TOPICS / ACTIVITIES AND CONCEPTS TO INCLUDE IN PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAMS

MASTER'S PROJECT

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by

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DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to my husband, Larry and our little boy growing inside of me. You both helped me keep things in perspective throughout this whole process. You are the most important people in my life!
Chapter I

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Historically, special education services for eligible children have been provided in separate classes or separate schools. In *Brown v. Board of Education*, the 1954 Supreme Court decision abolishing the legality of school segregation for blacks and whites, the stage was set for examining the segregated special education service delivery system (Schattman and Benay, 1992). It was at this time that parent groups, such as the National Association for Retarded Citizens, began to step forward and question why their children with disabilities were not being educated in the same schools as their peers. Lloyd Dunn (1968) was among a group of educators who also questioned the soundness of segregated programs for children with disabilities. His research indicated that there was no evidence that students were doing better in pull-out segregated programs than in the regular education classroom. Slowly, the restrictions placed on those with disabilities were recognized as problematic. The wheel of change for service delivery was set in motion (Stainback & Stainback, 1996).

In 1971, the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Citizens (PARC) represented a group of parents whose children, diagnosed as mentally retarded, were denied public education (Stainback & Stainback, 1996). As a result of this litigation, the school was required to provide public education for students with mental retardation. This class action demanded equal rights for all.
A number of laws provided limited opportunities to individuals with disabilities. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (PL 93-112) assured that people with disabilities would not be discriminated against because of their disabilities by any program or activity receiving federal funds. Not until the passage of Public Law 94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Act of 1975, was the concept of least restrictive environment (LRE) linked with a continuum of educational services for students with disabilities. The continuum of services concept was originally put forth by Reynolds (as cited in Skrtic, 1991, p. 60). It was later expanded by Deno (1970). The continuum was developed assuming that a variety of services would be necessary to meet the needs of all students. The goal was to tailor an educational program for each child that would enable them to learn in as normal an environment as possible. This continuum of service model assumed that a majority of the students with special needs could be educated with their peers. It also assumed that a placement was not permanent. If a child were able to move from a more segregated (from peers) placement to a more integrated placement at mid-year, that should be done. This was the first time that a joint venture between regular and special education was mentioned in law. Implementation of this joint venture became known as mainstreaming. Mainstreaming was defined as the selective placement of special education students in one or more regular education classes. Students essentially had to “earn” the opportunity to remain in the regular education classroom by “keeping up” with the work assigned (Rogers, 1993). Schools began to mainstream students with
disabilities into the regular classroom in the late 1970's and early 1980's. Even students with significant disabilities (i.e. multi-handicapped, physically disabled), whose needs had never been addressed in their neighborhood schools in the past, began to receive educational services in special settings in their neighborhood schools. Some students with mild disabilities attended special education resource rooms for one or two subject areas and remained in the general education classroom (i.e. mainstreamed) for the remainder of the day (Mercer & Mercer, 1998). Others, however, were still removed from the regular education classroom for a majority of the day. This system of special education placements continued to be standard operating procedure until the mid eighties.

In 1986, Will (as cited in Stainback & Stainback, 1996) issued the Regular Education Initiative (REI). The REI proposed the merger of special and general education for the purpose of serving students with disabilities in general education classrooms. The REI strongly encouraged special education teachers to develop a partnership with the general education teacher. The REI position was a forerunner of the inclusion movement of the 1990's. Stainback and Stainback (1989) define inclusive education as the integration of regular and special education into a unified educational system capable of meeting the needs of all students. Roach (1994, p.21) also states in her definition that "...included students receive their in-school educational services in the general education classroom with appropriate in-class support." Mainstreaming set the stage for inclusion, though mainstreaming is not synonymous with inclusion.
"Mainstreaming occurs when a student with an identified disability leaves a special education class to participate in a general education class for part of the day to complete the same instructional goals set for other students. Within an inclusionary delivery system, special education and support services are delivered so that the student with a disability can benefit from being in the general education setting" (Rosenberg, O'Shea & O'Shea, 1998, p. 13). Inclusive classrooms are restructured to be supportive, nurturing communities that meet the needs of all individuals within them, with substantial resources and supports for students and teachers.

P.L. 94-142 was re-authorized in 1990 as P.L. 101-476, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Although each law, IDEA & P.L. 94-142, referred to placing students in the least restrictive environment, the interpretation of the concept of least restrictive changed. A U.S. circuit court ordered the inclusion of a student with severe disabilities into a regular classroom based on IDEA. It determined that IDEA prohibits a school from placing a child with disabilities outside of a regular classroom if education of the child in the regular classroom, with adequate aid and support services, can be achieved satisfactorily (Rosenberg, O'Shea & O'Shea, 1998). IDEA caused schools to more closely examine each student’s needs relative to the least restrictive environment concept.

Although IDEA was a significant improvement over P.L. 94-142, it unfortunately lacked the necessary measures to support the implementation of the merger of general and
special education. In 1997, IDEA was again re-authorized. This re-authorization dealt with the relationship between special and general education, the negative consequences of the dual system, and the outcomes for those in special education programs. It also required that, to the maximum extent possible, students with special needs be taught using the same curriculum and assessment practices as those used in regular education classrooms (Lipsky & Gartner, 1997). Richard W. Riley, secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, (as cited in Lipsky & Gartner, 1997, p. 64) stated, ‘...We really need to stop thinking about special education as a separate program and a separate place and start thinking about special education as the supports and services that children need in whatever setting that helps them learn.’ Riley’s words echoed Lilly’s (1987, p.326) belief, stated a decade earlier, that ‘once the special education system itself is ‘reformed’, it should no longer seek its own ‘niche’ in the reform literature, but rather should be seen as an element of general education.”

The move toward a unified educational system requires a refocusing of special education resources and expertise (Stainback and Stainback, 1996). Rather than testing children to qualify for specific programs, special educators work with general educators to help them better understand how students with identified learning needs can learn and succeed in the general education classroom. In a unified educational system, the resources of special education become a network of support for the general education teachers and for the students. It gives the teachers support in working with students with special needs
(Hoskins, 1995). The practice of inclusion goes far beyond simply the idea of physical location. Landers and Weaver (1997) have stated the importance of recognizing that inclusion is not a placement, it is a process where the basic values of participation, friendships, interaction, acceptance, and community building are nurtured.

The inclusive movement has evidenced support from a diverse audience since the early 1990's. Stainback & Stainback (1996) mention professional organizations, such as the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) and the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE), who support the inclusive movement. Schools Are For Everyone (SAFE) is an international organization whose sole purpose is to promote inclusion. Many educators (Stainback, Stainback, Thousand & Villa, 1993; Lipsky & Gartner, 1997; Weaver & Landers, 1997) express the importance of inclusion and the responsibility of educating all students in the least restrictive environment.

As shown by the literature review, the education of students with disabilities has drastically changed over the past forty years. Initially, students with special needs were educated in separate schools or kept at home, if not institutionalized. Students were accommodated in their neighborhood school in the self contained classroom or resource room with various degrees of mainstreaming. Some students participated in the general education classroom if they “earned” the privilege by keeping their grades up. Others were only mainstreamed into subjects like art, music, and physical education. Students
with severe disabilities were still taught in a separate class or a separate location.

Mainstreaming evolved into the inclusive movement where all students, regardless of handicap, have the opportunity to learn with the rest of their peers, in the least restrictive environment.

Inclusion, however, does not just happen. In order to implement inclusion successfully, the educational leader (i.e. building principal) is a key element. The principal has to envision a school where all students belong. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that in educational leadership training programs principals search to discover their beliefs about educating all students including those with disabilities. It has been noted by VanHorn, Burrello, and DeClue (1992, p. 11) that “the principals’ beliefs and attitudes about special education students and programs play a major role in the acceptance of these students into their schools.” Principals have the responsibility to “…ensure that decisions are made, challenges are met, and interactions and processes are supported that are consistent with the school’s philosophy” (Stainback & Stainback, 1996, p. 51). In order to fulfill these responsibilities, schools need principals willing to stand behind their values regarding the education of children. There are many practices inherent in inclusive programs that could cause contention among educators who do not embrace inclusion. If the principal has not thought through inclusion as it impacts general education, inclusive practices may be eroded.
Upon reviewing the University of Dayton’s conceptual framework on which its principal preparation program is based, this researcher noticed that one topic that is covered in the program is problem solving. Problem solving activities provide opportunities to incorporate special education issues into the principal preparation program. Problem solving that is driven by special education issues can aid principals-in-training in clarifying their values related to special education.

The purpose of an educational administration preparation program is to provide the prospective principal with the skills necessary to fulfill responsibilities. As we have seen evidenced through the research mentioned above, “...as the face of special education changes, so does the responsibilities of the principal. Principals are required to be more and more involved with special education issues and concerns” (Mercer and Mercer, 1997 p. 20). IDEA set new standards and requirements that affect building principals. Consequently, the skills required to effectively administer a special education program are becoming increasingly vital to the principal. Unfortunately, most educational administration preparation programs are sorely lacking in special education specific information (Sirotnik and Kimball, 1994).

Sirotnik and Kimball (1994) stated that they were not able to locate any substantive and specific treatment of special education concepts, issues, or practices in the vast majority of the 550 page report issued in 1993 by the National Policy Board for Educational Administrators. The report covered 21 domains, and it was only in Chapter
19 (Legal and Regulatory Applications) that the 1975 Education of All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 were mentioned. Noted in chapter 19 was the responsibility of the principal, under federal statutory requirements, to understand and apply appropriately the 1975 Act and its judicial interpretations.

It appears that the amount of special education information in textbooks used to prepare school administrators is quite inadequate. If the textbooks, as shown by Sirotnik and Kimball (1994), are indicative of the training covered, principals are lacking knowledge needed for addressing special education issues in general. It can further be assumed that inclusive education, as a topic, is not being appropriately addressed.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the question of what should be the content of principal preparation programs in order to better prepare future administrators to deal with special education issues and effectively incorporate inclusion in their schools.

Supporting documentation will be provided concerning the various roles of principals in the inclusive education process; the lack of special education specific curricula in current educational administration programs; and suggestions regarding the necessary special education curriculum content needed in the educational administration program to better prepare future principals.
Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

As education changes, so does the principal’s role. This is especially true with regard to special education. Today, building principals are required to become much more involved with special education issues. The question needs to be asked, what could be done to adequately prepare school principals to support special education in the current educational environment? In an attempt to answer this question, a review of literature was conducted to examine research concerning the principal’s role in special education, the current level of special education coverage in university courses and textbooks used for preparing principals, and the suggested content of Educational Administration programs to better prepare principals.

The Principal’s Role in Inclusion

Effective leadership is critical in all organizations. Change cannot occur without a leader who has a vision and a desire to change. Gameros (1995) examined principals’ attitudes and roles and found their leadership and vision to be a vital part of any inclusive school environment.

One of the keys to succeeding in this role of leader is communication. Clear, strong lines of communication are essential in supporting the ongoing process of school
reform. This type of communication takes energy and resources to sustain, but it is necessary to keep open the lines of communication (Roach, 1994).

It is important that principals are fully knowledgeable about their responsibilities related to special education because they play a critical role in leading the faculty through change. Fuchs and Fuchs (1994) have stated that leadership that supports special education recognizes the need for change, appreciates the importance of consensus building, looks at general education with a sense of what is possible, and respects special education’s traditions and values that can provide more intensive services to enhance the learning and lives of children. Though there are numerous issues mentioned above, they are all of significant importance to a successful educational program.

Principals have a critical leadership role in the successful implementation of inclusive practices in their buildings. They must lead the staff and students in creating a learning environment that values each student in order to provide each with the best education possible. The principal’s role is to coach, encourage, guide, educate, and support the teachers as they move toward a more inclusive school culture. The principal sets the tone in the building. Portraying a positive attitude concerning any issue, including special education, will positively influence the staff and students.

According to Perner (as stated in Jan Pijl, Meijer, & Hegarty, 1997, p. 72) “what is fundamental to an inclusionary approach in educating exceptional students is that the principal and the school staff accept responsibility for the progress of all students.” Once
the principal and staff have come to an agreement concerning the acceptance of the responsibility for the progress of all students, the administration then needs to clearly articulate this vision communicating it to the parents, students, and community.

Stating a vision is critical when moving toward the development of an inclusive school. Local school boards do not typically push for change. The school board has many responsibilities that consume their time; therefore, the principal needs to keep the school board informed concerning current issues with special education such as inclusion. Given a vision where the principal and staff look at the progress of all students, it is important that the principal communicate this clearly to the school board and encourages its support (Roach, 1994).

According to Burello and Lashley (as noted in Stainback & Stainback, 1996), there are beliefs that are critical to developing the vision of inclusion. These beliefs must be embraced by the principal and his staff:

1. Everyone in the school is responsible for the education of each student from the school’s attendance area regardless of learning needs.

2. Everyone in the school is focused on meeting the needs of all students in a unified system of education. Labeling and separation of students are counterproductive to educational excellence.

3. All educators have skills and knowledge which should be used to support the efforts of all teachers to ensure the success of all students in typical classrooms.
4. All students benefit from participation in inclusive classrooms and schools.

5. Prevention of learning problems is the proper province of special education.

6. Assessment of students’ needs is a regular part of curricular and instructional planning for all teachers and related service personnel.

7. Special education and related service personnel serve as full members of teacher teams under the leadership of the school principal.

8. Special education and related service personnel provide services to students in the context of the general school program.

9. Funding and budgeting models support the provision of services for students with special needs in the home school and local community.

10. Community human services for children are coordinated at the school.

11. Evaluation of the effectiveness of a school’s program includes consideration of the post-school adjustment of students with special needs. (p. 109)

If the principal is effective in getting the staff to embrace these beliefs, there should be no distinction between special education and general education. Educators will move away from looking at “placement” and will move more toward looking at the “process” involved to best educate students.

A principal shows support of special education and students with disabilities through modeling. Encouragement toward the inclusion of students with disabilities in events such as assemblies, graduation, and extra-curricular activities reflects core values
concerning students with special needs. It is through the principal’s involvement with the disabilities and display of acceptance that a principal is able to establish a climate that encourages the staff to accept all students, regardless of disability (Van Horn, Burrello, & DeClue, 1992).

Special Education Content in Educational Administration Training Programs

Principals have always been faced with the many demands of general education. They are now being required to more actively deal with the legal and moral responsibilities of special education. Are they prepared to do so? Lovitt (1993, p.57) states that “although principals might be required to learn about working with regular students, they receive little training in dealing with vocational or special education students or their teachers.”

Although an extensive literature search was conducted, little research was found which focused on the amount of special education knowledge covered in educational administration programs. One indicator of principal awareness of the needs of diverse populations would be the degree to which educational administration textbooks address special education. The following studies reflect the level of special education content found in the educational administration textbooks.

Sirotnik and Kimball (1994) conducted a study which looked to see what issues concerning special education were communicated to aspiring school leaders through contemporary textbooks typically used in school administration courses. Their survey was
neither exhaustive nor systematic. It mainly involved pulling texts off of bookshelves and looking through the tables of contents, indexes, and likely sections for headings such as “blended programs,” “exceptional children or students,” “Education for all Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142), “mainstreaming,” and “special education.” Among the 25 educational administration textbooks reviewed, 18 sources had no references at all to the topics listed. One book included a brief section pertaining to special education in a chapter dealing with the legal responsibilities of the school principal. Two other books each included several pages of discussion on the IEP process, mainstreaming, PL 94-142, the legal process and handicapped students. Only four books contained discussions concerning special education personnel, resources, and programming. Another review conducted by Sirotnik and Kimball (1994) looked at the same question a little differently. They reviewed 16 special education textbooks to see what reference was made to the role of the school administrator. They did this by looking in the tables of contents and in the index for the terms “principals”, and “(school) administrator”. Six sources made no reference to the role of the school principal. Six sources briefly referred to the role of the principal and the importance of coordinating efforts among the staff. Four books had more detailed discussions of the role of the principal in relationship to special education children and programs. According to Matczynski, professor of education at the University of Dayton, the books reviewed in both surveys were reputable. Of the sources reviewed by Sirotnik and Kimball, Matczynski recognized 10 as strong textbooks.
Assuming that the principal preparation programs are covering generally material addressed in textbooks, this research data suggests that educational administration textbooks and education administration university programs need to be revised in order to prepare future principals for the task at hand: to place value on each child and their education.

**Topics and Issues to Include in an Educational Administration Program**

Research indicates a wide variety of topics and issues which would prove beneficial if covered in a principal preparation program. These topics and strategies cover thought processes and practical steps that the principal could follow in order to be effective. These topics and strategies cover many areas due to the wide range of responsibilities placed upon principals.

Critical thinking is paramount to developing a belief system and vision by which the principals will lead their schools. According to Blumberg, (as cited in Villa et al., 1992), in order to prepare school leaders, school administrator programs must begin by exploring beliefs and visions. It is within the context of the vision that skills and strategies of school administrators become meaningful. As educational administration programs incorporate activities that promote and foster critical thinking into each class, aspiring principals will be able to determine for themselves their beliefs and their own visions for education.
Barnett (as cited in Villa et al., 1992) states that one way to incorporate critical thinking into education is by structuring self-reflection into the class and homework assignments. Self-reflection also positively affects legal issues surrounding special education. "When a principal engages in reflection behaviors, legally defensible decisions and actions are more likely to occur" (Goor et al., 1997). The educational administration students need to be encouraged to clearly state what they believe. In order to feel free to express their beliefs, the students need a learning atmosphere of trust and openness where they feel safe enough to honestly discuss controversial questions. (Schon, 1987)

There are many issues that will arise for which the principal preparation program could not directly prepare its students. However, having developed critical thinking skills will enable them to deal with these issues in the most effective way possible. The University of Dayton, according to its Principal Preparation Program Conceptual Framework (the organization by which they orchestrate their principal preparation program), does not deal directly with critical thinking; but there are various areas where critical thinking is necessary in order to meet the objectives set forth in the framework. An effective way to incorporate critical thinking skills and to practice problem solving would be to simulate in class special education situations that could potentially face principals.

Principals need to be encouraged to identify their own professional dilemmas about creating inclusive schools and to find ways to resolve them (Levine, 1989). “To lead an inclusive school requires a personal belief that all children can learn and a commitment to
providing all children equal access to a rich core curriculum and quality instruction" (Villa et al, 1992, p.269). Principals who work from this precept are able to look at special education not as a placement, but as a process that determines the best possible way to meet students' needs. Once principals have developed their beliefs and visions, it is important that they continue to encourage others to join them in their quest to provide the best education possible for all students. While addressing the ingredients necessary for inclusive schools, it's important to remember, as Barker states (cited in Landers, & Weaver, 1997, p. 34) that “...vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world.”

The legal issues surrounding special education are also important. Some research, however, has shown that these issues are currently being discussed in the educational administration programs (Sirotnik, Kimball, 1994). Others, such as Cline and Olson, (as cited in Valesky & Hirth, 1992) feel an increase is needed in the amount of time and attention given to special education law and its ramifications.

Principals need to be fully aware of what IDEA means to them as principals and leaders in schools that serve students with and without special needs. Principals need to be knowledgeable of the legally mandated process for identifying students with special needs. They are also responsible for funding negotiation and resource allocation to support special education. Although principals are constrained by strict budgets, they have the opportunity to allocate discretionary funds to special education needs. Burella et
al (1992) have stated that an effective principal understands that equal opportunities for students with special needs may require unequal resources and that a commitment to the entire teaching staff and student population is critical. Principals who understand and support special education can more effectively allocate funding for the special education programs.

Teachers in special education, especially those in inclusive classrooms, need support in implementing, personalizing, and refining a variety of methods to meet individual students’ needs. In order to support teachers, the principal needs to have a thorough understanding of the assessment, instructional, and discipline approaches used by special education teachers (Villa et al., 1992). Roy & O’Brien (as cited in Goor et al., 1997) feel that in order for staff to work cooperatively, principals must observe instruction and provide feedback, discuss instructional techniques and methods, and discuss innovative materials, techniques, and strategies through faculty meetings or inservice training. This involvement will demonstrate that the principal cares about what they are teaching and is constantly looking for ways to improve the overall education process. Knowledge of the curriculum and teaching strategies will assist the principal in answering questions about assessment, philosophies, and methodologies.

Curriculum, assessment, classroom management, methodologies, and philosophies are continuously evolving for teachers. In order for principals to establish a school environment where teachers may continually learn, principals will need to assist their
teachers in becoming self-directed individuals (Villa et al., 1992). As principals model lifelong learning through ongoing involvement in teaching and assessment, the staff, parents, and students will observe the value of continually improving. "If the leader is seen as an effective learner from the environment, others will emulate that model, much as a child emulates a parent or a student emulates a teacher" (Bennis & Nanus, p.205). Learning needs to be an ongoing process for everyone, teachers, students, parents, and administration. Principals need to foster an environment which supports lifelong learning (Villa et al., 1992).

Principals also have the unique responsibility to facilitate intragroup communication through meeting management, consensus-building, group problem solving, and conflict resolution). These skills are critical for promoting decision making that will create an inclusive environment; thus they need to be woven throughout the principal preparation program (Villa et al., 1992). Collaboration is critically important, especially considering the continual merger of general and special education. The more collaboration that occurs between general and special education teachers, the greater the opportunity will be for all students to be involved in positive learning experiences. In order for effective collaboration to occur, Schattman and Benay (1992) found that problem-solving teams and flexible time schedules are necessary. The make-up of these teams may vary but it generally includes the principal, special education teachers, regular education teachers, parents, and students.
It has been said that experience is the best teacher. Hands-on activities are essential in order for principals in training to fully experience the various demands that will be placed upon them. It is important that aspiring principals have field experience in a school that has inclusive practices. Graduate students need to do more than observe a school. The students need to interview school personnel, serve on teams to plan comprehensive inclusion for the students, and develop a thorough understanding of what is required to successfully implement inclusion in schools (Villa et al., 1992). There are many issues relevant in special education that will surface during the field experience time. If the principals have been trained properly, they will more readily use their critical thinking skills to determine where they stand on an issue and will find the best way to communicate that to others involved.

One of many difficult issues facing principals involves abandoning the concept that, “it's always been done this way.” Change is a frightening thing. It is the educator’s responsibility to prepare students for the rapidly changing world that awaits them (Villa et al., 1992). Along with preparing students for change, educators must also be willing to change. “Successful schools for the 21st century require leaders who are comfortable with and prepared to be the facilitators of change” (Villa et al., 1992). The best way to prepare principals to lead during change is to ground them strongly in their beliefs. They will then have the confidence to promote change. It is important to remember that change is a process, not a specific event. (Leithwood et al., 1987) Though this may be difficult to
remember at times, it is vitally important to implementing change. Bennis & Nanus (1985) argue that university programs in school administration are the logical places for grounding administrators in the attitudes and skills of change.

Many qualities are necessary to achieve effective leadership. "Requisite characteristics include patience, integrity, honesty, adaptability, creativity, imagination, openness, self-awareness, and a sense of humor" (Goor et al., 1997).

With the constant changes in both regular and special education, it is important that principal preparation programs frequently evaluate current programs. This will better prepare future principals for the task set before them. This preparation will benefit not only the students, but also the staff and the community. Though change can be difficult, it is essential to effectively meet each student’s needs.
CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

Subjects

The subjects were selected from a group of principals who had previously participated in an inclusive education training program through the special education resource centers. The researcher determined it would be most effective to select subjects from the list of those principals who has participated in this training, targeting geographical regions where many University of Dayton educational administration graduates are employed. Subjects were selected from the following resource centers: West Central Ohio Special Education Regional Resource Center (Wapakoneta), Central Ohio Special Education Regional Resource Center (Columbus), and Miami Valley Special Education Center (Dayton). Subjects were chosen by selecting every third participant from the three lists of all previous participants in the SERRC inclusive training programs. Of 270 participants, 128 were included in the survey.

Setting

The principals participating through the West Central Ohio Special Education Resource Center in Wapakoneta generally manage rural schools or small city school districts, such as Celina, Ohio. Most principals participating with the Central Ohio Special Education Regional Resource Center in Columbus manage medium size to large city
schools. Most principals participating with the Miami Valley Special Education Center in Dayton manage a mix of rural and medium and large district schools.

Data Collection

A survey instrument was used for data collection. The survey was divided into three sections. The first section was designed to obtain demographic data: The purpose of the second section was to determine which philosophies need to be stressed in a principal preparation program in order for a school to successfully implement an inclusive program. The third section was designed to determine specific topics and strategies that might better prepare principals if included in the principal’s training program and to determine those topics and strategies that were of least importance to cover in detail. The survey instrument was a Likert-type questionnaire with predetermined answer choices.

The first section, demographic data, included: the grade level and size of the school, the position of the individual filling out the survey, the existence of an inclusive education program in the school, and the name of the school for follow-up purposes. The grade levels were divided into two groups: elementary/primary and junior high/highschool. The schools were divided into three groups: enrollment under 400, enrollment 400-600, and enrollment over 600.

Section two of the survey was constructed based on the inclusion checklist for schools found in Project Apex: Assistance for Principals Operating Experimental Models (p.29). This Project Apex checklist is a compilation of inclusion-related activities and
attitudes; this checklist may be used to assess the status of a school as it relates to implementing inclusion. The researcher adapted the general ideas in the Apex checklist and generated a list of elements pertinent to the survey. There were 10 possible inclusive education elements. The individuals surveyed were asked to review each statement and rank order the top three elements that should be included in a principal’s training program in order to better prepare principals to effectively develop inclusive schools.

The third section of the survey consisted of a list of 20 special education topics and strategies generated from a review of research dealing with special education issues. The individuals surveyed were asked to do two rankings. First, they were asked to rank order the top three topics and strategies they felt should be stressed in a principal’s training program. Second, they were to indicate the three topics and strategies that they felt were least important in a principal’s training program.

The survey was piloted by two educational administration classes at the University of Dayton. The pilot participants were asked to complete the survey, then fill out an evaluation regarding the structure and content of the questions. (See Appendix A.) Some difficulties with the piloted survey included the excessive number of statements, the number of similar statements, and directions that needed to be stated more clearly. The researcher made changes based upon the comments.

A cover letter and survey were sent to the selected participants. Each participant received a self addressed stamped envelope in which to return the survey to the
researcher. Participants were given two weeks to complete and return the survey. A copy of the survey and cover letter can be found in Appendix B.
Chapter IV

Results

The survey instrument (see Appendix B) used to collect data for this study consisted of three sections. The first section was designed to obtain demographic information about the respondents. One hundred twenty-eight individuals were sent surveys and 58 were returned, yielding a 45% response rate. Two of the surveys returned were not used in the data compilation because the respondents were not building level K-12 personnel. The respondents were asked to indicate their job position, the organizational level (elementary, middle, high school) of the building in which they worked, the size of the student population served in the building, and the presence or absence of an inclusive education program. Of the remaining 56 surveys, 86% (48) were completed by principals, 11% (6) by vice principals or assistant principals, 3% (2) by other than a principal (one counselor and one team leader). Thirty-three (59%) were from elementary school personnel, 34% (19) were from middle or high school personnel, 5% (3) were from individuals in K-12 buildings and 2% (1) was from an individual in a K-8 building. The respondents indicated that they served student populations ranging from 135 per building to 1,874 per building. Twenty-four (43%) of the respondents worked in buildings with fewer than 400 students, 36% (20) worked in buildings with between 400 and 599 students, and 21% (12) worked in buildings with 600+ students. Four (7%) of the
respondents did not have inclusive education programs, while 93% (52) indicated that they were involved in inclusive programs.

Analysis of these data was done for the total group and then by subsets: level (elementary and secondary which consisted of the middle/high school data), size of building population (100-401, 401-599, and 600+), and program (inclusive and non-inclusive).

The purpose of the second part of the survey (Appendix B, Roman numeral I) was to determine which concepts the respondents, who had received training related to inclusive schooling, felt were needed in a principal preparation program designed to prepare future principals for success in inclusive settings. The respondents were to read ten statements deemed to be necessary elements of inclusive schools. After reading, they were to select and rank order the three statements that they felt should be included in a principal training program. Fifty-six surveys were analyzed.
Top Three Rankings. Table 1 shows that seven of the ten statements received a one ranking, six of the ten received a two ranking, and all ten statements received a three ranking by at least one of the fifty-six respondents. Statement C, “The school must be fully committed to the maintenance of a caring community that fosters mutual respect and support among staff, parents, and students...,” received the highest number of first place rankings. It was selected by 41% (23 of 56) of the respondents. Statement D, “Regular education and special education staff should integrate their efforts and resources so that they work together as integral parts of a unified team rather than being isolated in separate rooms or departments with separate supervisors and budgets,” was ranked most often as second most important by 46% (26 of 56) of the respondents. Statement E, “The administrative staff should create a work climate in which staff are supported as they
provide assistance to each other instead of teachers’ being intimidated by the perception that if they seek peer collaboration in working with students, they are less than competent,” received the highest number of third place rankings (18 of 56 or 32%).

A further analysis of these data was done using the following variables: building level (elementary and secondary), building size (100-400, 401-599, and 600+), and program (inclusive and non-inclusive). These data are found in Tables 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, and 22 in Appendix C. Because four buildings were either K-8 or K-12, the data from these sources were not included in the building level tables. The building level tables included 51 surveys (33 elementary and 19 secondary). All other tables, size and program, include data from 56 surveys.

Appendix C shows that these same statements, C-”fully committed,” D-“integrated efforts/resources,” and E - “supported collaboration,” retained their, respective, first, second, and third rankings when examined by level of school (elementary or secondary - Tables 4 and 7), by schools serving 599 students or less (Tables 10 and 13) and by schools with inclusion programs (Table 19). Respondents from schools with 600 or more students (Table 16), ranked statements C-”fully committed” and D - “integrated efforts/resources” an equal number of times as their first choice. Each received three, number one rankings. Statement D - “integrated efforts/resources” also was ranked second. Statement B - “individualization for all” was most often ranked third by this group. Schools which did not have inclusive education programs (Table 22), ranked
statement E - “supported collaboration” most often as the number one choice, statement D - “integrated efforts/resources” as second choice and statements E, F, I, and J were each ranked equally as a third choice item.

Although respondent rankings of first choice, second choice and third choice do indicate “C” as being the most frequently selected item for first choice followed by “D,” receiving the most second place selections and “E,” the most third, it is evident from Table 1 that total selection frequency does not support the first, second, third place sequence. Neither does it support the concept of only three top elements. Item D was selected by 82% (46 of 56) of the respondents as one of the top three elements, item C, by 70% (39 of 56), and items B and E, equally by 52% (29 of 56). A perusal of Tables 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, and 22 in Appendix C supports item D as receiving the highest frequency count for all groups with the exception of schools serving populations of 100-400 students. These tables, also, graphically depict that items B and E were comparatively selected and among the four most frequently selected items. These findings lead this researcher to negate a choice sequence discussion in favor of addressing four items as most important elements to include in a principal training program for preparing future principals to be successful in inclusive settings.

The purpose of the third section (Appendix B, Roman number II) of the survey was to identify specific topics and strategies that should be focused on in a principal licensure program designed to prepare principals for inclusive education settings. The
respondents were asked to select from a list of twenty topics/activities, the three considered most important and the three considered least important.

**All Respondents [n=56]: Most Important Topics/Strategies**

Three Most Important Topics/Activities. Table 2 shows that eighteen of the twenty items on the list were selected by at least one respondent as being one of the three most important topics/activities. Table 2, also, shows that items A, C, and I were selected most frequently. Item C - Federal and state regulations governing special education practices, was selected 48% (27 of 56) of the time as one of the three most important topics/activities. Item I - Curricular modifications and intervention practices, was selected 45% (25 of 56) of the time. Item A - Current special education issues and concerns, was selected 38% (21 of 56) of the time.
To look at the consistency of the selection of these three items being the most important topics/activities, an analysis of these data by level, by building size and by program was done. Graphs of these data can be found in Appendix C, by level (elementary and secondary, Tables 5 and 8), by size of school (100-400, 401 - 599, and 600+, Tables 11, 14 and 17) and by practice (inclusive/non-inclusive, Tables 20 and 23). By level, again limited to 52 surveys, both elementary and secondary selected items C and I as two of the three most important items. Elementary respondents also chose item A - Current special education issues and concerns, as one of the top three while secondary equally chose items D - Least Restrictive Environment: related attitudes and values, and E - Procedures for identifying students with special needs, among their three most important. By size, item C - Federal and state regulations governing special education practices, and I - Curricular modifications and intervention practices, were among the three most important regardless of school size. Schools with populations of between 100 and 400, selected item A - Current special education issues and concerns, as being among their three most important topics/activities. Schools with populations 401 to 599 selected item J - Problem solving techniques and practices, as one of the three most important. Schools with populations of 600+ equally selected item D - Least Restrictive Environment: related attitudes and values, and item E - Procedures for identifying students with special needs, among the three most important. By program, inclusive schools comprised 93% (52 of 56) of the responses to the three most important topics/activities and identified the same items A, C,
and I as were identified by the total group. The non-inclusive schools which represent only 7% (4 of 56) of respondents selected item D - Least Restrictive Environment: related attitudes and values, and item E - Procedures for identifying students with special needs, along with item A as being in the most important group.

The analysis of the most important topics/activities shows items I and C to be consistent across subsets. Item A was not as consistently pervasive at the secondary level or in buildings exceeding 400 students.

Three Least Important Topics/Activities. Five of the 56 respondents did not complete this portion of the survey. Table 3 shows the frequency of items chosen as, least important, by the remaining 51 respondents. Every item was chosen at least once by the respondents. Four items (Q, F, H and N), rather than three, did emerge as being least
important. Twenty-five of the fifty-one (49%) of the respondents selected item Q - Multiple opportunities provided to practice self-direction by codesigning and teaching courses with university instructors, as being among the three least important topics/activities to be included in a principal's licensure program. Item F - Negotiating funding and resource allocations, was chosen by 35% (18 of 51) as being least important. Items H - Evaluation of teachers of students with special needs, and N - Effective facilitation techniques that encourage life-long self-growth and communication of staff, were selected equally by 25% (13 of 51) of the respondents as being least important.

An analysis of the least important topics/activities frequency responses by level (elementary and secondary, Tables 6 and 9), by size of school (100-400, 401 - 599, and 600+, Tables 12, 15 and 18) and by practice (inclusive/non-inclusive, Tables 21 and 24) are shown in Appendix C. By level, items Q- Multiple opportunities provided to practice self-direction by codesigning and teaching courses with university instructors, F - Negotiating funding and resource allocations, and H - Evaluation of teachers of students with special needs, were selected as least important by both the elementary and the secondary respondents. The secondary, however, also selected items B - The mission of the school as it relates to special education, and E - Procedures for identifying students with special needs, the same number of times as item H. The secondary pool of least important items was five. Because several items were selected an equal number of times as being least important, selections made by schools of 100-400 and 401-599 students
resulted in a four item pool and schools with populations of 600+ had a five item pool. Items Q and H were common among the least important group regardless of the size of the school's population. Item F was selected as being least important by both schools with 100-400 students and 401-599 students. In addition, the 100-400 group selected item J - Problem solving techniques and practices, as least important. Schools with populations of 401-599 and schools with populations exceeding 600 selected item L - Open discussion of issues requiring critical inquiry and reflective practices, as least important. In addition, the 600+ group selected items K- Intensive training in crisis management, and N - Effective facilitation techniques that encourage life-long self-growth and communication among staff, as least important topics/activities to include in a principal licensure program preparing them to function in inclusive settings. By program, the respondents having inclusive programs (92%) reflected the selections of the total group, Q, F and H. The small number (8%) of buildings with no inclusive programs, selected items F, B and L.

The analysis of these data supports items Q, F, H and N as being the least important topics/activities identified by this group of respondents. The selection of every item on the list as being one that could fall into the least important category, diluted the power of the most frequently selected items.

The data collected by this survey indicates that these educators were able to agree at a 52% level or better on four elements (B, C, D and E) that should be included in a principal training program in order to assure that principals are effectively prepared to
implement inclusion. They were unable to agree at a 50% level on the most important or least important topics/activities that should be focused on in the licensure program.
Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions, & Recommendations

Summary

Special education programs of the 1990’s are very different from those of the 1960’s. In the 1960’s, persons with disabilities were totally segregated. In the 1970’s and 1980’s persons with disabilities were in the regular education schools, but were pulled out in separate programs or mainstreamed into the regular education classroom for short periods of the day. In the 1990’s persons with disabilities are more fully included in the regular education classroom. The revised IDEA (P.L. 103-57) now requires, when appropriate, the inclusion of students with severe disabilities into the regular classroom. With numerous changes in special education, it is important that principals are aware of the changes and are prepared to include these students in the most effective way possible.

In order to prepare principals for this task at hand, topics on inclusion need to be discussed in their training program. While conducting the research to determine whether special education issues were being discussed in principal’s training programs, the author found very little research. The research (Sirotnik & Kimball, 1994) that was found proved that issues in special education were not being adequately covered in principal’s training programs.

The purpose of this survey was to determine the concepts, topics, and activities that principals felt were most important to include in the principal’s training program. The
research was conducted using schools and principals within the potential training region of University of Dayton graduates. This was done in order to make the results applicable to the administration program at the University of Dayton as it’s current principal’s training program is reviewed and revised. The survey was distributed to 128 principals who have been trained in inclusive education. A return rate of 45% was obtained.

A Likert-type survey was created to determine what areas those principals who have been trained in inclusion felt were most important to focus on in the principal’s training program. The survey was divided into three sections. The first section was designed to collect demographic information. The second section was designed to determine the concepts concerning inclusion that participants felt were most important to focus on in the training program. The third section was designed to determine the top three topics or activities that participants feel should be covered in the training program. Using the same topics and activities, the third section also determined the three topics or activities that participants felt were least important to cover in the training program.

Conclusion

The researcher analyzed the survey results according to school size, grade level, and whether or not there was an inclusive program in the school. The results indicated that regardless of these factors, four elements were valued most by participants.
According to the results (See Figure 1), participants strongly agree that it is important that principals are prepared to encourage regular education and special education teachers to work as a team rather than being isolated. The researcher felt that this element was viewed as important because the respondents understand that two people working together are much more effective than those same two people working independently. When dealing with special education, the students need to know that the special education and the regular education teacher are both working together to accomplish the same purpose. Dissension or even a simple lack of cooperation between teachers reduces the effectiveness of the program.

Another element that participants strongly agreed upon was that the school needs to be fully committed to the maintenance of a caring community that fosters respect and
support among staff, parents, and students (See Figure 1). This commitment will help children with and without disabilities to mutually benefit from interaction with each other.

The last two elements in Figure 1 were also important to a significant number of the respondents. An effective principal education program must teach the principals to create a supportive climate for their special and regular education teachers. It is interesting that the respondents highly ranked two elements that dealt with teachers working together and the support that is required for that cooperation. Teachers may need to be provided extra time during the day in order to collaborate with other teachers. It is interesting that only 52% of the respondents viewed this as highly important. If the teachers were asked to fill out the same survey, the researcher feels more would rate this area as important. When teachers are not given the time and support from administration, they may get frustrated and not take personal time to collaborate with others. This may have a negative impact on students and other staff members. The principal is in the position to establish a climate of openness and support which will encourage teachers to talk to others. When staff feel they may be looked down upon or treated as incompetent, they will be much less likely to collaborate with other teachers when problems arise. Collaboration could lead to discussions concerning using different grading scales for those with special needs, including all children in assemblies, discussions concerning methods of teaching, how to deal with problems, or to discussions of other issues teachers might be
experiencing. A safe environment and adequate time to discuss issues with colleagues will positively affect the teacher and the students they teach.

Respondents also felt it important to establish services and programs that are child-specific rather than label-specific. It is encouraging that even half of the respondents felt this area was important. If more principals could embrace this philosophy that individual student needs should be met rather than fitting these students into a label category and placing them in a classroom accordingly, student needs may be met much more effectively.

Based upon their responses concerning the most important element that needs to be included in the principal’s training program, the respondents were asked to determine the topics or strategies that would be most necessary to be taught in order to accomplish the elements they viewed as important. Below are the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Most Important Topics/Strategies</th>
<th>Frequency of Selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Federal and state regulations governing special education practices</td>
<td>48% (27 of 56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Curricular modifications and intervention practices</td>
<td>45% (25 of 56)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Current special education issues and concerns</td>
<td>38% (21 of 56)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2

There were 20 topics or strategies from which to choose. Eighteen of the 20 were viewed as important by at least one respondent. It is interesting that so many of the topics or strategies were chosen. Was it because the statements were not clear enough to make a differentiation or was it because choices were all important? The researcher is unable to make that determination, but feels that this should be noted to explain the lower frequency of selection.
Figure 2 states that item C and item I were both viewed as highly important to include in the principal's preparation program. The frequency of these selections were greater than any other choice. It is interesting that the percentages were representative of only about half of the respondents. How can a principal think of special education without thinking of the federal and state regulation that govern the special education practices?

Almost fifty percent of the respondents did not view this as an important issue! There are constantly changing laws that affect schools. If the principals are not aware of these requirements, the school may be faced with lawsuits. Those who did rank it as important recognize the increasing role of legislative considerations in the educational system. Special education has many mandates which schools must closely follow.

Another topic or strategy that the respondents felt was important was curriculum modifications and intervention practices (See Figure 2). Less than 50% of the respondents felt this was among the top three topics or strategies to be included in the principal's training program. The respondents who did not rank this as important may not realize the changes in their role. As the face of special education changes, so does the role of the principal. The law requires all students to be placed in the least restrictive environment possible. This requires regular education teachers, some without training in special education, to adapt the curriculum to meet all student's needs. This can be very intimidating to a regular education teacher. Principals can help teachers by providing various workshops and opportunities to help schools learn to adapt the curriculum in the
most effective way possible. This topic is critical to cover to have an effective special education program where students are educated in the least restrictive environment.

Without proper training and support, inclusion may become a “negative” word to regular education teachers. These negative feelings will probably result in negative attitudes concerning students with special needs.

Table 2 shows that only 38% of the respondents feel it is important to learn about current special education issues and concerns. It is of great concern if principals universally view current special education issues and concerns as unimportant. Principals need to stay up to date on special education issues. These issues are constantly changing. In order to effectively meet students’ needs, principals need to be aware of the expectations placed upon educators. They must also be willing to incorporate these changes in their school.

There were other issues such as problem solving, identifying students with special needs, and attitudes about the least restrictive environment that were also viewed as fairly important to include in the principal’s preparation program. These issues would also be worthy of consideration for inclusion in a principal preparation program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Least Important Topics/Strategies</th>
<th>Frequency of Selection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Multiple opportunities provided to practice self-direction by codesigning and teaching courses with university instructors.</td>
<td>49% (25 of 51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Negotiating funding and resource allocations</td>
<td>35% (18 of 51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Evaluation of the teachers of students with special needs</td>
<td>25% (13 of 51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Effective facilitation techniques that encourage life-long self-growth and communication among staff.</td>
<td>25% (13 of 51)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Figure 3
Upon reviewing the results for this section, the researcher found it interesting that all 20 topics or strategies were chosen by at least one respondent. There were four topics or strategies that were agreed upon by a majority of the respondents (See Figure 3), but overall, the opinions were scattered among all the possible choices. Why was there not a stronger draw to a few topics or strategies? Why were the results so scattered? The four topics or strategies with the highest frequency of responses will be discussed below.

Many respondents did not feel it was important to provide opportunities to practice self-direction by codesigning and teaching courses with university instructors. Respondents may have felt this would not significantly improve teaching and overall education. Another topic or strategy viewed as least important to include in the principal preparation program was negotiating funding and resource allocation. With all the responsibilities placed upon a principal, the researcher is in agreement that this is an area that can be delegated to other members of the school administration staff.

Respondents did not feel that it was necessary to cover the evaluation of teachers with special needs. If special education teachers are not evaluated, how is one to know that the students are receiving a quality education? Another element to consider concerning special education is that special education teachers may need to be evaluated differently than regular education teachers. Should principals not be taught how to effectively evaluate special education teachers. Was this noted as least important because the respondents do not see the importance of evaluating individually or is it because there
were so many needed topics and strategies, that they marked this lower because the other topics and strategies are more important? Schools are doing their students a disservice when they fail to evaluate teachers.

The final area that was viewed as least important to include in the principal preparation program was to teach effective facilitation techniques that encourage life-long self-growth and communication among staff. Without actively reflecting on successes and failures, how is an educator to learn? The researcher feels principals need to be required to participate in reflective activities throughout their program. Without this, they may not feel comfortable to encourage staff to reflect and critically inquire about issues. Could this lack of commitment toward evaluating teachers and asking teachers to reflect upon their evaluations be the cause of problems in some schools today? Two of the elements that the respondents previously ranked as most important involved staff relations (See Figure 1). If this is truly important, encouraging self-directed learning may open doors to further the communication among staff. They may then feel more supported by administration and other colleagues.

**Recommendations**

The analysis of the surveys returned indicate specific measures which would seem beneficial to principals in leading a school engaged in school reform, specifically inclusion.
The author recommends that the University of Dayton focus on communicating the following four concepts to students in the principal training program:

- the importance of the school being fully committed to the maintenance of a caring community that fosters respect and support among staff, parents, and students.
- regular education and special education teachers working as a team rather than being isolated.
- administrative staff should create a work climate in which staff are supported as they provide assistance to each other.
- instructional programs need to be individualized for all children with and without disabilities.

The three most important topics/strategies for a principal’s licensure program are:

- federal and state regulations governing special education practices
- curriculum modifications and intervention practices
- current special education issues and concerns

Implementation of these measures should lead to improvement in the principal’s understanding of the needs of special education students, and will thus allow them to be more effective in their role as leaders of both teachers and students in their schools.
APPENDIXES
Dear

My name is Lisa Babb, and I am working on my Master’s Degree at the University of Dayton. I have been teaching for six years, and am in the process of writing my thesis under the direction of Dr. Fran Landers and Dr. Roberta Weaver. My thesis is associated with a grant that is being administered by the Educational Administration and Special Education programs at UD. The purpose of the grant is to address the components in the principal licensure program that might better prepare principals for their role relative to special education. Based upon the results of this grant, the educational administration program may be altered to better prepare principals for special education issues.

This survey specifically deals with inclusion. We would like to know what topics principals feel are most important to include in the educational administration program in order to better prepare principals to implement inclusion. We are asking for principals or vice principals or assistant principals to participate in this survey. We are in need of only one response per building. Completing the survey should take no longer than 10 minutes. Please return this survey in the enclosed stamped envelope by April 15, 1998.

Thank you for your time and your input on how to better prepare principals in the area of special education.

Lisa Babb
APPENDIX B
An Inclusive Education Survey
For Fulfillment of a Master’s Degree
University of Dayton

Demographics

1. Which of the following terms most clearly describes the organization of your building?
   Primary ____  Elementary ____  Middle ____  Jr. High ____  H.S. ____

2. What is the number of students in your building? _____

3. Please identify your position
   Principal _____  Vice Principal _____  Assistant Principal _____

4. Do you have an inclusive education program in your building?
   Yes _____  No _____

5. May we please have the name of your school in order to follow- up on responses?
   ______________________________________
Inclusive Education Survey

The statements below are necessary elements of an inclusive school. Though each ingredient is important, some may be more important than others. In this light, please review each statement and rank order the top three elements that should be included in a principal training program in order to assure that principals are effectively prepared to implement inclusion.

Rank your top three elements from the list above by writing the letter of the statement next to its order of importance.

1. _______  2. _______  3. _______

A. The school’s philosophy needs to state that each child belongs in the classroom he or she would otherwise attend if not disabled rather than clustering children who have disabilities into special groups, classrooms, or schools.

B. The instructional program needs to be individualized for all children whether or not they have a disability. The program must provide the resources so children needs can explore or discover their own interests. Services are child specific, not label specific.

C. The school must be fully committed to the maintenance of a caring community that fosters mutual respect and support among staff, parents, and students. These groups should believe that children without disabilities can benefit from interactions with children with disabilities and children with disabilities can benefit from interactions with children without disabilities.

D. Regular education and special education staff should integrate their efforts and resources so that they work together as integral parts of a unified team rather than being isolated in separate rooms or departments with separate supervisors and budgets.

E. The administrative staff should create a work climate in which staff are supported as they provide assistance to each other instead of teachers’ being intimidated by the perception that if they seek peer collaboration in working with students, they are less than competent.

F. Full participation in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities of children who have disabilities should be encouraged by the school.

G. The school needs to be prepared to alter support systems for students as their needs change through the school year so that they can experience successes, and feel a sense of belonging.

H. School personnel need to put forth the necessary effort to assure that parents of children who have disabilities feel an important part of the school community.

I. Children who have disabilities should be provided the opportunity to be involved in the total school curriculum. This would allow them to share curricular experiences with their classmates.
J. Children who have disabilities should be included in the same testing and evaluation activities as their classmates without disabilities.

II. Given your rankings in item I, which of the following topics and strategies should be focused on in a principal's licensure program?

IIa. **Most important:** Write below the letters which correspond to the three topics/activities you feel are most important to include in a principal’s training program.

1. _______ 2. _______ 3. _______

IIb. **Least important:** Write below the letters which correspond to the three topics/activities you feel are least important to include in the principal's training program.

1. _______ 2. _______ 3. _______

**TOPICS/ACTIVITIES**
A. Current special education issues and concerns
B. The mission of the school as it relates to special education
C. Federal and state regulations governing special education practices
D. Least Restrictive Environment: related attitudes and values
E. Procedures for identifying students with special needs

F. Negotiating funding and resource allocations
G. Parent Communication: services available
H. Evaluation of the teachers of students with special needs
I. Curricular modifications and intervention practices
J. Problem solving techniques and practices

K. Intensive training in crisis management
L. Open discussion of issues requiring critical inquiry and reflective practices
M. Exercises designed to gain an understanding of how to facilitate change among staff, parents, students, and community
N. Effective facilitation techniques that encourage life-long self-growth and communication among staff.
O. Active participation in the assessment of instructional and disciplinary approaches used by special education teachers.
P. Hands-on field experience with a principal of an inclusive school.
Q. Multiple opportunities provided to practice self-direction by codesigning and teaching courses with university instructors.
R. Techniques for making sound decisions related to engaging in emerging educational practices.
S. Skills in identifying and networking with community support services for students with disabilities and their families.
T. Hands-on experience with a variety of diverse populations and the agencies that provide support.
APPENDIX C
CHARTED SURVEY DATA
Elementary Respondents [n=33]: Ranking of Top Three Elements

Elementary Respondents [n=33]: Least Important Topics/Strategies

Elementary Respondents [n=29]: Least Important Topics/Strategies
401-599 Population Respondents [n=19]: Ranking of Top Three Elements

Survey Items
Table 13

401-599 Population Respondents [n=19]: Most Important Topics/Strategies

Survey Items
Table 14

401-599 Population Respondents [n=16]: Least Important Topics/Strategies

Survey Items
Table 15
600+ Population Respondents [n=12]: Ranking of Top Three Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Items</th>
<th>Frequency of Responses</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>C</td>
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Table 16

600+ Population Respondents [n=12]: Most Important Topics/Strategies

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<tr>
<th>Survey Items</th>
<th>Frequency of Responses</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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Table 17

600+ Population Respondents [n=12]: Least Important Topics/Strategies

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Table 18
Inclusive Respondents [n=52]: Ranking of Top Three Elements

Inclusive Respondents [n=52]: Most Important Topics/Strategies

Inclusive Respondents [n=47]: Least Important Topics/Strategies
Non-Inclusive Respondents [n=4]: Ranking of Top Three Elements

Non-Inclusive Respondents [n=4]: Most Important Topics/Strategies

Non-Inclusive Respondents [n=4]: Least Important Topics/Strategies
References


