previous research assumptions, the only way in which to do this would be to provide a large body of research that supports their aforementioned ideas on this topic. Without a larger sample size, it is difficult to take the findings of this study and generalize it further.

This study is an example of a solid quantitative study that was used as a model for the current study. A similar survey, with both participant data as well as Special Education questions, was used in the current study to collect data from current Canadian teachers on the exact same topic. Now that over a decade has passed since the introduction of the inclusion educational approach, the question that remains is as follows: do teachers' attitudes towards their various students (SD, GS, NS) still reflect the same results or has it changed? Additionally, Moore and Siegel (1994) provide results that support the current study's hypothesis that gifted students are given less time and attention in the regular classroom, as teachers in the inclusion educational approach are spending a large portion of their time being concerned with other types of Special Education students.

Abstract:

Social dominance orientation (SDO), right-wing authoritarianism (RWA), and socially desirable responding were examined among a sample of self-identified supporters of gifted education (N = 341), 70% of whom had an official role in gifted education as researchers,

teachers, or gifted talented (G/T) trainers. The sample was primarily female, White, well-educated, and upper middle class. The relationship of SDO, RWA, socially desirable responding, and support for various gifted education practices such as testing for identification, curricular differentiation in a heterogeneous classroom, and cooperative learning was explored through latent class analysis and logistic regression. Two distinct groups, communitarians and individualists, were found on the basis of their support for different gifted programming. Higher deference to authority among communitarians predicted support for an inclusive social norm, compared to a preference for maximizing potential without regard for inclusion among the individualists, who were less likely to defer to authority.

The purpose for Cross, Cross and Finch's (2010) study entitled "Maximizing Student Potential Versus Building Community: An Exploration of Right-Wing Authoritarianism, Social Dominance Orientation, and Preferred Practice Among Supporters of Gifted Education", was primarily a lack of research in this specific area. The researchers insist that although researchers have spent decades studying gifted children and how best to serve them, little attention has been paid to the individuals who support efforts to provide service to gifted students. They assert that the educational system is strengthened by this type of analysis and critique of the seemingly homogenous group that represents supporters of gifted education. Thus, this study aimed to better serve the entire educational system as a whole by combining research from gifted education and cognitive and social psychology to answer questions about the reasons behind the support for different educational practices.

The problem investigated in this study was the idea that there is a relationship among Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) and Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA), and therefore a common preference for different gifted education practices (such as the identification of gifted

students, and the type of classroom practices by which gifted students should be educated). This study sought to explore the relationship between these psychological constructs and the possibility that it drives their support for gifted education.

The authors hypothesized that subjects high in SDO or RWA would resist cooperative learning (a type of classroom practice) for gifted students because they would prefer to maintain dominance and would not support a practice that builds egalitarian sentiment in the classroom. They also hypothesized that participants with a high degree of SDO or RWA would prefer hierarchy-enhancing practices that favour the dominant group, such as IQ testing for identification of gifted students and self-contained classes, and would also oppose hierarchy-attenuating practices, such as cooperative learning.

The authors used a quantitative research method of data collection as they solicited participants over 18 years of age to be part of an anonymous online survey. They used a combination of closed-ended multiple-choice questions and a 7-point Likert scale. Invitations to participate in this survey were sent via emails to address lists of various professors in the field of gifted education. The solicitation contained the following statement: “We are looking for parents, teachers, researchers, administrators, and gifted persons age 18 and over who are supporters of gifted education, to participate in this study.” A link to the survey was also posted on two popular gifted education websites, and the online survey was completed over a 7-month period. This study’s sample consisted of 341 (49 male; 290 female) adults who were self-identified supporters of gifted education.

The main results of this study presented a fair degree of surprise to the researchers. The data analysis showed that, contrary to the authors’ hypothesis, participants with a high degree of SDO or RWA did not prefer different practices for gifted students. Participants with a high SDO

or RWA score did not desire to maintain a separation between gifted and non-gifted students; they, in fact, showed a strong degree of preference for inclusion. Therefore, the authors assert that it is therefore possible that these supporters of gifted education actually reject the exclusive nature of self-contained classrooms, and support the current model of inclusion in classrooms for gifted students.

The limitations of this study centre directly on the fact that the sample size and parameters for participation in the study were incredibly exclusive. First, as this was an online electronic survey, Internet access was a necessary requirement for participation. This limitation could have possibly skewed the social-economic status of the subject pool. Second, the lack of diversity in the sample is even noted by the researchers themselves as a serious limitation. The fact that the majority of participants were women of high social-economic status, the possible responses that could have been gleaned from a wider subject pool are limited. In addition, the researchers noted that not all participants completed all sections of the survey itself. This represents another serious limitation as omissions in the instrument used could have possibly provided inaccurate or misleading data that led to the researchers' final findings and conclusions.

This study offered an intriguing look at the complicated reasoning behind support for gifted education, and was used to inform this researcher about themes surrounding inclusion support. It also provided excellent information in regards to gifted education practices and programming that will aid in providing background and context to this researcher's own gifted education study.

Abstract:

The low representation of culturally, linguistically, and ethnically diverse (CLED) and high-poverty students in gifted and talented programs has long been an area of concern. This

qualitative study investigated methods to increase successful participation of CLED students in gifted programs across the nation. Twenty-five programs were selected for inclusion in the study. Of those, 7 programs were selected for in-depth site visits that included interviews with administrators and teachers, as well as observations. Data suggested five categories that contributed to the successful identification and participation of CLED students in gifted programs. These categories included modified identification procedures; program support systems, such as front-loading (identifying high-potential children and providing opportunities for advanced work prior to formal identification); selecting curriculum/instructional designs that enable CLED students to succeed; building parent/home connections; and using program evaluation practices designed to highlight avenues to CLED students' success.

The low representation of culturally, linguistically and ethnically diverse (CLED) students in gifted programs across the country has long been a concern of researchers and educators in the field of gifted education. The purpose of Briggs, Reis, and Sullivan's (2008) study was to shed light on the urgent need, both in terms of quickly changing national demographics, along with continued political pressure regarding funding sources for gifted education and education in general, to address this reality by changing the identification procedures and services to adequately recognize and develop CLED students' talents. Therefore, the problem addressed by the authors in this study is the low representation of CLED gifted and talented students, along with the educator bias for identification that they assert currently exists. The authors hypothesized that a deep, thorough dissection and critical analysis of particular gifted education programs (those in which had a higher representation, or a growing number, of CLED students in gifted education programs) across the nation would enable key features and

strategies for widespread inclusion of CLED students in gifted education programs to become readily apparent.

The authors used qualitative methodology, including multiple comparative and in-depth case-study analyses, in their lengthy, detailed study. The instruments used for data collection included questionnaires, document review, in-depth interviews and observations.

The procedures followed in this study were quite detailed and involved 4 distinct phases. Prior to formal data collection and the initiation of the first phase, an informational questionnaire was developed and included a range of open-ended questions to be answered in appropriate phases. In Phase One, inquiry letters and emails soliciting nominations were sent to leaders in the field (such as directors of graduate programs, gifted education researchers, members of the Board of Directors for the National Association for Gifted Children, and state-level directors of gifted programs). Invitations to nominate programs was accompanied by a the previously developed questionnaire, which was also available on the website of the National Association for Gifted Children, and the National Research Centre on the Gifted and Talented. 46 programs were initially nominated, representing a cross-section of geographic areas across the nation. Phase Two began as program coordinators of all nominated programs were asked to complete and submit the previously developed questionnaire and additional program documentation. This Phase was completed properly by 40 programs, which enabled the authors to identify 25 programs for follow-up and in-depth interviews with program directors. Programs were selected from all regions of the nation, representing all grade levels and multiple types of delivery models. Phase Three then began as an interview protocol was developed and implemented during interviews with the program directors of the 25 selected programs. Prior to the formal interview, each participant received a copy of the interview protocol. Interviews lasted 1-2

hours. The majority of participants also participated in semi-structured follow-up interviews to clarify and explain information obtained in the original interview. The final Phase consisted of 7 programs being selected for site visits; a range of program design and geographical area were used in deciding these sites. The authors spent 1-2 days as experienced researchers at each site and conducted formal classroom observations without direct interaction with any students or teaching staff.

The results of this case study were plentiful in nature, and consistently supported the authors' original hypothesis. The authors grouped their findings in five separate categories related to key features and strategies found in gifted education programs that successfully represent CLED students. First, modified identification procedures need to be used in order to increase representation of CLED students in gifted programs, such as alternate pathways for program identification, early identification usually at the Primary grade level, and inclusion of information about broader perspectives of student performance. In other words, the successful gifted education programs for CLED students involved more inclusive identification procedures. Second, 'front-loading' as a strategy was found in several successful gifted education programs for CLED students and should therefore be explored further. Third, curriculum or instructional changes were used by 5 out of the 7 successful gifted education programs for CLED students, including implementation of a continuum of services, adoption of a specific curriculum framework, and an emphasis on directly addressing the needs of CLED students. Fourth, parent-home communication was found to be a key feature of the successfully diverse gifted programs. Finally, program evaluation was discovered to be an essential component in extending services to CLED students.

The limitations of this study are few, as the authors themselves spent a fair portion of their final case study paper addressing the issues of validity and reliability in their research work. They provided a detailed and thorough analysis of their own study with specific comments concerning how the researchers/authors avoided limitations such as the ‘trust’ piece with questionnaire and interview participants. One limitation that this researcher found is the lack of definition or clarity regarding what the authors deemed “CLED” students. Perhaps greater explanation in this area would have allowed this researcher, and other readers of the case study, to more precisely understand the authors’ original purpose and problem.

With regards to this researcher’s Research Project, this study offers insight into the rapidly changing definition of what ‘giftedness’ consists of, and the individuals who may be identified as ‘gifted.’ One of this researcher’s justifications for pursuing this area of research was the fact that this definition is in cultural and political flux; this study provides pertinent information and real-life context with regards to the need for a better, more applicable and relevant definition of the term ‘gifted.’

Abstract:

Helping children with disabilities has become a part of American education with varying degrees of acceptance and tolerance and over the years, efforts to provide special education have become controversial. Much of the concern is about paying for “extra” services, but the debate is not just about money. Many professionals question the benefits of special education and more recently the practice of educating children with disabilities in general education classrooms (i.e., inclusion) has received increased attention. The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes of parents toward inclusion and identify predictors of their opinions about important effects of the practice. Parents of children attending a suburban school district in the

Piedmont region of North Carolina participated in the study. In general, parents were opposed to including children with disabilities in general education classrooms and they did not believe that inclusion would greatly improve academic achievement of children with disabilities or greatly hinder performance of children without disabilities. The findings are discussed with regard to other studies of parent attitudes toward special education as a basis for continued study of the most effective means of promoting a greater awareness of the benefits and potential limitations of special education.

The purpose of this study was to measure and report the attitudes of parents towards Special Education, as the perceptions of such a central stakeholder in education influence both the process and product of change in education. Portfeli, Algozzine, Nutting and Queen (2006) hypothesized that the results of their survey would help improve communication with parents about Special Education, thus, increasing the potential for a more successful implementation of key practices, such as inclusion, in the future.

The participants of this study were parents of children attending a suburban school district in the Piedmont region of North Carolina. Of parents of children attending general education classrooms, 644 parents were randomly sampled from the district and 47% of this group completed all aspects of the study. All parents of children attending Special Education classrooms in the school district were sampled to ensure adequate statistical power between parents groups. Of this latter group, 31% participated in all aspects of the study. A subset of 250 participants was employed for the hypothesis testing phase of this study. Participants completed a quantitative survey, with a Likert scale containing descriptive anchors, in the setting of their choice.

The results of this study found that the large majority of the sample was most frequently opposed to including children with mental disabilities and behaviour problems, while a majority of the sample was opposed to including children with learning disabilities, into the general education classroom. The sample was also in favour of including children with physical disabilities, and was clearly divided on the issue of including children who are academically gifted into the general education classroom. In summary, the sample was generally opposed to the concept of inclusion; approximately 60% of the responses collected were against inclusion. Interesting, however, was the fact that 36% of the sample reported having at least one child with a disability and they were categorically over-sampled as well. Thus, it is clear that a good majority of both parents with identified children who would typically be in Special Education classrooms, and parents without identified children, are against an inclusion-based classroom. In addition, parents in this study generally believed that inclusion will slightly improve the included child's academic performance and slightly hinder other children's academic performance. Portfeli, Algozzine, Nutting and Queen also found that parents' beliefs concerning the impact of inclusion on the identified child generally have a stronger impact on their inclusion decisions than do their beliefs concerning the other children in the classroom. The only meaningful exception to this trend was with respect to mental disabilities; in this case, parents' beliefs concerned the implication of inclusion on other children weighed more heavily upon their inclusion decision than did the implications on the included child. Most significantly, a large number of responses indicated parents believed inclusion impairs the academic achievement of the gifted child. In summation, the study found that parents are opposed to including children with disabilities in general education (inclusion) classrooms. They also believed that inclusion will slightly improve academic achievement of the child with a disability but slightly hinder the

performance of other children in his or her classroom. Lastly, the study showed that there is a strong and definite disconnect between perspectives of parents of students with identifications in Special Education and those that are parents of non-identified children.

One of the biggest limitations to this study is fairly clear: the sample size was not only quite small, but also limited to one suburban area. Correspondingly, the study did not necessarily incorporate an appropriate cross-section of socio-economic profiles. More, the lack of diversity makes the results of the study far less applicable across different sectors of society.

This study offers incredible insight into the perspectives of parents in terms of inclusion for their identified or non-identified child. The motivations and reasoning behind these perspectives is as important for this researcher's study as the perspectives themselves. Both reflect this researcher's statements regarding the varying, and mostly negative, feelings towards the inclusion educational approach. Portfeli, Alzonnine, Nutting and Queen's study also reflects other relevant case studies that this researcher has used to support the current study. More, the results of their study shed light on a strong reasoning for the waxing and waning of support for Special Education: the perspectives of parents. Portfeli, Alzonnine, Nutting and Queen's assertion that parents are critical to the eventual acceptance of reform practices such as inclusion show the power that these stakeholders wield.

Chapter Three: Procedures and Methods

Research Design

The primary aim of this Research Project was to discover the extent to which gifted students are being served by the educational approach of inclusion, especially in comparison to their Special Education counterparts, and the extent to which regular education (inclusion) teachers are professionally prepared to incorporate these students into their classrooms. The present study utilized a paper survey to retrieve qualitative and quantitative data on this topic from elementary school and high-school teachers in British Columbia. Teachers from two neighbouring school districts in British Columbia, School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) and School District #69 (Qualicum), were given the opportunity to fill out the survey. This sample was both convenient and purposive, and participants ranged in gender, years of teaching experience and grade level (elementary or secondary) taught. Specific schools sites in each School District were chosen because they reflected a diverse mix of socio-economic profiles, ranging from low to high SES. In doing so, this researcher aimed to enhance the validity of the study. All participation was anonymous and completely voluntary.

The survey was composed of three distinct sections: the cover letter, Part One and Part Two. The cover letter provided a brief description of the study, which explained that it was intending to gather information on Special Education students in the regular inclusion classroom. Part One was comprised of participant data information questions that would help establish greater validity and reliability to this Research Project. Part Two contained 18 quantitative and 1 qualitative question(s) that referenced teachers' experience with Special Education students, including identified gifted students, and the inclusion educational approach. The information gathered from the completed surveys was used to inform this researcher as to the current practice

in the current inclusion education classroom for Special Education students, especially in regards to those identified as gifted, and to that professional preparedness of regular education (inclusion) teachers to incorporate these types of students into their classrooms.

Participants

This study collected data in the form of surveys from four schools in two neighbouring school districts in British Columbia and did not involve vulnerable participants. All of the teachers surveyed from the schools were regular education teachers; that is to say, they taught specific grade(s) and/or educational subject(s) in an inclusion educational setting. Learning Resource, English as a Second Language, Speech and Language Pathologists, and other specialized subject teachers were not surveyed, nor were Educational Assistants within the school. These individuals were not included as they did not fall within the specific purposive sample required for this study, which was specifically regular education (inclusion) classroom teachers.

Two schools within the Nanaimo-Ladysmith School District, Randerson Ridge Elementary School and John Barsby Community School were given the opportunity to participate in this study. Randerson Ridge is comprised of 321 students from Kindergarten to grade 7, and employs 21 teachers. John Barsby is comprised of 720 students in grades 8 to 12, and employs 30 teachers. Two schools within the Qualicum School District, Winchelsea Elementary and Ballenas Secondary School, were also given the opportunity to participate in this study. Winchelsea Elementary is comprised of 255 students from Kindergarten to grade 5, and employs 16 teachers. Ballenas Secondary School is comprised of 834 students from grades 8 to 12, and employs 32 teachers. These particular schools were chosen because this researcher aimed to collect data from teachers working within a variety of educational grades and socio-

economic areas. Information on the participants' age, grade(s) taught, subject(s) taught, years of teaching experience, and number of identified Special Education students in their classrooms was collected in Part One of the survey; this information ranged considerably from participant to participant and was taken into consideration in the latter data analysis step in terms of adding to the validity of the overall study.

Instrumentation

The mode of instrumentation was a survey package, comprised of three distinct sections. The cover letter, Part One containing data collection information questions, and Part Two containing questions based on teachers' experience with Special Education students within regular (inclusion) classrooms. This researcher used 10 close-ended questions for Part One (Participant Data Questions) and a six point Likert scale for 18 questions in Part Two (Special Education Questions) in order to score the results of the survey. This researcher also used an open-ended question for the final question (#19) of Part Two in order to elicit anecdotal, qualitative responses.

The cover letter consisted of a fairly generic outline of the ethical components of this study, including the fact that teachers' participation in this survey was entirely voluntary, and their responses would always be kept completely private and anonymous. It also provided a brief description of this researcher's study, explaining that it intended to gather information on Special Education students in the regular (inclusion) classroom. Part One of the survey was comprised of data collection information questions that would help establish greater validity and reliability to the Research Project. Part Two contained 19 questions that referenced teachers' experience with a variety of Special Education students within the current inclusion educational approach.

Literature in the field of gifted education and inclusion research (Shipley, 1995; Vaughn et al, 1994), in addition to this researcher's past experience with Special Education students in inclusion classrooms, was also used to inform and design this survey.

Procedures

This study emphasized a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods in the form of participants completing a survey (see Appendix). Over a four-week period in 2012, 24 teachers from four separate schools in British Columbia, two in School District #68 (Randerson Ridge Elementary School and John Barsby Community School) and two in School District #69 (Winchelsea Elementary School and Ballenas Secondary School) completed this survey. Each principal was given an envelope containing enough survey packages for every teacher in their respective school, and a secured drop-box was placed in respective school staff rooms for anonymous collection of the surveys once completed. Surveys were physically distributed to all teachers in each of these four schools by the principal via teachers' in-school mailboxes. The four week period given (as stated in the survey's cover letter) for data collection gave each respondent sufficient time to give thorough, thoughtful responses and return the survey. The conditions under which the survey was administered were as similar as possible for all participants. After the survey completion deadline, the secured drop-box was picked-up by this researcher, which contained the completed surveys. Once this researcher collected each of the schools' drop-boxes, they were all kept in a locked facility to ensure the safety and privacy of the materials.

The survey itself (see Appendix) had two important data collection sections: Part One (Participant Data Questions) and Part Two (Special Education Questions). Part One asked participants to provide individual data on elements such as their years of teaching experience,

grade(s) and subject(s) taught, number of identified Special Education students in their classroom (and, specifically, how many are identified as gifted and how many are identified in other Special Education categories such as learning and physical exceptionalities). The format of this data collection section consisted of multiple choice questions that provided numerical ranges for answers. This information was used to increase the validity and reliability of this study. Part Two asked participants to answer questions regarding their experiences with different types of Special Education students. The participants responded to 18 questions in this section by choosing the number that best corresponded to their individual response on a six point Likert scale. The final question provided an opportunity for teachers to list strategies that they have used for all three different types of Special Education students in their current or previous classrooms.

Surveys were gathered together and the data obtained from them was entered into a SPSS Statistical Software Program and interpreted using descriptive analysis. Data from Parts One and Two were converted into quantitative bar graphs, pie graphs, and tables in order to illustrate participants' responses. Mean scores for several questions in both Parts One and Two were calculated and displayed in tables. Data were also disaggregated according to various variables such as type of identification (ID), level of schooling currently teaching, and years of teaching experience in order to draw insightful conclusions from the results. This researcher also analyzed the sole qualitative question in the survey in order to discover relevant themes that may provide further insight into the findings of the Research Project.

Validity

One of the primary challenges this researcher anticipated before the start of the data collection process was the idea that teachers might be inclined to alter their responses to the

survey's questions in Part Two (Special Education Questions) if they were made aware of this researcher's exact hypothesis. This hypothesis implied that teachers do not spend as much time accommodating their gifted students as they do their other Special Education students. This researcher believed that if teachers were made completely aware of this hypothesis before they completed their survey, it would greatly affect the validity of this Research Project. The participants were simply told that the survey aimed to gather data around teachers' experience with Special Education students in regular (inclusion) classrooms, and the focus on gifted students being done by this researcher was omitted. Thus, by not disclosing the entirety of this researcher's hypothesis, the validity of this Research Project was greatly enhanced.

Data Analysis

The quantitative and qualitative data collected from the survey (see Appendix) was examined closely using descriptive analysis, and analyzed for pertinent information. Data collected from Part One of the survey, where specific information was collected on participants' teaching experience, along with the number and designation of their Special Education students, was sorted, analyzed and converted to quantitative bar and pie graphs (Figures 1-3), and expository tables (Tables 1-2) for the purpose of managing and organizing the data for quick reference.

Data collected from Part Two of the survey, where specific questions were asked of participants regarding their experience with a range of Special Education students in their regular classrooms, were recorded using SPSS statistical software. That data was then put into tables and bar graphs to illustrate the experiences and perceptions of teachers with various types of Special Education students. More, mean scores for several questions in Part Two were

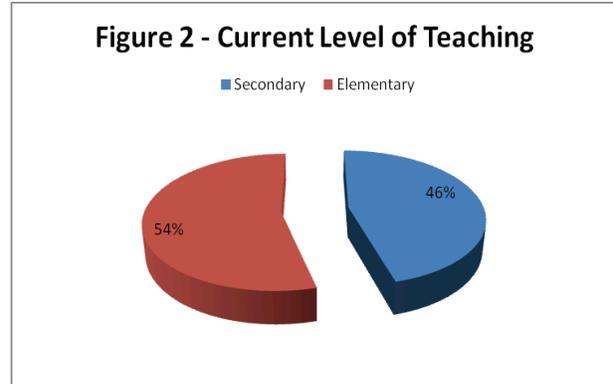
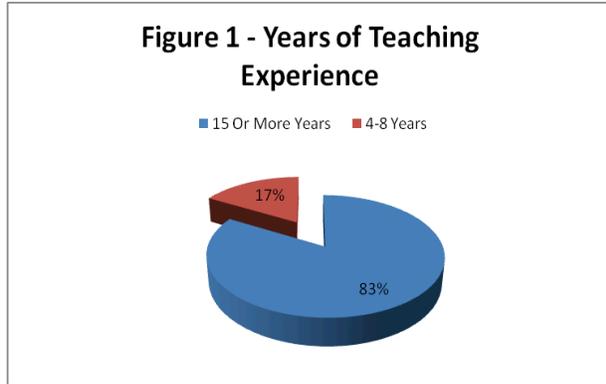
calculated and presented in Tables 3.1-4.3. The data was also disaggregated according to type of Special Education identification (ID), and years of teaching experience.

The researcher also summarized the responses from the final and sole qualitative survey question in Part Two in order to draw some conclusions from the anecdotal results. The information found in participants' responses to Parts One and Two of this survey were analyzed carefully in order to address the research questions.

Chapter Four: Findings and Results

This researcher identified a lack of up-to-date research on the success of the current educational approach of inclusion in the Canadian context, especially in relation to gifted students, as justification for further research in this area. In an attempt to discover more about this topic, this researcher developed two focused research questions aimed at discovering more about whether or not gifted students are being served successfully, and whether regular education teachers are professionally prepared to serve these types of students (and Special Education students in general) appropriately, under this educational approach. This researcher gathered data from regular education teacher participants across two separate school districts in British Columbia (SD#68 Nanaimo-Ladysmith, and SD#69 Qualicum) in the form of a paper survey (see Appendix), which was distributed and then collected during a four-week period in the winter of 2012. The total participant pool was 24 teachers, out of a possible 99, which indicates a return rate of 24%. A selection of survey questions from Parts One and Two were analyzed using SPSS statistical software with respect to this researcher's research questions.

Part One of the survey was designed to elicit information regarding participant data so as to strengthen the validity and reliability of the data, and overall Research Project in general. In regards to teaching experience, 20 participants (83.3%) had taught 15 or more years of teaching experience, and four participants (16.7%) had 4-8 years of teaching experience. There were no participants who were in the beginning stages of their career (having 1-3 years of teaching experience), or middle stages of their career (having 9-15 years of teaching experience). 45.8% of participants were currently teaching at the Elementary level and 54.2% at the Secondary level. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate these findings.



Participants were also asked in Part One of this survey if they had had any Professional Development or specialized training in Special Education. All participants answered this question and the results are summarized in Figure 3, which reveals that 17 participants (70.9%) had indeed had some sort of Professional Development in Special Education; eight participants teaching at the Secondary level, and nine participants teaching at the Elementary level. Meanwhile, seven participants (29.1%) had not been involved in any Professional Development in Special Education; five participants teaching at the Secondary level, and two participants teaching at the Elementary level. Thus, a majority of this participant pool had been exposed to Professional Development in Special Education at some point in their careers. However, of note is that this survey did not ask for the type of Professional Development, topics covered during the session(s), reasons why the Professional Development was undertaken, the length of the Development, or the time that had passed since the last piece of Professional Development was taken. These omissions present some duly noted limitations, which are elaborated on in Chapter Five.

More, participants were asked to indicate the number and type of identification for the Special Education students in their current classroom. The data provided by the teacher participants indicates that the majority of Special Education students in participants' classrooms

were identified as having a learning disability. Table 1 also clearly reveals that this particular participant pool had only 2 gifted students, total, in their classrooms. Possible implications of this data will be discussed further in Chapter Five.

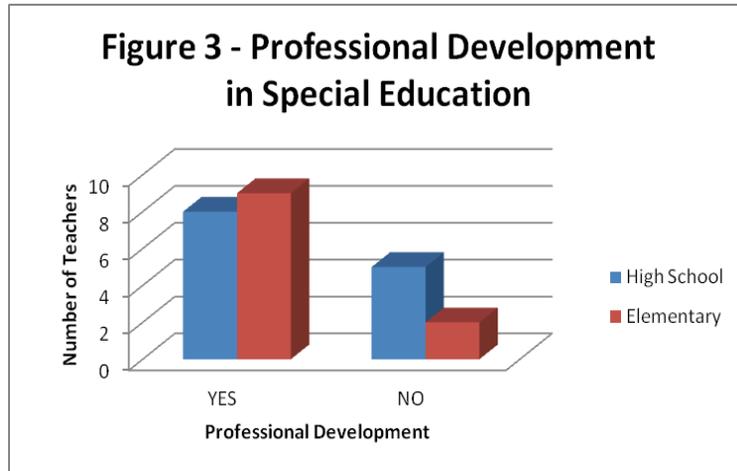


Table 1
Special Education Identifications (ID)

	High School (n=13)					Elementary (n=11)					Totals
	1	2	3	>3	>5	1	2	3	>3	>5	
Learning ID	0	0	1	3	8	3	0	1	3	0	19
Physical ID	1	3	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	7
Gifted ID	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2

The last question in Part One asked participants to indicate whether they believe any of their regular education students (i.e. those that have *not* been officially identified as “Special Education” students) would benefit from a Special Education identification (and thus specific adaptations/modifications to the curriculum and/or special funding by the Ministry of Education). The results are summarized in Table 2, which reveals that a very strong majority (91.6%) of regular education teachers surveyed believe that one or more of their students would benefit from a Special Education identification. Only 8.3% of participants indicated that they did not believe that any of their regular education students would benefit. More, the number of

actual students teachers believe would benefit from an identification was quite high; 79.1% believe that two or more of their students would benefit, while 58.3% of respondents believe more than four or more students would benefit. Of particular note is that the Secondary teacher participant sub-group had the strongest numbers by far in this latter area; 92.3% believe that four or more of their students would benefit from a Special Education identification, and none of the Secondary teachers who participated in this survey believe they have classes where no extra identifications should occur.

Table 2
Teachers' View of Identification (ID) Needs

	# of Current Students Believed to Benefit from ID					
	1	2	3	>3	>5	None
Elementary Teachers (n=11)	3	4	0	1	1	2
Secondary Teachers (n=13)	0	0	1	6	6	0
Totals	3	4	1	7	7	2

Part Two of the survey was designed to ask questions about teachers' experience with Special Education students in their inclusion classrooms. Participants provided responses on a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly agree" (6), to "strongly disagree" (1). Survey participants were instructed in this section to leave a question blank if it did not apply to them (i.e. if they did not have a particular type of Special Education identification in their current classroom). Thus, the number of participant responses (n) differs from question to question. Potential means ranged from a maximum of 6.0 (strongly agree) to minimum of 1.0 (strongly disagree). Actual means differed by question and type of Special Education identification (ID).

Teachers were asked in Part Two to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed (and to what degree) that it was challenging to incorporate a variety of Special Education students into

their regular education inclusion classrooms. The data in Table 3.1 displays the overall mean scores, disaggregated according to Special Education identification. A mean score of three or more was considered by this researcher as evidence of agreement, while a mean score of <3 was considered evidence of disagreement. Table 3.1 reveals that all types of Special Education identifications (learning, physical, gifted) were considered to represent challenges of incorporation (i.e. inclusion) to teachers.

Table 3.1
Overall Mean Scores of Teachers' Feeling of Challenge Regarding Special Education Incorporation

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean
Learning ID	24	1	6	3.88
Physical ID	17	1	6	3.35
Gifted ID	17	1	5	3.53

Data were analyzed utilizing the reported demographic information of participants in Part One of the survey, and disaggregated according to level of schooling currently teaching and years of teaching experience. Table 3.2 displays mean scores according to level of schooling currently teaching, while Table 3.3 displays mean scores according to years of teaching experience.

Table 3.2
Mean Scores of Teachers' Feeling of Challenge Regarding Special Education Incorporation According to Level of Schooling Currently Teaching

	Elementary Level			
	n	Min.	Max.	Mean
Learning ID	11	1	5	3.73
Physical ID	7	1	5	3.14
Gifted ID	9	1	5	3.11

	Secondary Level			
	n	Min.	Max.	Mean
Learning ID	13	2	6	4.31
Physical ID	10	1	6	3.50
Gifted ID	8	2	5	4.00

Table 3.3
Mean Scores of Teachers' Feeling of Challenge Regarding Special Education Incorporation According to Years of Teaching Experience

	4-8 Years of Teaching Experience			
	n	Min.	Max.	Mean
Learning ID	5	2	5	3.2
Physical ID	1	4	4	4
Gifted ID	1	4	4	4

	15 or More Years of Teaching Experience			
	n	Min.	Max.	Mean
Learning ID	19	1	6	4.26
Physical ID	16	1	5	3.31
Gifted ID	16	1	5	3.50

The data in Table 3.2 shows that Secondary teachers had comparatively higher means than Elementary teachers with respect to all Special Education identifications, which translates to stronger feelings of challenge in terms of incorporating students into their regular education classrooms. The means for a learning disability identification across both Elementary and Secondary levels of schooling was higher compared to those of other identifications, which

indicates that teachers at all levels find incorporating these types of students to be the most challenging. In terms of gifted students, teachers found incorporating them into their classrooms to be less challenging than those with a learning disability, but more challenging than those with a physical disability. The challenge of incorporation of gifted students also seemed to be greater at the Secondary level than at the Elementary level. More, the data in Table 3.3 shows that teachers with only 4-8 years of teaching experience considered incorporating students with learning disabilities less challenging than other types of Special Education students, while teachers with more than 15 years of experience considered these students to be the most challenging to incorporate into their regular education classrooms.

The survey also asked teachers to indicate the extent by which they agreed or disagreed that they receive enough necessary support for a variety of their Special Education students. Table 4.1 displays the overall mean scores, disaggregated according to Special Education identification. Again, a mean score of three or more was considered by this researcher as evidence of agreement, while a mean score of <3 was considered evidence of disagreement. The data in Table 4.1 reveals that teachers feel that they do not receive enough necessary support for any of their students with Special Education identifications. This is especially so in relation to gifted students, whose mean score was the lowest at 1.75. This indicates that teachers feel that they receive the least amount of support for their gifted students when compared to other types of Special Education students.

Table 4.1
Overall Mean Scores of Teachers' Feelings Regarding Receiving Enough Necessary Support for Special Education Students

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean
Learning ID	24	1	6	2.25
Physical ID	15	1	6	2.93
Gifted ID	16	1	5	1.75

Again, data were analyzed utilizing the reported demographic information of participants in Part One of the survey. Table 4.2 displays mean scores according to level of schooling currently teaching, while Table 4.3 displays mean scores according to years of teaching experience.

Table 4.2
Mean Scores of Teachers' Feelings Regarding Receiving Enough Necessary Support for Special Education Students According to Level of Schooling Currently Teaching

	Elementary Level			
	n	Min.	Max.	Mean
Learning ID	10	1	6	2.70
Physical ID	6	1	6	2.67
Gifted ID	6	1	4	2.17

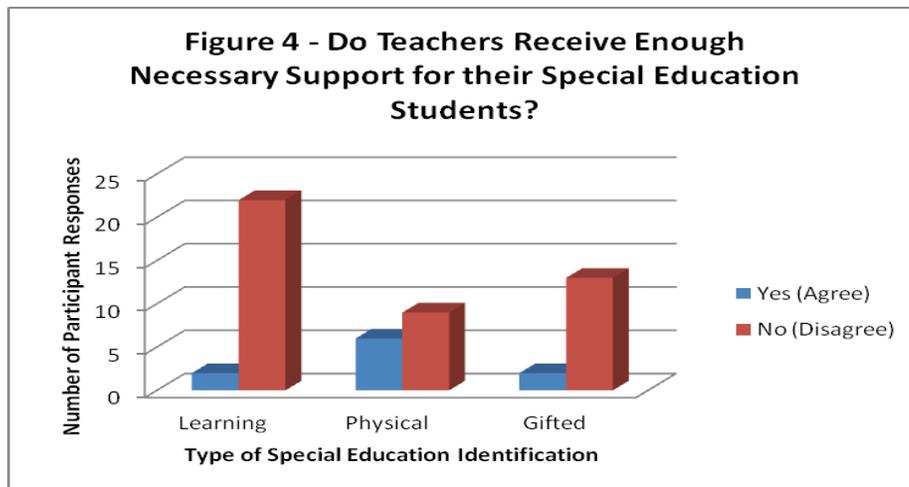
	Secondary Level			
	n	Min.	Max.	Mean
Learning ID	14	1	3	1.93
Physical ID	9	1	6	3.11
Gifted ID	9	1	4	1.78

Table 4.3
Mean Scores of Teachers' Feelings Regarding Receiving Enough Necessary Support for Special Education Students According to Years of Teaching Experience

	4-8 Years of Teaching Experience			
	n	Min.	Max.	Mean
Learning ID	3	2	2	2
Physical ID	1	3	3	3
Gifted ID	1	3	3	3

	15 or More Years of Teaching Experience			
	n	Min.	Max.	Mean
Learning ID	21	1	6	2
Physical ID	14	1	6	2.93
Gifted ID	14	1	5	1.79

Data from this question is also illustrated in Figure 4. Figure 4 shows that a strong majority of teachers who responded to this question feel they do not receive enough necessary support for students who have been identified as gifted, and having a learning disability. Teachers' feelings regarding whether they receive enough necessary support was clearly divided in terms of their students identified as having physical disabilities.

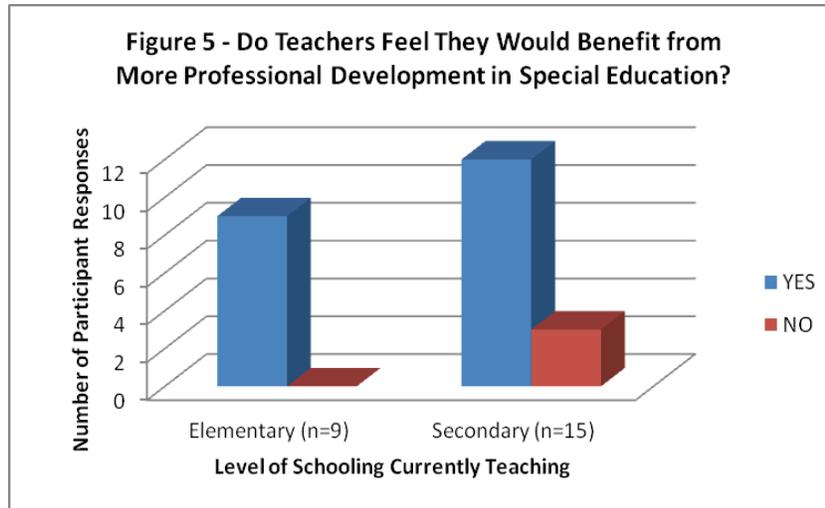


In regards to survey questions concerning how teachers’ planning time is distributed amongst their Special Education students, participants’ responses are illustrated in Table 5. The data displays the overall mean scores, disaggregated according to Special Education identification. A mean score of three or more was considered by this researcher as evidence of high priority in terms of planning time for a particular Special Education identification, while a mean score of <3 was considered evidence of low priority. Table 5 reveals that teachers spend most of their time preparing accommodations (i.e. adaptations and modifications) for students with a learning disability identification. The data also shows that teachers spend the least amount of their planning time preparing adaptations/modifications for students with physical disabilities. More, teachers consider spending time on students with both physical and gifted identifications a much lower priority when compared to the time spent on students with learning disabilities.

Table 5
Overall Mean Scores of Teachers’ Time Spent Accommodating Special Education Students

	n	Min.	Max.	Mean
Learning ID	23	1	4	0.91
Physical ID	17	1	6	5.88
Gifted ID	14	1	4	2.64

Participants were also asked to indicate the degree to which they feel they would benefit from more Professional Development in Special Education. The data is illustrated Figure 5, which clearly shows that the entirety of the Elementary (100%) teachers who participated, and a majority of Secondary (80%) teachers, feel they would benefit from more Professional Development in Special Education.



Qualitative data was collected from the last question on the survey (see Appendix). This researcher wanted to give participants an opportunity to list any strategies or ways that they have adapted or modified their curriculum for any of their current or previous Special Education students. 16 participants (66.7%) included information in this section, while the remainder left it blank. Of the 16 participants who chose to complete this final part of the survey, all 16 (100%) listed strategies under the “learning disabilities” section, while seven (43.8%) participants chose to complete the “physical disabilities” section, and only six (37.5%) completed the “gifted” section. Possible reasons for this will be discussed in Chapter Five. The following excerpts are a selection of the responses given, organized according to identification:

>For students with Learning Disabilities (including mild ID, moderate to profound ID and learning disabilities)...

“1) Have the EA assigned to student invite other students to do activities with that student in and out of the classroom

2) Have a child's parent/sibling speak to the class so the class as a whole better understands student and his/her needs (very effective!)”

- “1) Home - School communication book*
- 2) Visual Day-plan (on board, or at desk, or with student)*
- 3) Built-in breaks during day*
- 4) Enlarge print/text/etc. Larger - add illustrations to make assignment interesting or more simple”*

- “1) Modifying worksheets, activities, etc.*
- 2) Expecting less written output*
- 3) Using computer for written work*
- 4) Using scribe for written work*
- 5) Partner activities”*

- “1) Have a student/EA/myself read materials, or do the writing*
- 2) Have a student demonstrate knowledge pictorially*
- 3) Create folders/baskets/booklets for students to work through (during math)*
- 4) Literacy centers, wide variety, students have choice or directed”*

- “1) Completing parts of an assignment/adaptations*
- 2) Students work with an EA or other adult, when available*
- 3) Work specifically with them while the other students are occupied*
- 4) Computer programs use for specific skills building”*

- “1) Altering assignments*

2) *Extensions*

3) *Deleting assignments”*

>For students with Physical Disabilities...

“1) Ensure room is uncluttered (I’ve purged the room)

2) Ensure furniture in room is stable (not prone to tip over, roll, have too many items in it to fall off/out, etc.)

3) Ensure there are no sharp corners, loose carpets, etc.

4) Included daily exercises to provide agility, flexibility, endurance for "physically-challenged" students”

“Most kids with physical disabilities are accompanied by an EA, so no huge modifications”

“1) Seating arrangements

2) Proximity

3) Provide materials as needed”

“1) Depends on the specific problem (e.g. Computer for written help, colouring not expected, etc.)

2) Classroom equipment used as provided by SD”

“Depends on the student physical set-up changes made based on individual student's needs”

>For students who are gifted...

“Provide enrichment/extension activities, projects, etc.”

“Independent work”

“Greater use of IT possibilities (powerpoint, animation, etc.)”

“Provide extra studies”

“1) Conversations

2) Book recommendations

3) Double years (complete English 9+10 in one semester)

4) Common interests Special Projects

5) "Choose One" lists for all

6) Finish the unit ahead of time and get free time in the library”

“1) Occasionally able to assign extra responsibilities

2) Teach in smaller grouping to a "higher level"

3) Toss them some additional reading as available”

The analysis of data presented in this chapter has found significant results that help to answer the original research questions. These findings will be discussed further and their implications, including possible recommendations, will be addressed in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five: Summary, Discussion and Conclusions

Brief Overview of Study

The original purpose of this researcher's Research Project was to add to the existing knowledge regarding the current approach of inclusion, especially in regards to gifted students. As the majority of research done on inclusion in general was completed during the pre-emptive and initial stages of the implementation of the educational approach of inclusion itself, and the fact that this area of scholarly research is entirely dominated by American content and context, this researcher sought to provide informed, current insight into this area from an entirely Canadian perspective. Two research questions were developed in order to determine more about whether the needs of gifted students are being served successfully within the current educational approach of inclusion, and whether teachers are properly supported and professionally prepared to accommodate these types of learners (and other Special Education students in general) into their regular education (inclusion) classrooms. A two-part survey (see Appendix) was constructed using a wide range of past studies as reference guides in order to elicit both quantitative and qualitative responses from regular education teachers. Part One contained data collection information questions, and Part Two contained questions regarding teachers' experience with a range of Special Education students in their regular education inclusion classrooms. The quantitative and qualitative data from the survey were collected and analyzed from a convenient and purposive sample of 24 regular education classroom teachers across four separate schools in two neighbouring school districts in British Columbia during the winter of 2012, in order to effectively address the original research questions.

Discussion of Findings and Implications

The results of the Research Project were plentiful, and shed light upon a wide range of

aspects related to this researcher's interrelated research questions. In terms of the type of identification for Special Education students found in participants' current classrooms, the data revealed a strong majority of Special Education students being identified as having a learning disability (19 out of a possible 28), while very few were identified as gifted (two out of a possible 28). Thus, the number of actual gifted Special Education students that were represented in this study was only two, making the ability of this researcher to provide a deep level of insight in relation to gifted students quite difficult. A likely reason for this finding is found in the fact that there are increasingly low numbers of identified gifted students in the British Columbia public education system today. In fact, while there were 22,707 identified gifted students in the province in 1996, there is now merely 7,333 identified gifted students. This low number is especially intriguing considering the widely expanded definition of "gifted" that is present in educational spheres currently – a far cry from the early definitions provided by Abraham Tannenbaum (Jolly, 2009). If the number of actual gifted students in British Columbia public education classrooms is decreasing, and the number of other types of Special Education students is greater, it is possible that the focus, and professional training, of classroom teachers has simply followed this trend. If it has, it would strongly echo the concerns of gifted education scholars alike regarding the 'quiet crisis' in gifted education, where a shift in focus has occurred from highlighting the needs of gifted learners, to that of their Special Education counterparts. Of note, however, is the data collected in this study regarding whether teachers believed more students in their regular education inclusion classrooms would benefit from a Special Education identification. A very strong majority (91.6%) of participants said that at least one of their current students would benefit from an identification, and 58.3% said that 4 or more of their current students would benefit from a Special Education identification. Although questions

regarding the type of identification that teachers felt would be beneficial for their students were not included in this study, it is possible that teachers feel that more of their students should be identified as gifted. It is also equally as possible that teachers feel that more of their students should be identified as having a learning or physical disability. It is clear that teachers in this study feel that not enough of their students are identified as having Special Education needs as they should be.

In terms of professional development, data revealed that a good majority (70.9%) of participants had, at one point or another, been involved in professional development that was directed related to Special Education. Also, many secondary teachers than elementary teachers reported that they had received no professional development in this area. Even though a strong majority of teachers had been involved in this type of professional development, when asked whether or not they would benefit from *more* professional development in Special Education, an interesting set of data was revealed. The entirety, or 100%, of elementary teachers, and a strong majority (80%) of secondary teachers, responded that they would, indeed, benefit from more professional development in Special Education. A possible interpretation of this data is that although teachers were at some point (to a lesser or greater degree, depending on the teacher) professionally developed with regards to Special Education, most teachers do not feel professionally prepared to address the needs of these students in their regular education (inclusion) classrooms. More data to support this conclusion comes from the analysis of survey questions regarding the extent to which teachers feel challenged in incorporating Special Education students into their classrooms. Here, the data reveals that *all* types of Special Education identifications (learning, physical, and gifted) represent considerable challenges of incorporation (i.e. inclusion) to teachers. More specifically, students with learning disabilities

were considered by teachers to represent the greatest challenges to incorporation, whilst students who have physical disabilities represented the smallest challenges. In terms of gifted students, teachers' responses show that greater challenges of incorporation occur at the secondary level than the elementary level. A possible reason for this result may be, again, the very notion of the 'quiet crisis' that is spoken of in gifted education research: gifted students may be suffering from a watered down curriculum that is more apparent by the secondary level of schooling. In other words, as the academic grades increase, the gap between the achievement ability of gifted students and their regular education peers gets greater, thus making it more challenging for the regular education teacher to incorporate them into their inclusion classroom.

The results of the previous data set are most intriguing when disaggregated according to years of teaching experience, which found that teachers with four to eight years of teaching experience found it less challenging to incorporate learning disabled students into their regular education classrooms than those who had 15 or more years of teaching experience. A possible interpretation of this might be that less experienced teachers were professionally educated (i.e. when they attended Teacher's College and received their teaching certification) at a time when the educational approach of inclusion was already instituted and had become a more central focus. Therefore, a greater emphasis on strategies to incorporate different types of Special Education students may have been included in their professional education at this level, making incorporation of these types of students less challenging. Teachers with 15 or more years of teaching experience would not have received their teaching certification at a time when the current inclusion educational approach was necessarily a predominate focus in teacher education programs, and thus, perhaps they did not receive the same type of specific training in terms of

incorporating, or accommodating, different types of students into their regular education classrooms.

Teachers also reported that they spend the majority of their time accommodating (i.e. preparing adaptations and modifications) for their learning disabled children, and the least amount of their time accommodating for their gifted students. Again, this finding supports the bulk of the historical research done by gifted education scholars regarding the lack of instructional or curricular differentiation being done for gifted students (Centre for Gifted Education & Society for the Advancement of Gifted Education, 1992; Reis et al., 2004; Toth, 1999; Westberg et al., 1993). It also reaffirms the results of previous studies (Moore & Siegal, 1994; Vaughn, et al., 1994; Wesley, 1995) concerning the treatment of gifted students in inclusion classrooms, where teachers have been proven to be more concerned with, and spend more time focusing on, their learning disabled students than their gifted students.

Reasons for this continual prioritization could possibly be the deeply embedded ideological beliefs that stand behind the proposed 'quiet crisis' in gifted education: that gifted students have it 'easier' than other categories of Special Education students because they already meet grade level expectations, and should therefore receive less time, attention, and curriculum accommodations from teachers. Thus, perhaps it is the very concept of the inclusion educational approach itself, or the current interpretation of it, that does not allow gifted students adequate teacher time and proper accommodations. If gifted students already meet (and, likely, far exceed) the curriculum expectations for each grade due to the very nature of the components that define them as "gifted", concentrated efforts to "include" them in a regular education (inclusion) classroom can appear to be quite unnecessary. In the same way, if learning disabled students severely struggle to meet these same curriculum expectations, it follows that teachers might see

it as quite crucial to spend more time accommodating for these types of students in their inclusion classrooms. In other words, teachers might see it as unnecessary (or, much less important) to spend time accommodating for their gifted students when they already meet grade level expectations, than their learning disabled students who struggle to meet these same expectations. This treatment of gifted students, however, could be interpreted as standing in stark contrast to the Ministry of Education's inclusion policy, which states that *all* students are entitled to *equitable* access to learning, achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their education (Ministry of Education, 2011). More, if this is indeed the case, then gifted students would not be interpreted by this researcher as being served successfully within the inclusion educational approach. Gifted students' access to "pursue excellence in all aspects of their education" could also possibly be hindered by the deeply embedded ideology behind a 'quiet crisis' in gifted education – meaning that the inclusion educational approach itself, as it is currently interpreted and treated by regular education classroom teachers, may be a serious obstacle to the success of gifted students in general.

In addition, the data from this researcher's study revealed that a very strong majority of teachers feel that they do not receive enough necessary support for the entire range of Special Education students in their classrooms. Of particular note here was that teachers, at both the elementary and secondary level, reported that they feel they receive the least amount of support for their gifted students, followed by their learning disabled students. This researcher was quite surprised by this finding, especially considering the remainder of the data which clearly reveals an overarching theme regarding the preference of treatment for learning disabled students over those of their Special Education counterparts. A possible interpretation of this data may be that teachers recognize the fact that the needs of their gifted students are not as supported as the

needs of their other Special Education students, especially those with learning disabilities. Again, this interpretation would reflect the notion of a ‘quiet crisis’ in gifted education regarding the decreased focus on the needs of gifted students, and a greater emphasis on the needs of learning disabled students. And in terms of one of this researcher’s research questions, it could, again, be considered evidence of gifted students not being served successfully under the inclusion educational approach.

Finally, the qualitative data collected from this study revealed some intriguing details that may offer more insight into this researcher’s initial research questions. When teachers were asked to list strategies in terms of accommodations (i.e. adaptations or modifications) for each Special Education category (learning, physical, and gifted), the responses were quite varied. Of the 16 participants that completed this final section of the survey (see Appendix), all 16 listed strategies under the “learning disabilities” section, while only 6 completed the “gifted” section. A possible reason for this could quite simply be the fact that teachers are not well versed in how to incorporate gifted students into their regular education inclusion classrooms. It could also mean that, due to the increasingly low numbers of identified gifted students in British Columbia, teachers have yet to have the actual experience of incorporating gifted students into their classroom, and thus have not had a need to develop the skills and strategies in which to do so. Both of these interpretations would then suggest that a significant amount of professional development in this area should be done by teachers in order to serve gifted students more effectively.

Also of note here is that the types of answers provided in the qualitative section of the survey were also quite varied in terms of appropriateness and applicability. A number of the qualitative participant responses did not actually reflect true, specific, focused strategies for

accommodation or incorporation of different types of Special Education students into regular education inclusion classrooms. For example, a “home-school communication book” is not an adaptation or modification strategy for inclusion of learning disabled students, but rather a tool that a number of teachers use to communicate between the home and school environments. “Group work” was also included as a strategy for incorporating learning disabled students into the classroom; again, this is not necessarily a strategy for inclusion, but rather a type of student grouping in which teaching and learning can occur. More, “finish the unit ahead of time and get free time in the library”, “toss them some additional readings as available” and “occasionally be able to assign extra responsibilities” were listed as strategies for the incorporation of gifted students. Not only are these not strategies for gifted students, but they actually reflect, again, the misunderstanding and lack of instructional or curricular differentiation regarding gifted students that gifted education scholars speak of (Toth, 1999), which has contributed to the proverbial ‘quiet crisis’. However, a number of the qualitative participant responses did, indeed, reflect excellent, research-driven strategies for a variety of Special Education students. For example, “have a visual day-plan on board/desk/with student”, “have built-in breaks during the day”, “expect less written output”, and “complete parts of an assignment/assignment deletion” were all responses given regarding strategies for the incorporation of students with learning disabilities, and “provide enrichment/extension activities” was included as a strategy for the incorporation of gifted students, into regular education inclusion classrooms. Therefore, it was clear to this researcher that the regular education teachers in this survey represented an extremely wide divide in terms of professional preparedness to incorporate Special Education students, especially those that are gifted, into their regular education inclusion classrooms. It is also entirely possible that because this qualitative question occurred at the very end of the survey instrument itself, the data

(or lack thereof) could very simply be the result of participant fatigue, rather than indications of an absence of knowledge or skills in terms of strategies to incorporate a range of Special Education students.

Limitations to the Study

While this study yielded a number of excellent responses with regards to the research questions, the limitations of this study must be properly addressed in order to fully appreciate the scope to which the data analysis of the survey findings can be accurately applied. Most notably, this study was quite limited by its sample size; 24 participants from four different schools, across two separate school districts, is not a large enough sample from which to generalize the findings of this study, however significant the results may have been. As a result, the external validity of the results of this study is quite limited. There was also a very high concentration of participants who had 15 or more years of teaching experience (83%), as well as zero participants who had less than four years of teaching experience. Thus, the data does not properly represent the entire teaching field, from novices to seasoned teachers. It is possible that some of the results of this study, and the interpretations that followed, could be skewed because of this uneven concentration of teaching experience.

In addition, the very low number of gifted students that were reported in this study hinder, again, any generalization that could be made regarding these types of Special Education students and their experiences within the educational approach of inclusion. These results were disappointing for this researcher, but not entirely unexpected due to the indisputable facts surrounding the actual number of identified gifted students in British Columbia, as well as the general consensus in the field of gifted education research concerning a 'quiet crisis'.

More, the current provincial context and participant employment conditions during the time in which this study was conducted is another significant limitation to the study itself. The British Columbia Teacher's Federation entered into a job action in September 2011 to protest the passing of Bill 22, of which the content and scope of this Research Project (especially in relation to the number of identified Special Education students in regular education classrooms) were quite central. The cautious and somewhat contentious working atmosphere that many teachers experienced as a result of the lengthy job action was quite possibly a factor as to why there was such a small sample size. It could also have affected the quality of the answers provided in the survey, as the timing of this researcher's stage of data collection occurred merely weeks before the six-month job action escalated into a full-scale strike and withdrawal of teacher services for a period of 3 days in March, 2012. The working conditions and professional atmosphere that occurred during this study must, therefore, be duly considered.

Finally, the aspect of researcher bias needs to be noted in order to both understand the subjective perspective of this researcher, as well as the lens through which the entire study was conducted and later interpreted. This researcher was not only a gifted student herself throughout her own educational career, but is now, in fact, a Special Education teacher. With a lengthy history of education and experience with regards to a wide range of Special Education students, this researcher acknowledges the unintentional bias that may be present throughout this study.

Suggestions for Further Research and Recommendations for Policy

The findings, implications, and limitations of this study leave this researcher with myriad suggestions for further research and recommendations for educational policy. One of the original justifications for this researcher in completing the current study was the fact that there is a massive gap between the research initially done on the educational approach of inclusion, and

current research regarding the possible success (or failure) of that same model. Therefore, a substantial amount of research still needs to be done on the effects of this current educational approach on *all* types of students, including non-identified students and those with a wide array of Special Education identifications. This research needs to go beyond what current studies provide, which mainly focus on the strategies in which to incorporate a range of students (from Special Education to CLED – culturally, linguistically, and ethnically diverse – students) into this type of inclusion classroom. More specifically, additional studies need to be completed on the possible reasons behind the quickly decreasing numbers of gifted students in general. Studies from the gifted students' point of view should also be explored in order to provide a more comprehensive picture to this area of interest and concern. It would also be prudent to have informed, scholarly discussions, at the government level, regarding the deeply embedded ideology behind the educational approach of inclusion. Critical questions and reflections on the reasons why the approach began in the first place, and what this has actually looked like for not only students, but teachers, since it was instituted in Canada, is absolutely crucial. Embedded in this research and inquiry could also be a re-evaluation of the actual definition of what “giftedness” entails, and the reasons why so few gifted students are now represented in public education.

Furthermore, this study, albeit limited in its external applicability and ability to generalize outside the scope of its participant pool, reveals that a concentrated effort by school districts and the Ministry of Education alike needs to be undertaken in terms of focused professional development of its teachers in Special Education policies, ideologies, and strategies (i.e. adaptations and modifications). This professional development needs to also address the ideologies behind the educational approach of inclusion that exist in educational spheres today,

especially as the call for ‘personalized learning’ has become the central focus of 21st-century teaching and learning environments. In order to effectively address the gap between the policy of inclusion and the actual practice that appears to be occurring in everyday regular education classrooms, this researcher posits that this professional development begin at the very beginning of where formal teacher education begins: teacher education programs (i.e. Teacher’s College). Here, the ideology of inclusion, and the ways in which to make such an approach work (including proper direction and modeling of excellent, research-driven adaptations and modification strategies and tools), could be explored in-depth. Also, there needs to be a more direct emphasis on the need, and perhaps mandated requirement, for teachers in regular education classrooms to be thoroughly well versed in Special Education knowledge and procedural expertise – meaning, continual offerings of informed professional development by school districts and individual schools alike. As the results of this study clearly reveal, teachers also need to be given the proper resources and support to properly address the needs of all the learners in their classrooms, especially in terms of their identified Special Education students. Proper support could range from maintaining appropriate numbers of identified Special Education students in each class so that teachers can effectively address the needs of *all* their students, to excellent and timely resources to address the challenges of the inclusion classroom such as modern technology, equipment and curriculum resources, to the seemingly simple advent of more teacher prep time inside and outside of the regular school day. With a more concentrated effort by administrators and Education Ministry personnel alike to truly recognize the challenges that the educational approach of inclusion represents to both students and teachers, perhaps the experiences of gifted students, and their regular education inclusion

teachers that this survey speaks to, may be entirely changed, for the betterment of all involved.

Conclusion

This Research Project, which aimed to discover more about the experiences of gifted students within the current educational approach of inclusion, and the professional preparedness of teachers to accommodate these types of students into their regular education inclusion classrooms, was successful in that it uncovered a great deal of information regarding the initial research questions. Although external validity of this study is quite limited, the results of the study merely offer more salient reasons as to why this area of scholarly research, discovery and reflection should not be ignored. This researcher posits that the roles and experiences of the regular education teacher, and of *all* of the students that may be present in inclusion classrooms, need to, first and foremost, be at the center from which further inquiry into this area begins. Only then can true, informed understandings be reached regarding the ideologies behind, and the practices that follow, the inclusion educational approach. In doing so, perhaps the needs of gifted students will come full circle to, once again, be positively highlighted by teachers and society alike, en route to future educational change for *everyone*, in the 21st-century, and beyond.

Appendix

Special Education Experience Survey



FACULTY OF EDUCATION
 Vancouver Island University
 900 Fifth Street, Nanaimo
 British Columbia, V9R 5S5
 Tel (250) 740 – 6221 Fax (250) 740 – 6463
<http://www.viu.ca/education/>

Sarah-Jane Granholm, Student Masters in Educational Leadership Vancouver Island University (VIU) sgranholm@sd69.bc.ca #250.327.2234	Dr. John Phipps, Supervisor Faculty of Education Vancouver Island University (VIU) John.Phipps@viu.ca #250.740.6444
---	---

My name is Sarah-Jane Granholm and I am a graduate student in the Masters of Educational Leadership program at Vancouver Island University (VIU). As part of my degree requirements, I am conducting a research study designed to help gather information on Special Education from teachers in British Columbia. This study is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. John Phipps, Faculty of Education. I would like to invite you to participate in this research.

I am inviting teachers from one elementary school and one high school in both School District #68 and #69 to participate in this study. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to complete a survey with two parts; one part collects participant data, the other contains questions on Special Education students in the regular classroom. The results of this survey will be used to aid my Research Project on Special Education. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete.

This study may benefit both teachers and students, as the information you provide may inform and enhance Special Education practices. There are no risks foreseen for participants in this research. Only I and my supervisor will have access to the data and no identifying or identifiable information will be included in my final report, ensuring your complete anonymity and confidentiality. The final results of my study will be presented in June 2012 by written thesis and oral presentation to graduate program peers and VIU supervisors.

If you have any concerns about your treatment as a participant in this research, please contact the Vancouver Island University (VIU) Research Ethics Officer at reb@viu.ca or by telephone at (250) 753-3245 (ext. 2665). Your participation is completely voluntary and anonymous. The return of your completed survey indicates your consent to participate in this study and for the information you provide to be included in study results. You are encouraged to ask questions at any point during this research. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, without question or penalty. I am available, at your convenience, to answer any questions.

I will ask that you complete each section of the survey and return it to your school's drop-box before the deadline of February 29th, 2012. A sincere thank-you in advance for your participation in this valuable research study.

Sincerely,

Sarah-Jane Granholm
Masters of Education Student, Vancouver Island University



PART 1: PARTICIPANT DATA QUESTIONS

Please circle the letter that best corresponds to your individual data/information. Please do not write your name or identify yourself in any way on this survey. You may complete this survey wherever you wish, but please return it to your school's drop-box located in your reception office. **You are free to withdraw from this study at any time, for any reason or to choose not to respond to some questions; individual responses are kept completely anonymous and private.** The return of your completed survey indicates your consent to participate in this study and for the information you provide to be included in study results.

(1) *How many years of teaching experience do you have?*

- a. 1-3 years
- b. 4-8 years
- c. 9-15 years
- d. More than 15 years

(2) *What level of schooling do you teach?*

- a. Elementary
- b. Secondary

(3) *What subject(s) do you teach (circle ALL that apply; leave **BLANK** if you are an elementary teacher)*

- a. Social Sciences & Humanities (i.e. English, History, World Religions, Law, Geography, Economics, Psychology, Politics, etc.)
- b. Science (i.e. Chemistry, Biology, Physics, etc.)
- c. Math
- d. Physical Education and/or Health
- e. Trades/Careers (Mechanics, Electrician, Engineering, Nursing, Construction, etc.)
- f. The Arts (i.e. Visual Arts, Music, Drama, etc.)
- g. Technology (i.e. Computer Studies, Computer Design, etc.)
- h. Languages (i.e. French, Spanish, Italian, German, etc.)
- i. Specialized Programs (Cooperative Education, Online Learning, IB, etc.)

(4) *How many years of experience do you have teaching "identified" Special Education students in your regular education classroom (i.e. those that have an IEP and/or those who are counted/funded by the Ministry)?*

- a. 1-3 years

- b. 4-8 years
- c. 9-15 years
- d. More than 15 years
- e. No experience teaching Special Education students

(5) *Have you had any **Professional Development or specialized training in Special Education** (i.e. adaptation/modification strategies, etc.)?*

- a. Yes
- b. No

(6) *How many “**identified**” (again, those that have an IEP and/or those who are counted/funded by the Ministry) Special Education students do you **currently** have in your classroom(s)?*

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. More than 3
- e. More than 5
- f. None

(7) *How many of your Special Education students are “**identified**” with **learning exceptionalities** (including mild ID, moderate to profound ID and learning disabilities)?*

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. More than 3
- e. More than 5
- f. None of my Special Education students have learning exceptionalities
- g. I have NO identified Special Education students in my classroom

(8) *How many of your Special Education students are “**identified**” with **physical exceptionalities**?*

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. More than 3
- e. More than 5
- f. None of my Special Education students have physical exceptionalities
- g. I have NO identified Special Education students in my classroom

(9) *How many of your Special Education students are “**identified**” with **gifted exceptionalities**?*

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. More than 3
- e. More than 5

- f. None of my Special Education students have physical exceptionalities
- g. I have NO identified Special Education students in my classroom

(10) How many of your **regular** education students (i.e. those that have NOT been officially identified as “Special Education” students) do you believe would **benefit** from a Special Education identification (and thus specific adaptations/modifications to the curriculum and/or special funding by the Ministry)?

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. More than 3
- e. More than 5
- f. I do not believe any of my regular education students would benefit from a Special Education identification

PART 2: SPECIAL EDUCATION QUESTIONS

This survey is designed to ask questions about teachers’ experience with Special Education students. If a question does not apply to you, please **leave it blank**. Please read each statement carefully and select the number along the scale that best describes your experience. ALL responses are kept completely anonymous and private.

(1) I find it challenging to incorporate Special Education students who are gifted into my regular classroom.

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(2) I find it challenging to incorporate Special Education students who have physical exceptionalities into my regular classroom.

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(3) I find it challenging to incorporate Special Education students who have learning exceptionalities (including mild ID, moderate to profound ID and learning disabilities) into my regular classroom.

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(4) I receive enough necessary support for Special Education students who are gifted from within my school and School District.

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(5) I receive enough necessary support for my Special Education students who have physical exceptionalities from within my school and School District.

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(6) I receive enough necessary support for my Special Education students who have learning exceptionalities (including mild ID, moderate to profound ID and learning disabilities) from within my school and School District.

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(7) I have enough time to adapt/modify my classroom for my Special Education students who are gifted.

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(8) I have enough time to adapt/modify my classroom for my Special Education students who have physical exceptionalities.

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(9) I have enough time to adapt/modify my classroom for my Special Education students who have learning exceptionalities (including mild ID, moderate to profound ID and learning disabilities).

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(10) I would benefit from more Professional Development in Special Education (i.e. learning various strategies, programming alternatives, instruction on better curriculum adaptation and modification with relevant examples, etc.).

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(11) I enjoy having Special Education students who are gifted in my regular classroom because they are able to help other students with their work and act as a classroom tutor.

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(12) I enjoy having Special Education students who have learning exceptionalities (including mild ID, moderate to profound ID and learning disabilities) in my regular classroom because many of the strategies I use to adapt/modify the curriculum for them are useful for all of the students.

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(13) I find/would find developing IEPs (Individual Education Plans) for my Special Education students who are gifted to be challenging.

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(14) I find/would find developing IEPs (Individual Education Plans) for my Special Education students who have physical exceptionalities to be challenging.

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(15) I find/would find developing IEPs (Individual Education Plans) for my Special Education students who have learning exceptionalities (including mild ID, moderate to profound ID and learning disabilities) to be challenging.

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(16) With regards to necessary planning time for my Special Education students, I spend most of my time (this includes time at home and at school) preparing adaptations/modifications for my students who are gifted.

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(17) With regards to necessary planning time for my Special Education students, I spend most of my time (this includes time at home and at school) preparing adaptations/modifications for my students who have learning exceptionalities (including mild ID, moderate to profound ID and learning disabilities).

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

(18) With regards to necessary planning time for my Special Education students, I spend most of my time (this includes time at home and at school) preparing adaptations/modifications for my students who have physical exceptionalities.

Strongly Agree 6-----5-----4-----3-----2-----1 Strongly Disagree

*****Thank-you in advance for completing and returning this survey! 😊**

*****The return of your completed survey indicates your consent to participate in this study and for the information you provide to be included in study results**

References

- Baum, S. M., & Others, A. (1995). Reversing Underachievement: Creative Productivity as a Systematic Intervention. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 39(4), 224-35. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.viu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/ezproxy.viu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,cookie&db=eric&AN=EJ516099&site=ehost-live>
- Briggs, J.C., Sally M. Reis and Erin E. Sullivan (2008). A National View of Promising Programs and Practices for Culturally, Linguistically, and Ethnically Diverse Gifted and Talented Students. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 52(2), 131-145. Retrieved from <http://gcq.sagepub.com/content/52/2/131>
- Centre for Gifted Education & Society for the Advancement of Gifted Education. (1992). *Images in Transition. Proceedings of the Annual Society for the Advancement of Gifted Education (SAGE) Conference (3rd, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, September 24-26, 1992) and the Canadian Symposium on Gifted Education (6th.)* Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.viu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,cookie&db=eric&AN=ED371537&site=ehost-live>
- Cross, J.R., Tracey L. Cross, and Holmes Finch (2010). Maximizing Student Potential Versus Building Community: An exploration of Right-Wing Authoritarianism, Social Dominance Orientation, and Preferred Practice Among Supports of Gifted Education. *Roeper Review*, 32(4), 235-248. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/02783193.2010.508155>

Culross, R. R. (1997). Concepts of Inclusion in Gifted Education. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 29(3), 24. Retrieved from

<http://ezproxy.viu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.viu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,cookie&db=aph&AN=9707272025&site=ehost-live>

Fraenkel, J.R. & Wallen, N. E. (2010). *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education* (7th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill

Gallagher, J. J. (1994). *Current and Historical Thinking on Education for Gifted and Talented Students*. Retrieved from

<http://ezproxy.viu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.viu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,cookie&db=eric&AN=ED372584&site=ehost-live>

Gentry, M., & Owen, S. V. (1999). An Investigation of the Effects of Total School Flexible Cluster Grouping on Identification, Achievement, and Classroom Practices. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 43(4), 224-43. Retrieved from

<http://ezproxy.viu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.viu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,cookie&db=eric&AN=EJ599206&site=ehost-live>

Jolly, J. L. (2009). A Resuscitation of Gifted Education. *American Educational History Journal*, 36(1), 37-52. Retrieved from

<http://ezproxy.viu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.viu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,cookie&db=eric&AN=EJ863663&site=ehost-live>; <http://www.infoagepub.com/products/journals/aejh/index.html>

Moore, J. N. & Siegel, S. (1994). *Regular Education Teachers' Attitudes Toward Their Identified Gifted and Special Education Students*. Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true@_&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=ED373512&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=ED373512

Porfeti, Erik J., Bob Algozzine, Boen Nutting, and J. Allen Queen. Predictors of Parents' Inclusion Decisions. *Journal of Public School Relations*, 27(1), 6-26. Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/search/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=EJ835516&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=EJ835516

Powers, E. A. (2008). The Use of Independent Study as a Viable Differentiation Technique for Gifted Learners in the Regular Classroom. *Gifted Child Today*, 31(3), 57-65. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.viu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.viu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,cookie&db=eric&AN=EJ803367&site=ehost-live;http://journals.prufrock.com/IJP/c.abs/gifted-child-today/volume31/issue3/article786>

Reis, S. M., Gubbins, E. J., Briggs, C., Schreiber, F. J., Richards, S., Jacobs, J. National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented. (2003). *Reading Instruction for Talented Readers: Case Studies Documenting Few Opportunities for Continuous Progress*. National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.viu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.viu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,cookie&db=eric&AN=ED505460&site=ehost-live>

- Reis, S. M., & Purcell, J. H. (1993). An Analysis of Content Elimination and Strategies Used By Elementary Classroom Teachers in the Curriculum Compacting Process. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*, 16(2), 147-70. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.viu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.viu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,cookie&db=eric&AN=EJ461227&site=ehost-live>
- Reis, S. M., & Renzulli, J. S. (2010). Is There Still a Need for Gifted Education? An Examination of Current Research. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 20(4), 308-317. doi:DOI: 10.1016/j.lindif.2009.10.012
- Renzulli, J. S., & Reis, S. M. (1991). The Reform Movement and the Quiet Crisis in Gifted Education. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 35(1), 26-35. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.viu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.viu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,cookie&db=eric&AN=EJ427058&site=ehost-live>
- ShIPLEY, W. W. (1995). *Duck! Someone Said, "inclusion"! Reactions to a Survey*. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.viu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.viu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,cookie&db=eric&AN=ED384190&site=ehost-live>
- Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, 1 British Columbia Ministry of Education C.1 (2011).
- Toth, N. W. (1999). *Gifted Education: A Critical Discussion*. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.viu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.viu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,cookie&db=eric&AN=ED430331&site=ehost-live>

Vaughn, S., & Others, A. (1994). *Teachers' Views of Inclusion: "I'd Rather Pump*

Gas.". Retrieved from

<http://ezproxy.viu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.viu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,cookie&db=eric&AN=ED370928&site=ehost-live>

Westberg, K. L., & Others, A. (1993). *An Observational Study of Instructional and Curricular*

Practices Used With Gifted and Talented Students in Regular Classrooms. National

Research Center on the Gifted and Talented. Retrieved from

<http://ezproxy.viu.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.viu.ca/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=ip,cookie&db=eric&AN=ED379846&site=ehost-live>