


2015

# Perceived Self-Efficacy of Secondary General Education Teachers in the Inclusion Classroom

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*Walden University*

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Pamela Sime-Cummins

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Walden University  
2015

Abstract

Perceived Self-Efficacy of Secondary General Education Teachers in the Inclusion

Classroom

by

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MA, Gratz College, 2002

BS, Kutztown University, 1999

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

June 2015

## Abstract

Teacher self-efficacy (TSE) has been linked to the academic success of students. This association has been found in contexts where teachers have received training relevant to working with the student population being served. In the suburban Pennsylvania school district targeted in this study, there was little district-sponsored professional development (PD) available to general education teachers regarding strategies for teaching students with disabilities in the inclusion setting. The purpose of this quasi-experimental study was to determine whether a difference exists in perceived TSE when instructing in the inclusion setting compared with the traditional setting, and whether an association exists linking prior experience and organizational support in the form of PD with TSE.

Bandura's social cognitive theory framed this study. A sample of 99 secondary general education teachers completed a 3-part online survey including the TSES and TSES-Learning Disabilities (LD) scales measuring self-efficacy in the traditional and inclusion settings, and demographic questions that served as potential predictors of self-efficacy. Correlated *t* tests and partial correlations were used to test for differences in perceived TSE across the inclusion and traditional settings and to test whether demographic factors were associated with TSE. Teachers perceived themselves as less efficacious in the inclusion setting when compared to instructing general education students in a traditional classroom, and setting-specific training was the greatest predictor of TSE. An inclusion PD program was created focusing on strategies for teaching students with disabilities in the inclusion setting. This endeavor may advance positive social change by increasing teacher self-efficacy and ultimately student achievement.

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## Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Jeff, for his support throughout all of my years of schooling and for picking up the slack while I worked to achieve my goal. Jeff, you have no idea how much your support has meant to me over the years. It is also dedicated to my daughter, Jessica, as proof that when you dream it, through hard work and perseverance, you can achieve it. I love both of you more than you will ever know. This is also dedicated to my girls: Sherry Dulsky, Eileen Larkin, Jess Bishof, and Jess Weaver for providing me with many fun distractions when I really needed them in order to maintain my sanity. Finally, this is dedicated to my mother, Joann Hutchison, and my friends, specifically Michelle Myers and Jess Bishof, for convincing me that I can finish this paper even when I felt like giving up.

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## Section 1: The Problem

### **Introduction**

The responsibilities of general education teachers in school districts throughout the United States have recently transitioned from teaching a relatively homogeneous student population with regard to social and academic skills to teaching an increasingly diverse population in which lessons must be differentiated to meet all students' needs. Before passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), students with disabilities were often taught in schools that served students with physical disabilities or in self-contained classrooms within the public schools ("IDEA—the Individuals With Disabilities," 2012). The responsibility of educating these students was delegated to the special education teachers who were trained in the skills and strategies to best meet their needs. Today, students with disabilities receive instruction in general education inclusion classrooms with their nondisabled peers. Teaching students with disabilities (special needs) is now the responsibility of the general education teacher who may or may not possess the skills needed to educate all students successfully.

General education teachers are responsible for the socialization and academics of all students in the inclusion classroom. General education students benefit from inclusion by gaining an increased understanding of students with disabilities. Students with disabilities benefit from inclusion due to an increased opportunity to interact socially with general education students. According to Schoger (2006), students with disabilities in the inclusion classroom improve their communication skills, learn to initiate social interactions, and identify their general education peers as friends.

Inclusion for all students has an academic benefit. According to Waldron and Cole (2000), math and reading skills increase for general education students in the inclusion classroom; however, that increase is not statistically significant. Little research examines the benefit of inclusion in science and social studies.

Educating students in the inclusion classroom requires special skills that many teachers believe they do not possess (Cullen, Gregory, & Noto 2010). This lack of understanding could be attributed to teacher preparation or professional development (PD) underpreparing teachers for the inclusion classroom. University leaders began to understand the importance of specialized training in inclusion for preservice teachers since No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was passed and adopted in school districts (Cooper, Kurtts, Baber, & Vallecorsa, 2008; Forlin & Chambers, 2011; No Child Left Behind, 2009). On September 22, 2007, an addition to the Pennsylvania School Code required all teacher certification candidates as of January 1, 2011, to complete at least nine credits regarding the adaptations and accommodations for students with disabilities in an inclusion classroom. These credits can be completed at the undergraduate or graduate level (Education, n.d.); however, before 2011, no such requirement existed. As a result of this state mandate, most certified teachers must rely on PD to gain the knowledge necessary to teach successfully in the inclusion classroom.

Certified teachers seeking instructional knowledge specific to the inclusion classroom beyond the training received in teacher preparation courses and/or PD are likely to attain new knowledge if teachers are self-efficacious. According to Bandura (1997), knowledge and skills are essential to self-efficacy development and play a role in



what teachers choose or choose not to do. Teacher self-efficacy (TSE) effects student achievement by influencing teachers' attitudes toward inclusion. Kosko and Wilkins (2009) affirmed that "teachers who had higher degrees of self-efficacy were more open to new ideas, more actively engaged in planning, less likely to be critical of students, and less likely to refer students to special education" (p. 2). Further, Goddard, Hoy, and Hoy (2000) found that as TSE increases, student math and literacy scores increase. The importance of teachers' self-efficacy cannot be overstated. Lack of teachers' self-efficacy may negatively impact attitudes toward students, resulting in low student achievement. This notion includes all students regardless of their needs.

### **Definition of the Problem**

Secondary general education teachers in a suburban school district in Eastern Pennsylvania are certified in subject area content and teach inclusion and general education classrooms. Their educational preparation and teaching experiences have resulted in a difference in teachers' perceived self-efficacy when educating students with disabilities in an inclusion classroom. Students' academic success and socialization skill growth depend on teachers' self-efficacy (Carter & Hughes, 2006; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Students with disabilities in an inclusion classroom may encounter negative experiences due to a perceived lack of teachers' self-efficacy. Teachers who do not believe they are competent to teach students with disabilities, are less likely to be motivated to assist students who encounter learning problems. In addition,, teachers may not persevere when faced with repeated failure to help students learn (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2006).

TSE has been empirically linked to the academic success of students. TSE is related to student achievement outcomes, motivation, and student self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Further, teachers who are efficacious are less critical of students and spend more time with struggling students. They are also more resilient in the face of obstacles, and they are more open to experimenting with new methods or ideas that are useful in the classroom. These traits are especially important in the inclusion classroom where the student population is academically diverse.

Carter and Hughes (2006) affirmed that general education teachers understand there is a social benefit to inclusion for students with disabilities. According to Schoger (2006), students with disabilities in the inclusion classroom improved their communication skills, learned to initiate social interactions, and identified their general education peers as friends. Communication skills, social interactions, and peer relationships are critical for students to function in society. In addition, inclusion academically benefits students with disabilities. Dessemontet, Bless, and Morin (2008) found an increase in literacy skills among disabled students in an inclusion classroom when compared with students with disabilities in a self-contained noninclusion classroom. Many teachers understand the benefits to inclusion, but many also have reservations (Cullen, et al., 2010). Instructing students with disabilities in the inclusion classroom requires special skills that many teachers believe they do not possess (2010). According to Casale-Giannola, “[teachers] do not understand special education classifications and issues and lack knowledge of effective strategies for supporting inclusion students” (2011, p. 22). Further, Carter and Hughes (2006) asserted that this

lack of knowledge decreases TSE and makes teacher more hesitant to teach inclusion classes.

Peebles and Mendaglio (2014) affirmed that teachers with prior experience in the inclusion setting perceive themselves as more efficacious than teachers without prior experience. Further, they found that regardless of prior experience, both groups of teachers perceived themselves as more efficacious after they participated in a course on teaching in the inclusion setting and had a field experience.

Unfortunately, the PD and training regarding inclusion available to teachers may be insufficient. Simon and Black (2011) asserted that the amount of time and the intensity of PD offered to teachers of inclusion are lacking. They concluded that on average, teachers spend only eight hours on PD for inclusion in a three-year period. Further, Kosko and Wilkins (2009) found that most of the PD received is inadequate. PD should focus on specific teaching strategies, should be conducted often, and should be developed with input from teachers. This practice generally does not occur. Instead, PD takes the form of a “once and done”-type workshop with little if any follow-up and even less teacher input. Because of this lack of specialized training, teachers do not have the knowledge they need to be confident to teach in an inclusion classroom.

Kosko and Wilkins (2009) affirmed that when teachers implement strategies received from PD pertaining to inclusion, they are twice as likely to believe they are efficacious when adapting instruction for students with disabilities. Further, they found that a correlation exists between PD and TSE: When PD regarding inclusion increases, TSE increases.

## **Rationale**

### **Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level**

The district in which this study occurred had a student enrollment of 20,432 in the 2010–2011 school year. Of those students, 2,749 had a documented learning disability and an Individual Education Program (IEP) (“National Center for Education,” 2012), which represents slightly more than 13% of the student population. These students, as well as those with other health impairment (OHI) disabilities, may be taught in the inclusion. Examples of disabilities that are classified as (OHI) under IDEA include attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), Tourette’s syndrome, Prader-Willi syndrome, blindness, and deafness (“IDEA—the Individuals With Disabilities Act,” 2012). Classroom accommodations must be made for all students with a disability by the general education teacher regardless of whether these disabilities are classified as learning disabilities or other health impairments (Shaw & Madaus, 2008).

General education teachers are responsible for all students’ academic progress and preparation for Pennsylvania State’s annual assessment in tested content areas. Secondary students in the district are mandated by the state to complete the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) standardized test in Grades 7, 8, and 11. Students with disabilities scored lower than their nondisabled peers on the state standardized tests for the 2010, 2011, and 2012 school years. General education students consistently scored proficient or higher on the PSSA when compared with students with disabilities who scored proficient or higher (Table 1).

Table 1

*Percentage Difference in PSSA Scores Between General Education Students and Students With Disabilities*

Grade	2012		2011		2010		Average 2010–2012	
	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading	Math	Reading
7	22.4	22.6	29.9	29.6	30.3	36	27.5	29.4
8	31.3	20	32.5	22.8	31.6	24.4	31.8	22.4
11	44	33	42.9	45.7	38.7	36.1	41.9	38.3

*Source:* (“2010–2012 PSSA & AYP Results,” 2014)

Between the years of 2010 and 2012, seventh-grade general education students, who scored proficient or above in math, averaged 27.5% higher than students with disabilities who scored proficient or above. Reading scores were similar for the same population of students. Scores for general education students who scored proficient or above were 29.4% higher than for students with disabilities. This trend continued in both eighth-grade and eleventh-grade. Further, the graduation rates of general education students differ from those of students with disabilities: A higher percentage of general education students graduated compared with students with disabilities (see Table 2).

Table 2

*Graduation Rates 2010–2012*

Year	General Education Students	Students With Disabilities
2012	97%	92%
2011	98%	92%
2010	98%	97%

*Source:* (“2010–2012 PSSA & AYP Results,” 2014)

Poor academic performance and graduation rates are compounded by general education teachers’ lack of knowledge and/or experience in teaching students with

disabilities. In 2014, there were four hundred seventy two secondary teachers employed in the target school district in which this study took place. Most of those teachers currently teach or have taught in the inclusion classroom and have experienced a dramatic change in their classroom responsibilities preparation, planning, and execution of instruction (Seniority List, 2014).

In general education classrooms, teachers plan and use a myriad of instructional strategies (direct instruction, cooperative learning, scaffolding, and hands on) to reach their students. Regardless of the strategies or delivery method used, most students complete the same assignments during the same period. In inclusion classrooms teachers must teach and adapt instruction regardless of reading levels, cognitive abilities, content, and time constraints (Gotshall & Stefanou, 2011). Historically, teacher planning for general education was framed by instructing the group rather than the individual. In inclusion classrooms, the opposite mindset is evident: The individual is central rather than the group (Gotshall & Stefanou, 2011). Teachers are expected to use student IEPs in planning and making adaptations or modifications that promote academic growth. In the past, general education teachers worked autonomously, making their own decisions, generally planned lessons in isolation, and were the sole authority in the classroom. In an inclusion setting, teachers work collaboratively, making decisions and planning lessons in conjunction with another teacher, and sharing authority (Casale-Giannola, 2012; Gotshall & Stefanou, 2011). Inclusion teachers must communicate and plan with the special education teacher and may have a teacher's aide or another teacher in the classroom (Winzer, 1998). In addition, inclusion teachers who desire to be effective in the inclusion

setting may not realize their roles and responsibilities (Casale-Giannola, 2012; Gotshall & Stefanou, 2011). At this time, no policy is in place that lists the responsibilities of inclusion teachers in the target district, leaving these teachers in a predicament.

Teaching students with disabilities requires specialized knowledge in their academic needs as outlined by their IEPs. As previously stated, in 2011 Pennsylvania changed their teacher certification to require all general education teachers to enroll and complete classes in special education that teach adaptations and accommodations for students with disabilities in an inclusion classroom (*You and Your Certificate*, 2013). According to Bocala, Morgan, Mundry, and Mello (2010), “with more than half of children with disabilities being educated in the general education classroom, and with federal education law requiring improved learning outcomes for these students, preparing general education teachers to work effectively with all students is critical” (p. 1). Although this decision will be beneficial for students with recently graduated teachers, the problem still exists for teachers who received their certification prior to 2011.

In the target school district 425 of the 472 secondary teachers received their certification before 2011. Because these teachers may not have had the benefit of graduate or undergraduate classes in inclusion at the university level, PD was provided to augment teachers’ knowledge of the inclusion classroom. Unfortunately, attendance was and is limited to special education staff and paraprofessionals and only a few were open to the general education inclusion teacher. From June 28, 2010, to April 1, 2014, there were 1,878 total workshops with 179 workshops geared toward working in the inclusion classroom. Of those workshops, 110 workshops were open to only paraprofessionals, 63

were open to only special education teachers, and six were open to only general education teachers. Of those six workshops, only general education teachers who were working with a coteacher in their classroom were invited to attend. Further, those six workshops focused on how to work with a coteacher and not on the skills and strategies the general education teacher needs to teach in an inclusion classroom (PD Place-Professional Development, 2012). As a result of the lack of PD experiences, teachers do not have the needed training in order to perceive themselves as efficacious (Gotshall & Stefanou, 2011).

### **Evidence of the Problem From the Professional Literature**

According to Scull and Winkler (2011), between 1976 and 2001 the number of students diagnosed with some type of disability has increased exponentially. This increase led to more inclusion in general education classrooms and the need for well-trained and knowledgeable teachers who are not only willing but skillful in teaching students with disabilities. This training and knowledge are best provided in coursework and/or PD and results in more efficacious teachers (Scull & Winkler, 2011). In contrast, general education teachers may perceive themselves as less efficacious when they feel underprepared to teach students in their inclusion classes because of a lack of university preparation and/or PD (Hodge et al., 2009). Harvey, Yssel, Bauserman, and Merbler (2010) affirmed that universities are now offering some introductory courses in special education to pre-service teachers to help them meet student diversity needs in the inclusion classroom. However, field experiences in the inclusive setting, co-teaching models and collaborative planning in the university setting are lacking.



When university training is insufficient in preparing inclusion teachers, PD in inclusion is essential; however, PD regarding the skills needed to successfully teach this population has not kept pace with the increased number of students with disabilities taught in the general education classroom (Horne & Timmon, 2009). Teachers have expressed a concern with the amount of inclusion PD that is offered. When teachers attend eight hours of PD in a three-year-period, they are twice as likely to feel efficacious when adapting instruction for this student population (Kosko & Wilkins, 2009). Unfortunately this is not occurring at the research site (“PD Place- Professional Development,” 2012). The importance of PD cannot be understated. According to Worrell (2008)

A general educator cannot be expected to be successful at teaching in an inclusive classroom without a solid foundation of knowledge about the students’ disabilities, educational needs, accommodations, modifications, and the laws that affect both the children with disabilities and the teacher.  
(p. 45)

If general education teachers do not possess the needed skills and strategies, a decreased perception of self-efficacy may create negative attitudes towards inclusion by them; thus, creating barriers to successful inclusion (Glazzard, 2011).

The purpose of this study is two-fold. First, it is to investigate the difference in general education teachers’ perceived self-efficacy when teaching students with learning disabilities in an inclusion classroom when compared to teaching general education students in a traditional classroom. Second, it is to investigate if there is an association

linking prior experience and organizational support in the form of PD with general education teachers' perceptions of their ability to instruct disabled students in the inclusion classroom.

### **Definitions**

*Perceived self-efficacy:* Belief in one's capabilities to attain a desired outcome through his or her course of action. These beliefs influence goal setting, how one goes about attaining a goal, motivation, and resiliency when faced with obstacles (Bandura, 1997).

*Inclusion:* The placement of special needs students into the general education classroom with the use of an individualized education program (IEP). The IEP outlines goals for these students to work towards as well as accommodations and modifications that must be made to the curriculum. The purpose of these accommodations and modifications is to enhance the likelihood of success in the attainment of those goals and the understanding of the curriculum (National Center for Education, 2012).

*Professional development:* Multifaceted way in which educators increase their knowledge base in order to be more successful practitioners. This learning can take place in a formal setting such as a workshop or more informal settings as in group discussions with peers (Desimone, 2011).

### **Significance**

The goal of this project study was to investigate if there was a significant difference in teacher perceived self-efficacy in the inclusion classroom when compared to the general education classroom. TSE and achievement of special needs students have

been empirically linked (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Teachers who feel efficacious in an inclusion classroom are more likely to try new methods of instruction that ultimately could lead to higher student achievement (Whitely, 2010). Furthermore, empirical evidence suggests that academic achievement increases as teacher self-efficacy increases (Whitely, 2010). Studying the issue of teacher self-efficacy was an important first step in improving the academic achievement of students with disabilities in the inclusion classroom.

Understanding teacher self-efficacy is especially important at the research site. Firstly, teachers want their students to perform well academically. Secondly, in light of NCLB and the high stakes testing that is associated with student performance, there needs to be improvement for those supplying academic support for this population (No Child Left Behind, 2009). Lastly, some of the secondary schools in the district are not making adequate yearly progress (AYP) due to the test scores of the special education population, and, thus, are subject to serious sanctions if the academic achievement of these students does not increase (2010-2012 PSSA & AYP results, 2014).

Academic performance on the PSSA standardized tests is critical the state's requirement of AYP. Adequate yearly progress is based on minimum requirements set by the state using three criteria. First, school attendance or graduation rate requires that the average student attend school for at least 90% of the days in which school is in session. Second, academic performance is determined by the percentage of students who score proficient and above on state standardized tests. The final criterion, test participation, requires that at least 95% of all students in the school must complete the state tests. A

portion (37.5%) of the secondary schools in the district did not make adequate yearly progress (AYP) and were placed on academic warning in 2012, because of the lower PSSA scores received by students with IEPs. If a school is on academic warning, it is permitted one year to remedy the problem with no sanctions imposed against the school. In the second year if the school does not make AYP again, it is identified as Needs Improvement I. The district devises an improvement plan which must be approved by the state and then implemented. Furthermore, students are offered the option of remaining at that school or moving to another school within the district that is making AYP. If a school does not make AYP for a third year, they change to Needs Improvement II status. The district must offer and pay for supplemental education services, such as, after school tutoring and mentoring programs. Further, districts must continue to offer students the opportunity to change schools if they so desire. If AYP is not attained at the completion of the fourth year, they are considered in Corrective Action II status. Technical assistance from the state will be used to rewrite curriculum that is aligned with the state standards and the content of the PSSAs. Additionally, leadership may be replaced. If a school does not make AYP for the fifth consecutive year, the school will be in Corrective Action II. The school will be closed, privatized or taken over by the state for restructuring. In the case of privatization or take over, most of the staff will be replaced (No Child Left Behind, 2009). The results of this study may lead to better trained and knowledgeable inclusion teachers, and, in turn, better student academic performance and higher graduation rates. With such high stakes, teachers must do all that they can to be sure that

students in inclusion classes are performing at an acceptable academic level to pass state requirements.

### **Guiding/Research Question**

Teachers' self-efficacy is necessary for successful performance in the classroom. There is evidence to suggest that teacher preparation, coursework and/or PD affects teacher self-efficacy, which, in turn, affects student achievement. This premise is true regardless of the classroom setting (general education or inclusion classroom) or student population (students with and without disabilities). The recent influx of students with disabilities included in the general education classroom might affect teachers' perception of self-efficacy. The following research question will address teacher self-efficacy in inclusion and general education classrooms:

1. Is there a difference in perceived teacher self-efficacy with regard to instructing special needs students in an inclusion classroom when compared to instructing general education students in a general academic classroom?

$H_{01}$ : There is no difference in perceived teacher self-efficacy with regard to instructing special needs students in an inclusion classroom when compared to instructing general education students in a general academic classroom.

$H_{a1}$ : There is a difference in perceived teacher self-efficacy with regard to instructing special needs students in an inclusion classroom when compared with instructing general education students in a general academic classroom

Past research on the topic of TSE shows that there are many factors that determine how efficacious teachers perceive themselves to be. The degree to which factors such as

prior experience as well as organizational support in the form of PD will be asked in the second question:

2. Is there an association linking prior experience and organizational support in the form of PD with general education teachers' perceptions of their ability to instruct disabled students in the inclusion classroom?

*H<sub>02</sub>*: There is no association linking prior experience and organizational support in the form of PD with general education teachers' perceptions of their ability to instruct disabled students in the inclusion classroom.

*H<sub>a2</sub>*: There is an association linking prior experience and organizational support in the form of PD with general education teachers' perceptions of their ability to instruct disabled students in the inclusion classroom.

A quantitative design was used to determine if there was a difference in general education teachers' perception of self-efficacy in the general education classroom when compared to the inclusion classroom. Additional factors that contribute to teacher self-efficacy were examined and recommendations were made.

### **Review of the Literature**

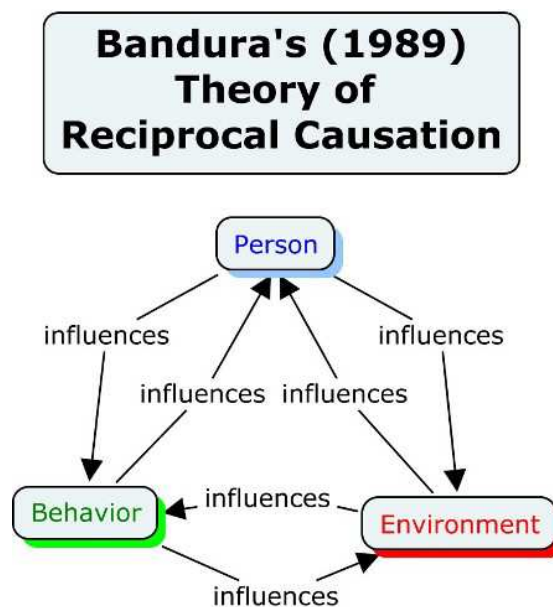
General education teachers have taken on new roles in their classrooms, because of the influx of students with disabilities. With the increase in inclusion, teachers face new challenges that they may or may not be equipped to handle. Teachers may feel unsure of themselves which could lead to a decrease in self-efficacy and subsequently in student achievement.

To address the problem in the study, the literature was “drawn primarily from recent and seminal articles published in acceptable peer-reviewed journals or sound academic journals and texts” (Walden University, n.d., p. 2). Older literature was used when recent sources (past 5 years) could not be found. Saturation for each topic was reached when the same sources became evident in the literature search. Online databases Education Research Complete, JSTOR, SAGE Journals Online, Google Scholar, and EBSCOhost to gather data from scholarly journals; electronic and on-line-only articles; and books. Search terms included: *self-efficacy, professional development, academic achievement, social development, inclusion, general education, special needs, and teacher preparation.*

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this study is Bandura’s social cognitive theory (1982), a theory of human agency, stated as “an individual’s ability to make choices and to transform those choices into desired outcomes” (p. 1182). This theory of human agency posits that people self-organize, reflect and regulate, and are proactive. They do not just react to external stimuli, nor do they react solely to an internal drive. Instead, many forces come into play that effect how one adapts to a changing environment and the choices that they make in response to that change. These forces are outlined in triadic reciprocal causation theory, which is a part of Bandura’s social cognitive theory. In triadic reciprocal causation, adapting to change takes place in a social context and a dynamic relationship exists among behavioral, cognitive and personal, and environmental factors. Environmental factors are those that are external to a person. For example, the

physical environment is an environmental factor as is social interactions with others, because they involve elements outside the individual. Behavioral factors refer to how an individual acts. Cognitive and personal factors include how people think, their beliefs, genetic make-up, and personality (Bandura, 1997). Environmental and behavioral factors influence cognitive factors and vice versa. Likewise, environmental and cognitive factors can influence the environment and so forth. (see Figure 1).



*Figure 1. Bandura's Theory of Reciprocal Causation, n.d.*

Triadic reciprocal causation can be illustrated in a classroom scenario. A teacher asks students to answer a question in class. One student raises his hand to answer but the answer is incorrect. Classmates chastise the student who answered the question incorrectly. The chastised student is then hesitant to respond to the question in class. In this case, the environmental factor, the teacher, asked the student to reflect on the question. The reflection is a cognitive factor that prompted the student to raise his hand, a



behavioral factor. As a result of answering the question incorrectly, the student was chastised by his classmates, an environmental factor. The student is hesitant to offer a response to a question for fear of answering incorrectly, a cognitive factor. All of these factors work together through a series of forethought and consequences, one influencing the other, to predict future behavior. Teachers use forethought because they “anticipate the likely consequences of their prospective actions, they set goals for themselves, and they otherwise plan courses of action that are likely to produce desired outcomes” (Bandura, 1989, p. 39). Once they have attained a plan of action, they ponder the consequences of their actions to determine if the desired outcomes were achieved. Through reflection of these consequences, cause and effect, self-efficacy is determined (Bandura, 1997).

**Perceived self-efficacy.** Perceived self-efficacy is not a belief in one’s capabilities for a fixed body of knowledge in a given circumstance, but rather a dynamic premise in which one has confidence to make a decision given a new situation (Bandura, 1982). According to Bandura “perceived self-efficacy is concerned with judgments of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with perspective situations” (p. 122). Perceived self-efficacy becomes evident when a teacher reflects on both the possible outcomes for a decision, as well as, the result of the action that was selected. For example, a teacher who feels efficacious is more likely to believe their actions will have a positive effect on student performance. When teachers believe that their actions can influence student achievement, new methods of teaching are explored that may prove

more effective for students (Whitely, 2010). Reflection is necessitated to determine whether those methods were successful.

Self-efficacy is a driving force behind cognitive development. Bandura (1993) surmised that cognitive processes were determined, in part, by self-efficacy. A function of cognition is prediction and control of events in people's lives. People with high self-efficacy visualize favorable outcomes in anticipatory scenarios which they rehearse as forethought. Conversely, people with low self-efficacy visualize failure when rehearsing scenarios. When people visualize, they are creating a symbolic representation of possible events that have not occurred. The ability to create these representations is of critical importance to teachers while they are planning instruction. According to Gibbs (2003), "how teachers intend to teach depends, in part, on their capacity for symbolic representation. Symbolic representation creates internal representations of experience, generates innovative and multiple solutions, and characterizes possible consequences (behavioral, cognitive, or emotional) of applying these solutions" (p. 3). Teachers imagine possible outcomes to best plan for instruction. For example, teachers in an inclusion classroom may want to share a newspaper article with the class; however, the reading levels of the class may be vastly different. A teacher with low self-efficacy may visualize a scenario where special needs students will have too much difficulty reading the content and will decide to forego the article altogether. An efficacious teacher might realize possible obstacles that need to be overcome while planning the lesson, and might visualize different scenarios with positive outcomes and select instructional strategies for teaching the information in the article based on those positive outcome beliefs.

Bandura (1997) affirmed that people who are highly efficacious set higher goals and will persevere to overcome obstacles more than people who are less efficacious. According to Lunenburg (2011), there is a relationship between goal setting and performance. Performance increases through goals that are specific, difficult, and attainable. Further, more difficult goals lead to greater focus, higher effort towards achieving the goal and increased persistence towards attaining the goal (2011). Teachers set goals based on their expectations of how they can affect student achievement. According Shaughnessy, "Teachers who set goals, who persist, who try another strategy when one approach is found wanting, teachers who have a high sense of efficacy and act on it are more likely to have students who learn" (2004, p. 156). For example, an efficacious teacher in the inclusion classroom might set a goal that all students in the class will write a paragraph that includes a thesis statement, supporting facts, and a concluding statement. This teacher may plan different activities that will lead the students towards attaining that goal. If one activity does not work, the efficacious teacher will try another, and then another until all students achieve the goal set by the teacher. A teacher who is not efficacious might set a goal that only 75% of the students will achieve the same writing goal and will only try a few strategies. Teachers with low perceptions of efficacy do not fully believe they are capable to affect change in their students, therefore, the goals they set are lower and they are inclined to surrender on the goals more easily.

Bandura (1977) outlined four sources of efficacy which are "mastery, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and psychological state" (p. 195). Mastery occurs when the belief of past successes lead to future successes. Alternatively if past efforts have

been unsuccessful, the individual believes that future attempts will be unsuccessful. For example, if a 7<sup>th</sup> grade teacher decided to use a class pet to teach socialization skills to an autistic student and those skills increased due to the introduction of the pet, the teacher may perceive himself/herself as efficacious at teaching socialization skills. That increased perception of efficacy will continue regardless of the subsequent skill to be taught. Alternately, if students are frightened of animals and withdraw, teachers may not perceive themselves as efficacious in teaching social skills and may be hesitant to try a different method.

According to Bandura (1977), vicarious experience is a source of self-efficacy. Teachers who observe the successful implementation of a practice by their peers may feel more efficacious and feel that they too will have success implementing the practice. For example, a teacher of inclusion may group students heterogeneously when arranging the classroom seating so that students of all abilities have direct contact with one another. If another teacher sees that this type of grouping is successful, he or she may feel confident to implement that practice as well and expect the same results.

Verbal persuasion, the third source of self-efficacy, comes from encouragement by a trusted outside source (Bandura, 1997). According to Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2006), teachers who receive positive feedback about their performance and prospects of success by administrators, their peers, and parents tend to feel more efficacious. This finding was primarily true for novice teachers within their first year of teaching. Interestingly, the authors believed that teachers with many years of experience are less effected by verbal persuasion, because they are used to working in isolation and do not

receive a lot of direct input. It is thought that more experienced teachers' efficacy beliefs are based on Bandura's other three sources: mastery, vicarious experience, and psychological state. Finally, the fourth source of self-efficacy is psychological state. If teachers feel less anxious about performing a task, efficacy increases (Bandura, 1977). Teachers' self-efficacy develops as a result of the four sources of self-efficacy working in conjunction with one another.

**Teacher self-efficacy.** TSE plays a pivotal role in teachers' planning and instruction. According to Bandura (1993), "teachers who perceive themselves efficacious will spend more time on student learning, support students in their goals and reinforce intrinsic motivation" (p. 140). For example, efficacious teachers are more persistent when facing obstacles, such as, the lack of student understanding (Bandura, 1997). When students have difficulties with the subject matter, an efficacious teacher will present the lesson in different ways to find the best method to teach the concept. They also spend more time on the concept being taught to ensure student learning since some students take longer than others to fully grasp a concept. This practice is especially true in the inclusion classroom where individual student goals are written into the IEP.

Efficacious teachers allow for student autonomy in the classroom along with trying numerous strategies to find the one that works (Silverman & Davis, 2009). Teachers who are not efficacious fear that if they give students choices, they will lose control of their ability to manage the classroom. Teachers who are efficacious allow for more student choice, because they believe in their ability to handle the classroom (McCombs, 2014). Students who have teachers who support student autonomy in the

classroom have greater intrinsic motivation than students who have teachers who are more controlling (Reeve, 2009). According to McClintic-Gilbert, Henderlong Corpus, Wormington, and Haimovitz (2013) students who are intrinsically motivated engage in learning strategies that foster a deeper understanding of the material; whereas, students who are extrinsically motivated tend to use strategies that lead to superficial learning. For example, intrinsically motivated students might study their notes every day, take notes on the chapter, make flashcards, and do their own research to further their understanding of a topic. In contrast, extrinsically motivated students will complete a teacher provided study guide the day before the test. By allowing students more autonomy, efficacious teachers provide students with the intrinsic motivation needed for more comprehensive learning. TSE is essential to the academic achievement of all students regardless of the educational setting. According to Woolfson and Brady (2009),

If students are to experience the same positive aspects of education in inclusive settings as typically developing learners, they need to be taught by a staff who believe they can produce positive educational outcomes for this group and who view themselves as capable of providing an effective instructional environment to bring this about. (p. 222)

Further, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) found that “teacher self-efficacy has proved to be powerfully related to many meaningful educational outcomes, such as teachers’ persistence, enthusiasm, commitment and instructional behavior, as well as student outcomes such as achievement, and self-efficacy beliefs” (p. 783). When teachers’ expectations of their abilities to successfully instruct students are high, they tend to put

forth more effort in planning and preparation as well as in instructional delivery. When faced with challenges, such as, a lack of student understanding or behavior issues, these teachers are persistent in ensuring student success. The opposite is true for teachers who do not believe they can successfully instruct students. They tend to put in less effort, surrender easily, and fail to implement strategies that may be beneficial to students (Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 2006). If teachers do not feel efficacious, there may be no real incentive to positively influence the lives of their students. Conversely, teachers who are efficacious put forth more effort which subsequently benefits the students.

**Teacher self-efficacy and student achievement.** As previously stated, TSE may directly impact student achievement. Teacher self-efficacy can influence cognitive outcomes, learning, and motivation of students who may be considered difficult to teach (Bangs & Frost, 2012). The research by Bangs and Frost (2012) is important in light of the inclusion classroom setting, especially for teachers in their planning and instruction of students with disabilities. Guo, McDonald Connor, Yang, Roehring, and Morrison (2012) assessed teacher self-efficacy in conjunction with the literacy skills of students. They found that teacher self-efficacy had a greater impact on the literacy skills of students than both teacher qualifications and years of experience combined. Their research assessed the efficacy of teachers using a teacher-efficacy-scale questionnaire and observed the interactions that teachers had with students in the classroom. They found that teachers who were efficacious spent more time on academics with productive instructional time and less time moving from one activity to another. Additionally, efficacious teachers were aware of and responsive to students who were having difficulties with the content or

concept during instruction, provided verbal encouragement of students, and allowed for student autonomy. The opposite was true for classrooms in which the teachers perceived themselves as less efficacious. As part of the same study, Guo et al. (2012) found that students of efficacious teachers also had stronger phonological decoding skills, vocabulary skills, and passage comprehension than those who had less efficacious teachers.

In summary, perceived self-efficacy affects teacher's attitudes towards inclusion (Sharma, Forlin, Loreman, & Earle, 2006; Sharma, Loreman, & Forlin, 2012; Sharma, Moore, & Sonawane, 2009). Whitely (2010) affirmed that efficacious teachers with positive attitudes towards inclusion set high expectations for academic achievement for students with disabilities. Elliot (2008) asserted that efficacious teachers provided more varied and abundant opportunities for students to learn than did teachers who had negative attitudes towards inclusion. Overall, Elliot (2008) found that teachers with positive attitudes towards inclusion expected greater success from their students and gave all students in the class more opportunities to practice the skill being taught than teachers with negative attitudes. De Boer, Bosker, and van der Werf (2010) affirmed the notion that teacher expectations affect student achievement. Students who have teachers with high expectations outperform students whose teachers have lower expectations of student achievement. This notion may be a contributing factor in the lower test scores and graduation rates of students with disabilities in the target school district. If teachers do not perceive themselves as efficacious in the inclusion classroom, they may hold negative attitudes toward inclusion, which may have an effect on student achievement.



## **History of Inclusion**

In the United States, the education of students with disabilities has experienced a long, protracted evolution. Early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, students who were disabled were either home-schooled or funneled into special education classes with little or no contact with their general education peers (Crossley, n.d.). The verdict of *Brown v Board of Education* in 1954 set the stage for students with disabilities to be instructed in a general education setting. This court ruling was based on the premise that separating Blacks and Whites into different schools instituted a violation of the equal protection clause in the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution ("History of *Brown v Board*," n.d.). Because these groups were separated, their education was unequal. This ruling showed that separate is not equal and paved the way for disability advocates to encourage legislators to enact a law that would give the same protections for students with disabilities.

Congress passed Public Law 94-142, in 1975, which was subsequently re-authorized several times and has been amended to be known as The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). Under IDEA, it is required that students with disabilities must be educated in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Per the equal protection clause of the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment, students with disabilities must be taught in the general education classroom if they are capable of success with supports and adaptations in place ("IDEA—the Individuals with Disabilities," 2012). Due to this law, more students with disabilities are enrolled in what was formally the general education classroom.

Since the enactment of IDEA there has been an increase in the number of special needs students who attend public school and are included in the general education classroom (Digest of Education Statistic, 2011). In the 1976-1977 school year, students with disabilities made up 8.3% of the total school population. In 2009-2010, they made up 13.1% of the population. Furthermore, almost 60% of those students spent less than 21% of their time apart from the general education classroom and almost 21% spent less than 21% - 60% apart from the general education classroom (Digest of Education Statistic, 2011). For at least part of the day, 81% of students with disabilities are taught in an inclusion classroom. To ensure that these students were not just housed in these classrooms but were actually learning to the same degree as their nondisabled peers, certain benchmarks contained in the No Child Left Behind Act needed to be put in place.

In 2001, the Elementary and Secondary Education act was reauthorized as the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). NCLB impacted the classroom for students with disabilities. One of the provisions of NCLB requires all students in the United States must earn a score of proficient or above on state level standardized tests by the 2013–2014 school year, including students with disabilities. It was designed diminish the disparity of achievement between students with disabilities and their general education peers (No Child Left Behind, 2011). In 2005, a further change in NCLB redefined the least restrictive environment (LRE) in a sense. *Gaskin v the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* was filed on behalf of 280,000 students with disabilities, had 12 named defendants, and included 11 advocacy groups for students with disabilities. The goal of the lawsuit was to grant students with disabilities access to the general education

environment, if appropriate, and that the school district would provide educational resources to aid in the success of these students. The Gaskin lawsuit also sought to hold school districts responsible for implementing and monitoring IEPs. As a result of this class action lawsuit, LRE is now enforced for all cases of disability, not only the less severe cases. This lawsuit also outlined the way districts were monitored for compliance to this mandate and called for PD of general education teachers who would teach in an inclusion classroom (*Gaskin v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, 2005). The outcome of this lawsuit had an effect in Pennsylvania.

According to the Pennsylvania code for the least restrictive environment, teachers are required to be familiar with the services (speech and language support, occupational therapy, and transition services) that are available to students with disabilities as well as skills and strategies on how to best teach in an inclusion setting (Least Restrictive Environment [LRE], n.d.). Such services can be accessed through the county intermediate unit. Every county in Pennsylvania has an intermediate unit which is governed by members of the various school boards in the county. The goal of the intermediate unit is to ensure academic growth for all students by enabling them to access needed services either through employees of the unit or through community outreach (Untitled, n.d.). Furthermore, according to the code, district leaders must provide opportunities for PD and be knowledgeable of best practices based on research that can be used to support students in inclusion classroom settings (Least Restrictive Environment [LRE], n.d.).

According to Woolfolk, the same self-efficacy that increases teacher performance can increase student performance as well (as cited in Shaughnessy, 2004). In the

inclusion setting, teachers who provide opportunities for students for student mastery create daily routines so that students know what to expect, ensure that learning tasks are at the appropriate learning level of each student, and provide instructional support for student success. Furthermore, efficacious teachers in the inclusion classroom use verbal persuasion by giving feedback that focuses on effort rather than intelligence. Woolfolk also suggested that efficacious teachers provide inclusion students with vicarious experiences through modelling when demonstrating a task. These strategies become sources of student efficacy, which can increase academic performance. Caprara, Vecchione, Alessandri, Gerbino, and Barbaranell (2011) affirmed that efficacious students perform better academically than their nonefficacious peers. Furthermore, they found that students who are efficacious in junior high school continue to be efficacious throughout senior high school. Postsecondary coursework and PD are ways for teachers to learn how to implement Woolfolk's suggestions for teaching in an inclusion classroom.

### **Professional Development**

In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education completed a report entitled *A Nation at Risk*. This report compared the educational system of the United States with other countries as a response to questions regarding our competitiveness in a global economy. The report cautioned that the United States was losing its competitive edge. Among the recommendations of the commission was a call for more time to be used for PD of teachers and resources given to school leadership for the same (National Commission on Excellence, 1983).

Eleven years later, congress passed the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. The goal of this act was to reform learning and teaching based on research, building consensus, and making changes to the educational system that would ensure equal and rigorous educational opportunities for all students. Section 102 of the Goals Act specifically outlined the importance of professional development. It mandated that teachers must be provided ongoing PD to gain the skills necessary for the education of an ever increasing diverse population. Furthermore, it calls on states and school districts to establish partnerships with outside agencies when possible to support these programs and for emerging methods and technologies to be learned and implemented (Goals 2000: Educate America, 1994).

That same year, the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 was passed extolling the importance of PD. This law called for extensive teacher participation in the development of training programs to improve the teaching of the state standards of each subject area so that students can meet the performance standards. While not mandated, PD that included strategies to help students with special needs was deemed appropriate (The Improving America's School, 1994). It is clear that the United States government places a high value on professional development; however, the type of training that takes place is decided at the local level.

### **Implementation of PD**

The Gaskin Lawsuit and NCLB call for increased PD for teachers of inclusion. The National Council on Disability recommended the use of school wide or collaborative staff development for anyone who is directly involved in educating special needs students

in an inclusion setting (2008). The intent of a collaborative approach to PD is to increase TSE and subsequently to increase student achievement. Bruce and Flynn (2013) studied the effects of a collaborative PD program on teacher self-efficacy and student achievement in math. The participants in this study included all students in both general education and inclusion settings. This collaborative PD program included principals, and teachers of both special and general education. During collaboration, teachers determined the focus of the PD to make instructional decisions together. They also practiced what they learned during the PD in their own classes and to observe other teachers using the strategies that they gained from the development sessions. Bruce and Flynn (2013) observed that teachers who participated in the collaborative PD had greater self-efficacy and their students' had higher academic achievement and belief in themselves.

The tenets of collaborative PD coincide with Bandura's sources of self-efficacy (1977). Through practice teachers can achieve mastery and through observations teachers can take part in vicarious experience. While working with other teachers during collaboration, the opportunity exists for verbal persuasion or encouragement of peers. Also, the psychological state of teachers may be affected by collaborative PD since it allows teachers the opportunity to learn and then to practice new strategies with others. Because of this practice, they may have reduced anxiety when implementing those strategies in their classrooms. Bruce and Flynn (2013) found that teacher collaboration during PD does indeed increase TSE , resulting in positively impacted student achievement.

The increase in inclusion has outpaced the training that general education teachers receive (Sharma et al., 2006; Sharma et al., 2012; Sharma et al., 2009). According to Costley, “In many public schools, the general classroom teachers have little or no formal training on the specific needs of special education students . . . therefore general education teachers do not feel they can adequately provide what inclusion students need” (2013, p. 6) With a student population that is growing increasingly and diverse academically, it is imperative that teachers be trained in how to best educate all students regardless of ability. Without adequate training, teachers may perceive themselves as less efficacious and thus student achievement may suffer.

### **Implications**

This study has far-reaching implications especially for the teachers and students at the research site. A PD program was created that focuses on teaching in the inclusion classroom, specifically student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. Once teachers gain a knowledge base regarding inclusion and the skills and strategies needed to teach a diverse student population (Grskovic & Trzcinka, 2011), teacher self-efficacy may increase which may subsequently raise the academic achievement of students.

### **Summary**

General education teachers have seen a change in their classroom responsibilities (IDEA—the Individuals with Disabilities, 2012). According to O’Gorman and Drudy (2010), with the increase of students with disabilities in the classroom, teachers need to make adjustments to the way they teach. How successful these adjustments are depends

partly on how efficacious the teachers perceive themselves. The purpose of this study was to investigate the difference in general education teachers' perceptions of TSE when instructing students with special needs in an inclusion classroom when compared to instructing general education students in a traditional classroom; and, to investigate whether there is a correlation between administrative support in the form of PD regarding inclusion and TSE. The results of the study were used to create a PD program that will help teachers implement effective teaching in the inclusion classroom thereby increasing teacher perception of self-efficacy.

Section 2 of this paper outlines the quantitative methodology that was used in this study, Section 3 encompasses the project that was developed after analysis of the data, and Section 4 includes a reflection of the project and the processes needed to complete the project.



## Section 2: The Methodology

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this quasi-experimental within-group quantitative study was to (a) examine perceived self-efficacy of secondary general education teachers in both the traditional and inclusion classroom environments to determine whether any differences existed in perceived personal efficacy related to these assignments, and (b) explore associations linking prior experience and organizational support in the form of PD with perceived TSE when instructing in an inclusion setting. In this study, the independent variable was the classroom environment and contained two values: the traditional classroom setting and the inclusion classroom setting. The dependent variable was the perceived self-efficacy of teachers. The broader population this study affected included teachers spanning all grade levels and subjects. The sampling frame was drawn from secondary general education teachers of this population. Participants completed a three-part survey regarding efficacy. Part 1 of the survey asked questions regarding perceived self-efficacy while teaching in the traditional classroom setting, and Part 2 of the survey asked the same questions regarding perceived self-efficacy; however, this time the questions pertained to the inclusion setting. In Part 3 of the survey, demographic data were collected from each participant to act as predictor variables in the simple linear regression analyses examining factors that contribute to perceptions of efficacy.

### **Research Design and Approach**

A quantitative research design was chosen for this study for three reasons: objectivity, bias, and deductive reasoning. According to Muijs (2011), quantitative

research is objective because it uses numerical analysis of data and helps to eliminate bias by detaching the researcher from the data. Particular attention to the threat of bias must be given so that data do not become skewed toward any preconceived opinions. Another reason that a quantitative research design is appropriate for this study is connected to the goal of the study itself. The goal was to determine the difference in perceived teacher self-efficacy in the general education and inclusion classrooms, if any, and to investigate the relationship among teacher self-efficacy, inclusion, and organizational support in the form of professional development. Deductive reasoning was employed to achieve these goals. According to Trochim and Donnelly (2008), deductive reasoning is primarily used in quantitative research when studying general concepts and narrowing those concepts to specifics. In this study, perceived self-efficacy was examined as a general concept, and specifics, such as how efficacy differs in response to the inclusion setting and the amount of PD that teachers have experienced, were investigated.

A quasi-experimental approach was used for this quantitative study. According to Baldwin and Berkeljon (2010), a quasi-experimental design is similar to a true experiment in that both methods look for causal relationships between variables. These experiment types differ in how the sample is obtained and assigned to experimental conditions. In a true experiment, a random sampling method is preferred and random assignment to experimental levels of the independent variable is required. Random sampling and assignment diminishes the possibility of alternative explanations of observed phenomena because any alternative influences of the dependent variable would be distributed randomly throughout the sample. In a quasi-experimental study, the

researcher lacks control over assignment to experimental conditions and randomization of the sample may not be feasible. Because of these factors, causal relationships are harder to deduce; however, if the study is planned appropriately, causal relationships may be surmised. In the context of a quasi-experimental approach, a within subject design was utilized. According to Kim (2010), in a within subject design, two or more measurement tools are used using the same participants. The goal of this design is to compare paired self-efficacy ratings from every participant. In the current study, all participants were administered a survey composed of three parts, two of which relate to teacher self-efficacy and one that asked for demographic data.

### **Setting and Sample**

The setting for this study was a large suburban school district in Eastern Pennsylvania. The district has 23 schools (15 elementary, 5 middle, and 3 high schools) with approximately 20,000 students. Of the students who attend the district, approximately 13% have an IEP; however, students with other health impairments are also in the inclusion classroom but are not included in the percentage. Of those students with an IEP, 81% receive instruction in an inclusion classroom for at least part of the day.

The sampling frame for this study was 472 secondary teachers who worked in the target district and was made up of teachers from Grades 7 to 12 and from all subject areas. To determine the sample size, a quantitative G-power 3.1 (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang & Buchner, 2007) analysis was employed based on the statistical power requirements for the paired sample *t* test analysis using a one-tailed test for two groups, with  $\beta = 0.95$ , and  $\alpha = 0.05$ . At least a moderate effect threshold was necessary to justify the possibility of

creating a PD program pertaining to inclusion should the results of the study warrant it; therefore, an effect value of  $d = 0.5$  was used in the calculations. The results of the analysis suggested a minimum sample size requirement of 45 participants for the within-subject comparison outlined in Hypothesis 1. Consideration was given that the end sample size might decrease from the desired target due to effects from missing data; therefore, a 20% oversampling was planned to compensate for attrition in the useable data, resulting in a target sample of 54 participants.

A probability sampling method was used to determine the participants of the study. According to Salkind (2010) in a probability sample, a subset of the population is chosen as the sampling frame and random sample of participants is taken from that subgroup. The entire sampling frame of 472 secondary teachers received an online survey and those who replied were included in the study. The inclusion of all teachers in sampling frame was decided upon because teachers in the district are easily accessible and are representative of schools where inclusion and general education classes are offered. Subject availability for this study may have been somewhat tenuous. Because teachers may be overwhelmed at times with the sheer volume of work they have, a decision was made to cast the widest net possible to gain participants. Although data from this probability sample may or may not be generalizable to other school districts, they aligned well to the purpose of the local problem addressed in this project study.

### **Instrumentation and Materials**

A three-part online survey consisting of two established classroom self-efficacy instruments and demographic questions was created using Survey Monkey (see Appendix

B). An invitation was sent via the school district's e-mail system. The e-mail contained a link that directed potential participants to the survey. The total time that the survey should have taken was 5 minutes per participant.

Part 1 of the instrument was the teacher's sense of self-efficacy Scale (TSES)-Short Form which is an established research instrument comprised of 12 questions in a Likert-scale format that measures perceived self-efficacy while teaching in the traditional classroom setting (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; see Appendix C). Permission was requested and granted to use the TSES instrument (see Appendix E). Participants were asked to respond to each question by selecting from the following: nothing, very little, some influence, quite a bit, and a great deal. The point values on the scale ranged from 1 to 9 with 1 corresponding to nothing, 3 corresponding to very little, 5 corresponding to some influence, 7 corresponding to quite a bit, and 9 corresponding to a great deal. Values of 2, 4, 6, and 8 allowed participants to choose values that were between each selection. A factor analysis was performed by the authors to partition the overall TSES scale into three subscales: efficacy in student engagement (questions 2, 3, 4, and 11) efficacy in instructional strategies (questions 5, 9, 10, and 12), and efficacy in classroom management (questions 1, 6, 7, and 8). As prescribed by the authors, the unweighted means of the items that load on each factor and the overall scale was calculated.

Part 2 of the instrument was the teachers' sense of efficacy scale (TSES)-Learning Difficulties, an established instrument, which measures perceived self-efficacy while teaching in the inclusion classroom setting (Woolfson & Brady, 2009; see Appendix D). Permission was requested and granted by the author to use the TSES-

Learning Difficulties instrument (see Appendix F). Woolfson and Brady (2009) adapted this instrument directly from the Teacher's Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale-Short Form and contains the same questions as the survey in Part 1, but as they pertain to the inclusion classroom setting rather than the traditional setting. This, too, is a 12-question instrument with a Likert-scale format. Participants were asked to respond in the same way that they did with the original TSES by selecting from the following: nothing, very little, some influence, quite a bit, and a great deal. The point values on the scale range from 1–9 with 1 corresponding to nothing, 3 corresponding to very little, 5 corresponding to some influence, 7 corresponding to quite a bit, and 9 corresponding to a great deal. Values of 2, 4, 6, and 8 allowed participants to choose values that were between each selection. The same three subscales applied to the modified survey as they do to the Teacher's Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale-Short Form and scores were calculated in the same manner as the original TSES.

The third part of the survey gathered demographic data from each of the participants (see Appendix B). These questions were used to determine if there was an association linking prior experience and organizational support in the form of PD with teacher perception of self-efficacy. Raw data for all portions of the three-part survey is available upon request. An email was sent to stakeholders, namely the target district administration, professional developers for the district, and teachers containing a link to the completed doctoral study.

**Reliability**

The two self-efficacy scales have been demonstrated as reliable by the authors of the instruments. The overall scale reliability of the TSES was determined to be 0.90 using Cronbach's alpha coefficient and as such, was deemed relatively strong. Adequate Alpha coefficients were also calculated for the three sub categories of the TSES; efficacy in student engagement, instruction, and classroom management. They were 0.81, 0.86, and 0.86 respectively (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

The TSES–Learning Difficulties survey that was developed by Woolfson and Brady (2009) was also found to be equally reliable as the TSES. The authors reported an overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.93; however, the alpha coefficients for the subscales were not reported.

**Validity**

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) also examined the validity of the Teacher's Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale-Short Form instrument. To determine the validity of the TSES, the authors compared their efficacy scales to the Rand items (Armor et al., 1976, as cited in Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) and to the efficacy scale created by Gibson and Dembo (1984, as cited in Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The Rand items consisted of two questions on teacher self-efficacy that were embedded into a larger survey conducted by the Rand Corporation. The authors found a strong positive correlation between the TSES and both the Rand items and the Gibson and Dembo efficacy scale. This indicates concurrent construct validity of the instrument which, according to Markus and Lin (2010), refers to whether or not the measuring tool accurately measures the target

construct. In this case, it was found that the TSES accurately measured TSE . There was no indication of validity in the literature for the TSES-Learning Support scale developed by Woolfson and Brady (2009); however, since this scale was a modification of the original TSES, one would expect similar findings if the construct validity test performed by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy were replicated with the only slightly modified instrument.

### **Data Collection**

The goal of this study was to compare general education teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy in the general education classroom with perceptions of self-efficacy in the inclusion classroom. Furthermore, this study aimed to determine the association, if any, between the amount of organizational support for inclusion in the form of PD and teacher perceptions of self-efficacy. The hypotheses tested in this study were as follows:

Hypothesis 1:

*H<sub>01</sub>*: There is no difference in perceived teacher self-efficacy with regard to instructing special needs students in an inclusion classroom when compared to instructing general education students in a traditional academic classroom.

*H<sub>a1</sub>*: There is a difference in perceived teacher self-efficacy with regard to instructing special needs students in an inclusion classroom when compared to instructing general education students in a traditional academic classroom.



Hypothesis 2:

*H<sub>02</sub>* There is no association linking prior experience and organizational support in the form of PD with general education teachers' perceptions of their ability to instruct students with disabilities in the inclusion classroom.

*H<sub>a2</sub>*: There are associations linking prior experience and organizational support in the form of PD with general education teachers' perceptions of their ability to instruct students with disabilities in the inclusion classroom.

For the first hypothesis, the independent variable was the classroom teaching environment which had two values. The first was the traditional classroom environment and the second was the inclusion classroom environment. The dependent variable was the perceived self-efficacy of teachers. For the second hypothesis, the predictors were the demographic and experience measures as well as the presence of organizational support in the form of PD while the predicted variable was perceived self-efficacy.

To test these hypotheses, permission to use the Teacher's Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale-Short Form (see Appendix E) and Teacher's Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale-Learning Difficulties was obtained from the authors (see Appendix F) as was permission to conduct the survey in the target district (see Appendix G). Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained (see Appendix H) and the school district email was used to invite all secondary teachers in the target school district to participate in the survey. The email message included an explanation of the study, a link that directed teachers to the survey monkey website that contained the survey, as well as, an informed consent letter at the beginning of the survey (see Appendix B). Participants, who agreed to complete the

survey, were instructed that completion of the survey served as evidence of their informed consent. From the date the email was sent, participants were given 10 days to complete the survey. The survey was accessible 24 hours per day for 10 consecutive days, including the weekend. Two reminder emails were sent before the survey was no longer available; one at day four and the other at day eight. The required number of participants was obtained within the 10 day survey access period. If an insufficient sample size not been acquired, there was a plan in place.

If the prerequisite number of participants was not reached by the end of this 10 day period, a third reminder email would have been sent on day 11 and the survey would have remained open until a minimum of 54 participants was reached. In the event that the requisite number of participants were not attained after the third email reminder, subsequent messages would have been sent until 54 participants were reached.

### **Data Analysis**

All quantitative data was analyzed upon the completion date. The data obtained from the online surveys was tested using SPSS. Hypothesis 1 was tested using a paired sample *t* test for within subject group analysis for within group differences in perceived self-efficacy across the two classroom environments. A paired sample *t*-test was used to determine if the mean of the dependent variable, in this case TSE, was different between the two classroom environmental conditions, in this case the traditional versus the inclusion setting. Hypothesis 2 was tested using partial correlations derived from a simple linear regression of potential demographic predictor variables on perceptions of self-efficacy. Partial correlations determined the strength of a relationship between two

variables while simultaneously controlling for the effects of one or more additional variables. Demographic data included participants' subjects taught, grade levels, years of teaching experience, amount of coursework and participation in professional development. These demographic data were examined as potential predictors of the self-efficacy dependent variables. These secondary variables were used to determine the association of prior experience and organizational support in the form of PD with teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy in the traditional and/or the inclusion classroom environment.

### **Assumptions, Limitations, Scope and Delimitations**

The first assumption was that the published instruments used in this study were both reliable and valid. Both surveys were published in peer reviewed journals and as such, the surveys have been scrutinized by experts in the field. A second assumption regarding this study was that participants would answer the survey honestly. This assumption was proposed because their responses were linked to their teaching experiences and personal beliefs.

One limitation of the study can be seen in the sampling method. Because the probability sample was not randomized, it did not necessarily include a representation of all potential participants in the population therefore the results may not be generalizable to a larger population. Another limitation of the study was the possibility of bias created by using my place of employment as the target school district. This limitation, however, was minimized by using a quantitative research methodology. The quantitative research

methodology itself can be a limitation in that this design type focuses more on the breadth of the study variables rather than their depth as a qualitative study would have.

The scope of the study was a large suburban school district in Eastern Pennsylvania. This study was delimited to secondary general education school teachers, who teach or have taught in an inclusion classroom or general education classroom. This study determined how efficacious general education teachers perceive themselves to be while teaching in the traditional and inclusion settings. Two existing research instruments, Teacher's Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES)-Short Form (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) and Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)-Learning Difficulties (Woolfson & Brady, 2009), were used to determine teachers' perceived self-efficacy in the classroom settings.

### **Protection of Participants**

Protection of participants protocols recommended by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services were used in this research study. These protections call for informed consent, confidentiality, and protection from harm. Before any data collection began, Institutional Review Board (IRB) permission was obtained to ensure the ethical treatment of participants.

Participants received an email invitation (see Appendix H) to take part in the survey. In the invitation, the guiding questions of the study were outlined. It was explained that participation was voluntary and may be stopped at any time and how confidentiality was ensured. In the body of the email was a link directing the reader to the survey. It was explained that clicking on the link and completion of the survey served as

informed consent. Anonymity was assured in that no personally identifiable information was asked in the survey directly. For example, the information regarding location of employment and participants' personal identities were purposefully omitted from the survey because that would make the respondents easily identifiable. Indirectly, the Survey Monkey website may collect the IP address from a computer the participants use, but this was explained in the email to the participants. Survey responses are kept in a password protected file on my personal hard drive and will be deleted after five years. My computer is password protected so only I have access to it. Furthermore, no personally identifiable information was used when aggregating and reporting information. This study may have, however, caused the participant some degree of anxiety related to their consideration of their own sense of efficacy as a means to doubt their competence and self-image as a professional. This anxiety and/or doubt may have resulted in a participant rating perceived self-efficacy higher or lower than the actual self-efficacy. Furthermore, some participants may have felt that their reputation or employability was in jeopardy by answering the survey questions. This risk was minimized due to the anonymity of participants.

## **Data Analysis Results**

### **Presentation**

An invitation was sent to all secondary teachers in the target school district with exception of the special education teachers. This invitation provided a link to a three part survey that was created using the Survey Monkey website. The first part included questions regarding teacher perception of self-efficacy in the general education setting

using the TSES scale. The second part of the survey consisted of questions regarding teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy in the inclusion setting using the TSES-Learning Difficulties scale. The third part of the survey consisted of questions regarding demographic data related to teaching experience, teaching related course work and PD respondents completed. Informed consent was verified and indicated when participants read a description of the purpose of the study, and clicked on the link to proceed with the survey. A reminder email was sent to participants six days after the original email was sent. Originally, it was planned that the reminder email would be sent after four days after the initial email invitation however since day four was a Saturday decided to send it the following Monday to assure that it would be at the top of the potential participant's email. A second email reminder was sent two days later on day eight. The survey was available for 10 days and the prerequisite number of participants was reached. The data collected were then downloaded, cleaned and analyzed using SPSS software.

Hypothesis 1 was tested using a paired sample *t* test used for within subject group analysis for within group differences in perceived self-efficacy across the two classroom environments. Hypothesis 2 was tested using a simple linear regression to examine partial correlations linking demographic factors with perceived self-efficacy in the inclusion classroom.

**Participant response.** At the local district level, the full sample of 472 secondary education teachers of all subject areas, with the exception of special education teachers, was solicited for participation in the current study. Out of those 472 teachers, 21.0%, or 99 teachers, opened the file and answered the first block of TSES survey questions

regarding teacher perception of self-efficacy in the general education classroom. The number of participants who responded to the second block of TSES-Learning Difficulties questions regarding TSE in the inclusion classroom decreased for a total of 82 teachers or 17.3% of the local sampling frame. The responses to the first and second survey question were used to determine the veracity of hypothesis 1. The number of participants who responded to the third section differed depending on the specific question (see Table 3).

Table 3

*Demographic Data Response Rates*

Variable	Number of Responses	% of District Participants
What grade do you currently teach?	78	16.5
What subject do you primarily teach?	78	16.5
How many years have you been teaching?	78	16.5
Have you ever taught in an inclusion classroom?	78	16.5
How many years have you taught inclusion (if you have)	75	15.9
How many college courses have you taken that focused specifically on managing an inclusion classroom?	76	16.1
How many college courses have you taken that focused specifically on students with learning disabilities in an inclusion setting?	77	16.3
For the last three years, how many hours of PD regarding inclusion have you taken part in?	77	16.3
Have you ever received any formal training on best practices for implementing inclusion and for teaching students with disabilities?	77	16.3
Evaluate the following statement:	78	16.5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I am satisfied with the amount of organizational support, in the form of professional development, that I receive regarding the implementation of inclusion</li> </ul>		

The responses to section three were used in the analysis of hypothesis 2. Although there was a difference in the number of teacher responses throughout the survey, the lowest number of list wise participants for an analysis was 62; therefore the G-power calculation of the minimum number of participants (54) was satisfied.

**Demographics.** Demographic data were used to examine potential predictors of the self-efficacy dependent variables. The median range of teaching experience for the participants was 11-14 years with the most frequent range being 7-10 years of experience (24.4%). Of the teachers who responded to the survey, 92.3% have taught in the inclusion classroom setting for 7-10 years (see Table 4).

Table 4

*Teaching Experience in the General Education and Inclusion Classroom Settings*

Variable (years)	Years of Experience Teaching Overall		Years of Experience Teaching Inclusion	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0-3	4	5.1	16	21.3
4-6	6	7.7	10	13.3
7-10	19	24.4	18	24.0
11-14	13	16.7	9	12.0
15-18	17	21.8	9	12.0
19-22	8	10.3	4	5.3
23-26	6	7.7	3	4.0
27-30	4	5.1	1	1.3
31-34	1	1.3	0	0
35+	0	0	0	0
Total	78	100	70 <sup>a</sup>	100

Note. <sup>a</sup>Frequency does not include 5 respondents who have never taught in the inclusion setting. <sup>b</sup>Percent does not include those who have never taught in the inclusion setting.

Of 76 participants who responded, the majority (39.5%) took zero (0) college courses that focused specifically on managing an inclusion classroom and of 77 participants who responded, the majority (36.4%) have taken zero (0) classes that focused specifically on students with learning disabilities in an inclusion setting (see Table 5).



Table 5

*College Courses Taken*

Variable (courses taken)	Management of Inclusion Classroom		Learning Disabilities in an Inclusion Setting	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
0	30	39.5	28	36.4
1	23	30.3	26	33.8
2	12	15.8	15	19.5
3	6	7.9	4	5.2
4	2	2.6	2	2.6
5+	3	3.9	2	2.6
Total	76	100	77	100

Over the last three years, many (46.8%) of the 77 participants who responded reported that they have received zero (0) hours of PD regarding inclusion (see Table 6).

Furthermore, of 75 participants who responded, 53.2% reported that they have never received any formal training regarding best practices for implementing inclusion and for teaching students with disabilities.

Table 6

*Hours of PD Over the Last Three Years*

Variable (Hours of Professional Development)	Frequency	Percent
0	36	46.8
1	10	13
2	11	14.3
3	8	10.4
4	2	2.6
5	2	2.6
6	3	3.9
7	0	0
8	1	1.3
9+	4	5.2
Total	77	100

Finally, out of the 76 participants who responded to the statement “I am satisfied with the amount of organizational support in the form of PD that I receive regarding the implementation of inclusion,” 48.7% either strongly disagreed or disagreed while only 22.3% agreed or strongly agreed. The percentage that neither agreed nor disagreed was 29.0%

**Results of TSES and TSES-Learning Difficulties.** Section one of the survey consisted of the TSES items and section two of the survey consisted of the TSES-Learning Difficulties items. The previously reported high alpha reliabilities of both scales were confirmed in the current study; an alpha reliability of .88 was documented for the TSES, and an alpha reliability of .90 was observed for the TSES-Learning Support. These scales were used to determine if there was a difference in perceived teacher self-efficacy with regard to instructing special needs students in an inclusion classroom when compared to instructing general education students in a traditional academic classroom (see Tables 7 and 8).

Table 7

*Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale Response Summary- Traditional Classroom*

	Nothing		Very Little	4	Some Influence	6	Quite a Bit	8	A Great Deal
	1	2	3		5		7		9
How much can you do to control the disruptive behavior of children in the classroom? ( <i>N</i> = 97)	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	8.3	11.3	39.2	17.5	21.7
How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork? ( <i>N</i> = 97)	0.0	0.0	2.1	5.2	29.9	23.7	29.9	5.2	4.1
How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in schoolwork? ( <i>N</i> = 97)	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	7.2	21.7	46.4	12.4	11.3
How much can you do to help students value learning? ( <i>N</i> = 97)	0.0	0.0	3.1	3.1	18.6	18.6	36.1	11.3	9.3
To what extent can you craft good questions for your students? ( <i>N</i> = 95)	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.1	1.1	8.4	19.0	31.6	39.0
How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules? ( <i>N</i> = 97)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.1	9.3	35.1	33.0	18.6
How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy? ( <i>N</i> = 97)	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	9.3	22.7	41.2	20.1	5.2
How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students? ( <i>N</i> = 96)	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	4.2	6.3	34.4	29.2	24.0
How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies? ( <i>N</i> = 97)	0.0	0.0	2.1	1.0	5.2	12.0	25.8	28.9	24.7
To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused? ( <i>N</i> = 97)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.1	3.1	24.7	34.0	36.1
How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school? ( <i>N</i> = 96)	1.0	0.0	0.0	5.2	27.1	23.0	23.0	15.6	5.2
How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom? ( <i>N</i> = 97)	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	11.3	16.5	37.1	24.7	8.3

Note- Values represent percentages of the respondents rounded to the nearest 10th

Table 8

*Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale Response Summary - Inclusion Classroom*

	Nothing		Very Little 3	4	Some Influence 5	6	Quite a Bit 7	8	A Great Deal 9
	1	2							
How much can you do to control the disruptive behavior of children with learning support needs in the classroom? ( <i>N</i> = 76)	0.0	0.0	2.6	4.0	25.0	22.4	27.6	11.8	6.6
How much can you do to motivate students with learning support needs who show low interest in schoolwork? ( <i>N</i> = 75)	0.0	0.0	6.7	8.0	28.0	21.3	26.7	6.7	2.7
How much can you do to get students with learning support needs to believe they can do well in schoolwork? ( <i>N</i> = 75)	0.0	0.0	1.3	5.3	26.7	22.7	28.0	9.3	6.7
How much can you do to help students with learning support needs value learning? ( <i>N</i> = 75)	0.0	0.0	6.7	4.0	26.7	24.0	25.3	10.7	2.7
To what extent can you craft good questions for your students with learning support needs? ( <i>N</i> = 73)	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.4	6.7	6.7	41.1	20.6	23.3
How much can you do to get children with learning support needs to follow classroom rules? ( <i>N</i> = 76)	0.0	0.0	2.7	2.7	6.6	22.4	40.8	14.5	10.5
How much can you do to calm a student with learning support needs who is disruptive or noisy? ( <i>N</i> = 74)	0.0	0.0	2.7	6.8	14.9	28.4	30.0	13.5	4.0
How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students with learning support needs? ( <i>N</i> = 75)	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.3	10.7	13.3	32.0	30.1	12.0
How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies with children with learning support needs? ( <i>N</i> = 73)	0.0	0.0	1.4	0.0	12.3	15.0	27.0	30.1	13.7
To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students with learning support needs are confused? ( <i>N</i> = 74)	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.7	5.4	10.8	32.4	18.9	29.7
How much can you assist families in helping their children with learning support needs do well in school? ( <i>N</i> = 75)	0.0	0.0	4.0	9.3	24.0	16.0	28.0	10.7	8.0
How well can you implement alternative strategies for children with learning support needs in your classroom? ( <i>N</i> = 78)	0.0	0.0	1.3	2.6	16.7	15.4	28.2	21.8	14.1

Note- Values represent percentages of the respondents rounded to the nearest 10th

## Hypothesis Testing

**Hypothesis 1.** Hypothesis 1 predicted that there would be significantly lower perceived teacher self-efficacy with regard to instructing special needs students in an inclusion classroom when compared to instructing general education students in a traditional academic classroom. As predicted, average levels of teacher perceived self-efficacy were greater in the traditional academic classroom setting ( $M = 78.1$ ) than in the inclusion classroom setting ( $M = 71.6$ ). The difference between the perceived efficacy in the two settings was statistically significant ( $t = 9.19$ ,  $df = 68$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The paired  $t$  test was repeated for the matched pairing of the individual scale items to examine if there were specific sub areas that accounted for the significant difference between the overall self-efficacy means. The difference observed in the overall scales was not attributable to specific sub areas; in fact, significant differences were observed across classroom conditions for each item/area assessed in the scales.

**Hypothesis 2.** Hypothesis 2 predicted that there may be associations linking prior experience, education and organizational support in the form of PD with general education teachers' perceptions of their ability to instruct students with disabilities in the inclusion classroom. A simple two step linear regression model first entered predictors related to teaching experience followed by predictors related to training (coursework and professional development) to predict teachers' self-efficacy in the inclusion classroom,  $F(8, 53) = 2.66$ ,  $p = .016$ . It was determined that prior teaching experience alone was not a significant predictor of self-efficacy in the inclusion classroom and only accounted for

8.2% of the variance; however the training dimension, when added predicted an additional 20.5% of the overall variance (see Table 9).

Table 9

*Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.286 <sup>a</sup>	.082	.018	7.347	.082	1.273	4	57	(.291)
2	.536 <sup>b</sup>	.287	.179	6.716	.205	3.804	4	53	(.009)

a. Predictors: (Constant), Have you ever taught in an inclusion classroom?, How many years have you been teaching?, How many years have you taught inclusion (if you have)?

b. How many years have you been teaching?, How many years have you taught inclusion (if you have)?, Have you ever received any formal training on best practices for implementing inclusion and for teaching students with disabilities?, How many college courses have you taken that focused specifically on managing an inclusion classroom?, Over the last three years, how many hours of PD regarding inclusion have you taken part in?, How many college courses have you taken that focused specifically on students with learning disabilities in an inclusion setting?

By examining the partial correlations generated by the regression analysis, it was determined that of all the training items in the statistically significant second model – the only significant contributor to teachers’ perceptions of self-efficacy was if the participants had specific training regarding best practices of teaching in the inclusion setting (see Table 10).

Table 10

*Partial Correlations Linking Factors Related to Experience and Training with Perceived Self Efficacy in the Inclusion Classroom*

Item	Sig.	Partial Correlations
How many years have you been teaching?	.407	-.114
How many years have you taught inclusion (if you have)?	.409	.114
Have you ever taught in an inclusion classroom?	.943	.010
How many college courses have you taken that focused specifically on managing an inclusion classroom?	.098	.226
How many college courses have you taken that focused specifically on students with learning disabilities in an inclusion setting?	.789	-.037
For the last three years, how many hours of PD regarding inclusion have you taken part in?	.487	.096
Have you ever received any formal training on best practices for implementing inclusion and for teaching students with disabilities?	.033	.288

### **Outcomes**

These results were used to verify that, on the average, teachers perceived themselves as less efficacious in the inclusion classroom setting when compared to instructing general education students in a traditional academic classroom. These results were also used to infer that focused formal training on best practices for teaching inclusion has a greater impact on teacher perception of self-efficacy in the inclusion classroom than both teaching experience and college coursework. Teaching experience is

not necessarily guided or mentored and college coursework may be too general and not relevant to specific situations that may occur in the inclusion classroom. Focused, ongoing PD in best practices for inclusion is needed for teacher perception of self-efficacy to improve. Furthermore, the original TSES and TSES-Learning Difficulties were partitioned by their authors into three different categories: efficacy in student engagement, efficacy in instructional strategies, and efficacy in classroom management (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Woolfson & Brady, 2009). There were significant differences observed between the traditional and inclusion classroom settings for each item/area assessed in the scales. Therefore, based on the outcomes of this study a PD was created for general education teachers which focused on student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management in the inclusion classroom setting.



## Section 3: The Project

### **Introduction**

Section 3 outlines a description of the project's goals as well as a rationale and review of literature connecting the PD program to research findings for both my study as well as current peer reviewed research. The literature review outlines the overarching theories that informed the creation of the PD program, the weaknesses of the one-shot traditional workshop design, the use of professional learning communities, and online professional development. To locate current research on these topics, books and databases such as Educational Research Complete, Academic Research Primer, Eric, EBSCO host, Pro Quest Central and Taylor and Francis were used. The search terms included *self-efficacy, professional development, constructivism, andragogy, communities of inquiry, effective professional development, professional learning communities, and online professional development*. Also included in this section is an explanation of how the PD program will be implemented as well as how it will be evaluated.

The findings of this study indicate that general education teachers of inclusion can benefit from a PD program, which encompasses information on student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management in the inclusion classroom setting. These three components will form the basis of the project content.

### **Description and Goals**

In this study, I addressed the problem of perceived self-efficacy of secondary general education teachers in the inclusion classroom setting when compared to the general education setting. The results showed that teachers perceived themselves as less

efficacious in the inclusion classroom across three domains: student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. Further, the results indicated that the only significant contributor to teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy was training specific to best practices of teaching in the inclusion classroom. The participants also indicated that they have received little to no PD regarding inclusion and they were dissatisfied with the amount of PD offered by the district. The solution to the problem is to create a PD program that focuses on best practices regarding student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management in the inclusion setting.

The PD program was created with the ultimate goal of increasing teacher perception of self-efficacy in the inclusion classroom setting. Based on the findings of this study and informed by literature, the PD program will be delivered using face-to-face and online professional learning communities (PLC), also known as a blended learning format. Participants will attend a one day face-to-face workshop. The goals of the face-to-face workshop are the following:

- Build relationships and trust among the participants.
- Disseminate information regarding the history of inclusion as well as the legal and ethical responsibilities of teachers of inclusion.
- Reflect on what it might be like to have a disability in an inclusion classroom.
- Distinguish between different disabilities and how they may manifest themselves in an inclusion classroom.
- Build relationships for co-teaching.

- Introduce participants to the structure of the online PLC.

The content of the face-to-face workshop will be reflected upon throughout the online PLC portion of the program. According to Noormohammadi (2014) “meta-cognitive reflection can significantly predict instructional strategy and student engagement components of efficacy” (p. 1386). It is through this reflection that the PLC will expand upon lessons learned in the face to face workshop.

The online PLC is organized into modules that focus on a different disability that participants may encounter in the inclusion classroom. The goal of each module is for participants to gain a better understanding of each disability specific to the three domains recognized in the TSES results: student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. This understanding can be achieved through discussions, application of strategies, and reflection. Each module will encompass a two week cycle in which the first week, members will learn about different strategies and the second week, they will apply those strategies in the classroom and reflect individually and collaboratively regarding the outcome of the implementation.

The format and activities of the blended learning PD will be structured around Bandura’s four source of self-efficacy: mastery, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and psychological state (Bandura, 1977). Participants will apply learned strategies for mastery experiences, verbal persuasion and vicarious experiences through interactions of the PLC members. They will also achieve a psychological state of trust which will enable members to gain confidence in taking risks and trying new strategies.

## **Rationale**

The goal of creating this PD program was to increase TSE in the inclusion classroom. The problem that compelled this study was the difference in perceived self-efficacy of general education teachers in the traditional classroom setting when compared to the inclusion classroom setting. This problem was compounded by the lack of PD opportunities that were provided by the district for general education teachers of inclusion. The results of this study indicated that there was a significant difference in teacher self-efficacy across the two classroom conditions and that PD was lacking. Furthermore, it was determined that training with regard to best practice of teaching in the inclusion setting was the greatest contributor to perceived self-efficacy. It follows then that a PD program was created to address best practices in teaching inclusion, specifically student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management as per the TSES subscales, is the best way to address the difference in perceived self-efficacy.

The creation of a PD program was chosen to address TSE discrepancies across classroom settings. According to the United States Department of Education, “PD is an important factor in developing and supporting educators in improving their practices” (State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, 2009, p. 58,441). It is through professional development, that teachers have access to sources of self-efficacy namely: mastery, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and psychological state (Bandura, 1977). According to Bümen (2009), through professional development, teachers have the opportunity to gain mastery through workshops and during practice of new skills in the authentic classroom

environment. Further, when teachers collaboratively discuss the implementation of various learned skillsets, they learn vicariously through one another. Discussions also lend themselves to verbal persuasion in that feedback is given with regard to the implementation of new skills. This feedback may be in the form of encouragement, accolades, and possible strategies for overcoming difficulties. Finally, Bümen asserts that “these sources of teacher self-efficacy enables teachers to develop their capabilities they bring to the task, experience the consequence of those capabilities, and gain information about their strengths and weaknesses in managing, instructing and assessing students” (2009, p. 273). It is for these reasons, that the creation of a PD program was necessary to increase the self-efficacy of general education teachers in the inclusion classroom.

The blended learning format was chosen for the PD program in that it incorporates a face-to-face program and PLC with flexibility of an online environment. The components of the blended learning PD: face to face, PLC, and online, have individually been shown to increase teacher perception of self-efficacy (Mintzes, Marcum, Messerschmidt-Yates, & Mark, 2013; Shea & Bidjerano, 2010; Tseng & Kuo, 2010). The face to face component serves as the introduction to the online PLC and may contribute to an increase in self-efficacy by facilitating the social presence and group cohesion that is indicative of the community of inquiry framework (CoI) of the blended learning format. Group cohesion and social presence fosters trust among participants. When members of a community trust one another, they are more likely to learn vicariously through them and be persuaded by them which are both sources of self-efficacy (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2010). Furthermore, the presence of trust (Swan,

Garrison, & Richardson, 2009) is essential to a positive psychological state of participants which is a source of self-efficacy. PLCs have been empirically linked to self-efficacy in that they enable a sense of empowerment and help develop confidence among the participants as they implement new strategies and reflect upon them. If the strategies used in the classroom are successful, mastery develops which is a source of self-efficacy (Mintzes, et al., 2013). Lastly, the blended learning model of PD was determined to have a larger impact on self-efficacy than either the face-to-face or online format alone (Shea & Bidjerano, 2012).

### **Review of the Literature**

The results of my study indicate that the majority of teachers have not enrolled in and/or completed any university level classes nor have they had PD regarding inclusion. This omission has resulted in diminished perceptions of self-efficacy of secondary general education teachers in the inclusion classroom setting when compared with the traditional classroom setting. Furthermore, the majority of participants indicated dissatisfaction with the administrative support in the form of PD that they have received. The most appropriate solution to this problem was to create a PD program that focuses specifically on best practices in the inclusion classroom.

### **Theoretical Framework of the Project**

The constructivist philosophy, Knowles' Andragogy, and the Community of Inquiry Framework (CoI) were taken into consideration when designing the PD program. According to Alt (2015), constructivist learning environments enhance self-efficacy by providing opportunities for abstract and reflective analysis of an issue. CoI was utilized in

the development of the project in that it conforms to the constructivist philosophy in an online or blended learning format. Furthermore, this PD project was tailored to meet the needs of the adult learner per Knowles' Andragogy.

**Constructivism.** Constructivism is an educational philosophy in which learners create their own knowledge through experience and through social interaction (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). Those who ascribe to the constructivist paradigm believe in a subjective reality based on individual experiences. Dewey (1944) believed that learning was cyclical and was a result of individual experiences. For example two people may experience the same event; however, the realities of that experience may differ. These experiences then determine future learning. He also believed experiences and thoughts were intertwined and that one was dependent on the other; therefore, constructivism is a continual process - ever changing and ever evolving. Furthermore, Dewey believed that learning was a cumulative, active process unique to each person and that all people learn best by participation rather than passive involvement. Dewey's belief in the cyclical nature of learning is mirrored in Bandura's (1977) Triadic Reciprocal Causation theory which influences a person's choices. In turn, the choices may affect self-efficacy.

Constructivists believe that knowledge can be gained by the construction and assimilation of ideas through social interactions (Trochim & Donnelly, 2008). According to Postholm (2012), the constructivist philosophy of learning posits that "individuals construct knowledge and learn through mediated acts in the encounter with one or more persons and the surroundings in which they live and act" (p.405). Bakhtin, as cited in Postholm (2012), asserted that within the realm of constructivism there is the

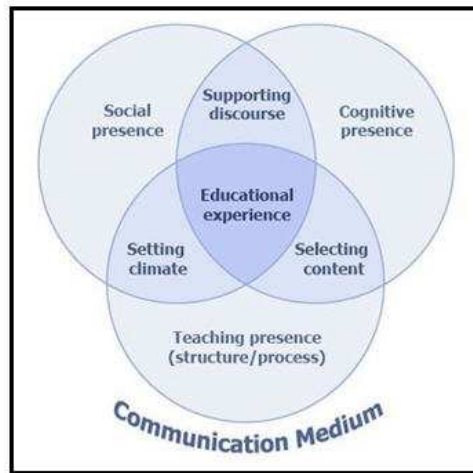
authoritarian and the authoritative discourse. The authoritarian word pertains to an external direct transfer of knowledge through instruction with no feedback from the participants in that discussion; whereas, the authoritative word invites a two way dialogue between speakers and participants. According to Bakhtin (1991), the authoritative word leads to internal persuasive dialog where “it is affirmed through assimilation, tightly interwoven with ‘one’s own word. In the everyday rounds of our consciousness, the internally persuasive word is half-ours and half-someone else’s.” (p. 346). He believed that this internal persuasive dialogue was not static but ever evolving through interactions with others. Further, as people construct new internal persuasive dialogues, they either build upon or replace old ones. It is within this dialogue where people construct their own knowledge that eventually becomes their reality.

Both components of the blended learning workshop that was created in response to this study are comprised of authoritarian and, to a greater extent, authoritative discourse. Information in the face-to-face component regarding the history of inclusion, working with a co-teacher, and legal responsibilities will be transferred externally in a lecture format as authoritarian word. Likewise, the authoritarian word will be used during the online PLC component through informing members of various inclusion techniques that focus on student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. The discussions and activities during both the face-to-face workshop and the online PLC are indicative of the authoritative word and leads to internal persuasive dialogue. This persuasive dialogue assimilates and accommodates new knowledge into that which exists, to create a new reality for the participants with regard to inclusion. According to



Ono and Ferreira (2010) “learners construct knowledge of their own by deconstruction, interpretation and reconstruction when engaged in activities and in social discourse that take place” (p. 61). When people first encounter something new, they mentally process it by attempting to build upon something they already know in their existing schema. When the existing schema does not fit with the new information, they make new schema by deconstructing what they know and adjusting it to fit the new information, as they interpret it. This process is called accommodation and continues until equilibrium is reached. This is the point in which learning occurs (Piaget, 2001). Further, Alt (2015) affirmed that knowledge construction, as is present in persuasive word, helps to develop a strong perception of self-efficacy. Participants form their own concepts through analysis and reflection of social interactions. Simultaneously they develop a sense of self as learners and reflect upon the application and consequences of that learning leading to mastery experiences - a source of self-efficacy.

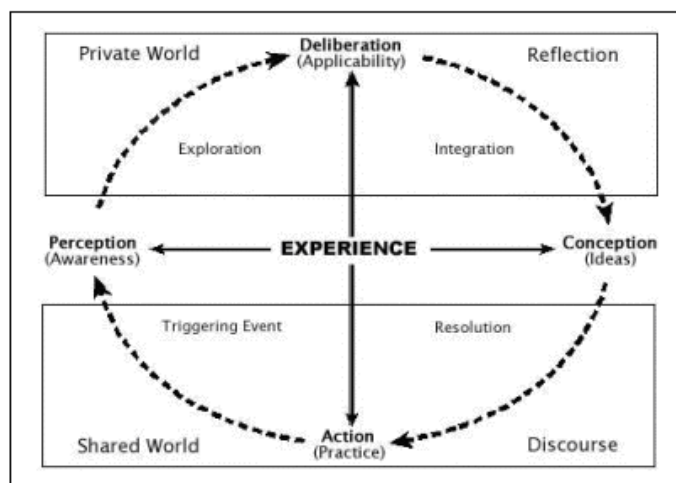
**Community of inquiry framework.** The online portion of the project was created based on CoI. This framework supports the needs of learners in the online environment. The CoI is comprised of three overlapping components: cognitive presence, social presence, and teaching presence (see Figure 2).



*Figure 2 CoI Framework (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 1999) used with permission from Dr. Terry Anderson (see Appendix H)*

According to Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2010), “CoI framework is dependent upon the interaction of all presences to a greater or lesser degree depending on the subject matter, the learners and the communications technology” (p. 6). The project that was developed in response to this study is structured to include all CoI presences through direct instruction, discussions, and the face-to-face workshop of the blended learning PD.

***Cognitive presence.*** Cognitive presence refers to the construction of knowledge. Garrison, Anderson, and Archer define cognitive presence as “the extent to which learners are able to construct and confirm meaning through sustained reflection and discourse in a critical community of inquiry” (2001, p. 115). The practical inquiry model is the vehicle in which cognitive presence is attained (see Figure 3)



*Figure 3 Practical Inquiry Model (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 1999) used with permission from Dr. Terry Anderson (see Appendix H)*

Practical inquiry is grounded in Dewey's ideas about the nature of reflection and present in the constructivist philosophy. According to Dewey, "Reflection involves not simply a sequence of ideas, but a consequence - a consecutive ordering in such a way that each determines the next as its proper outcome, while each in turn leans back on its predecessors" (Dewey, 1910, pp. 2-3). It is this cyclical reasoning is at the forefront of constructivism and is a contributing factor of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977).

According to Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2001), there are four phases in The Practical Inquiry Model: initiation, exploration, integration and resolution. The initiation stage begins with a triggering event. The triggering event is a dilemma that participants have experienced and reflected on privately (Garrison et al., 2001). An example of a triggering event in the inclusion setting may be a lack of instructional strategies for students with reading difficulties.

The exploration stage is a move from the private world of individual reflection to the shared world of collaboration. During this stage, participants discuss the dilemma with other members of the community and brainstorm possible solutions (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2001). Using the previous example, participants may discuss various theories and approaches to instructing students with reading difficulties and elaborate on individual experiences that they have found successful. This discussion can be a vicarious experience and a source of self-efficacy in that when one participant shares a successful outcome to a strategy, other members in the PLC may perceive themselves as able to achieve that same successful outcome in their classrooms.

The integration stage occurs when meaning is constructed from the information gained in the previous stage and is where connections from prior knowledge to new knowledge are made (Garrison et al., 2001). According to Garrison et al., (2001), “construction of meaning may result from individual critical reflection but ideas are generated and knowledge constructed through collaborative and confirmatory processes of sustained dialogue within a critical community of learners” (p. 91). This sustained dialogue mirrors the construct of authoritative word present in constructivism which in turn, was empirically linked to self-efficacy. In the aforementioned example, participants in this stage will examine what they know about reading strategies and amalgamate that information with information acquired through discourse with the group.

The resolution stage is the implementation of the ideas from the integration stage. Implementation may be physical or in the form of a thought experiment in which members of the community reach a consensus on the best course of action (Garrison et

al., 2001). In the reading difficulties example, the resolution stage may result in applying a new strategy in the participant's classroom. This application and subsequent reflection of its success or failure, contributes to mastery experience which affects self-efficacy.

***Social presence.*** It can be difficult to develop a social presence in a text-based online community. Facial expressions, body language, and other visual communicative cues are missing in an online environment; therefore, concerted efforts towards group cohesion becomes of critical importance (Garrison et al., 2010). Furthermore, group cohesion leads to trust among participants and thus a more positive psychological state which is a source of self-efficacy. According to Swan et al. (2009) social presence is “the degree to which participants in computer mediated communication feel affectively connected to one another” (p. 9). In the blended learning PD project I created, the face to face workshop portion prepares participants for social presence in the online setting.

***Teacher presence.*** Teacher presence refers to the design, organization, curriculum content, activities, and timeline of the online community (Swan et al., 2009). Additionally, teacher presence includes direct instruction, facilitating communication, setting expectations, and evaluating participant learning. It is through teacher presence that both cognitive and social presences are directed towards educationally meaningful learning outcomes (Garrison et al, 2010).

The design of the PD program in response to this study facilitates social presence in the online environment. The use of the GoToMeeting format allows for synchronous video conferencing in which participants will not need to rely on text alone. One of the features of this PD program is the opportunity to see members of the PLC and respond to

visual cues which will be advantageous to creating a cohesive community. Furthermore, the PD program was designed to encourage cognitive presence and reflection through discussions following the application of strategies. These social interactions, which focus on learning goals, allow participants the opportunity to increase self-efficacy through Bandura's mastery, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and positive psychological state.

**Knowles' andragogy.** When creating a PD program, it is imperative that the characteristics of adult learners be taken into consideration. Adults have with them a myriad of life experiences that may provide both a positive and negative basis for their learning. Knowles' postulated that adult learners are self-directed (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). According to Knowles, "it is a natural part of the process of maturation for an individual to want (need, even) to move from dependency toward increasing self-responsibility and self-directedness." (1980, p. 48). Knowles' asserted that adults have a wealth of experience from which to draw that learning must be relevant and impactful to their lives. Furthermore, adult learners are interested in problem solving rather than content (Merriam et al., 2007). According to Knowles, "they experience a need to learn in order to cope more satisfyingly with real-life tasks or problems" (1980, p. 44). These assumptions are the foundation of the adult PD I designed.

Participants in the proposed PD program will use their previous experiences to provide direction for discussions and activities that will enable them to problem solve. Mastery experience, a source of self-efficacy, is gained as participants implement strategies that lead to successful outcomes in their classrooms. These PD features align

with Knowles' Andragogy theory and result in a relevant and impactful learning experience that increases self-efficacy.

### **Theory to Practice**

This PD project was created using a constructivist perspective, the CoI Framework, and Knowles' Andragogy. Teachers will participate in a single day workshop in which participants will take part in lecture, hands-on activities, and discussions. While this one day workshop is somewhat authoritative in nature, the discussions and hands-on approach will lend themselves to the internal persuasive dialogue that is characteristic of constructivism as well as a social and cognitive presence that is characteristic of the CoI Framework. Also during this time, through simulations and role plays, participants will experience how learning is affected for students with disabilities. They will have the opportunity to share concerns about inclusion, and provide input for the direction of the online PLC. This opportunity to choose the PLC content and its order directly coincides with Knowles' assumptions that adult learners are self-directed, problem solvers, and are interested in relevancy in their learning (Merriam et al, 2007). Allowing participants choice and self-direction makes the PD learning and application applicable to real life, relevant issues while enabling participants to draw on their knowledge and experiences.

The content of the online PLC is based upon input from participants during the face to face workshop. The online PLC directly corresponds to the constructivist philosophy in that they necessitate social interaction for learning to take place (Dewey 1916/1944). In these communities, participants will construct their own knowledge

regarding inclusion by learning from one another. During this time, participants will interact during synchronous webinars once per month. In these sessions they will learn strategies specific to the inclusion setting, with a focus on the three domains tested in the TSES, and discuss how the strategy might be implemented in their classrooms. The synchronous nature allows for “real time” discussions which contribute to CoI’s social presence (Garrison et al., 2010) The strategies presented are disability specific and, therefore, they will be universally relevant to all teachers of inclusion regardless of subject, experience, or content. The structure of the webinar as well as the initial introduction of the content is a product of CoI’s teacher presence (Garrison et al., 2010). Participants will apply these strategies in their classrooms for two weeks and subsequently post their observations as well as perceived outcomes on an asynchronous discussion board. Other members of the PLC will then respond with their own reflective thoughts offering suggestions and/or vicariously learning from others in the discussion forum. The initial application of the strategies is in response to a CoI triggering event. The discussions during the webinars are exploratory in that authoritative discourse takes place with the sharing of ideas and possible solutions. Participants in the study integrate information from others into their own schema leading to constructivism’s persuasive word. Finally, the application and further reflection corresponds to CoI’s resolution stage with the cycle repeating itself as CoI’s cognitive presence (Garrison et al., 2010). Through this cycle of information sharing (regarding student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management in the inclusion setting), discussions, applications,



and reflections, participants gain opportunities to develop self-efficacy through mastery, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and psychological state (Bandura, 1977).

### **Choosing a Professional Development Method**

The National Staff Development Council ("Standards for Professional Learning," n.d.) affirmed that several factors must be taken into consideration when developing a PD program: intended outcome, engagement of adult learners, application of the content learned and chances for feedback from others. Furthermore, "decisions about learning designs consider all phases of the learning process, from knowledge and skill acquisition to application, reflection, refinement, assessment, and evaluation" (p. 1). It is with these factors in mind, that I created the PD program in response to this study.

When choosing a PD method for this study, the first factor taken into consideration was the intended outcome of the program. The results of this study indicated a significant difference in teacher perception of self-efficacy in the inclusion classroom setting when compared with the traditional classroom setting for student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. The intended outcome of the program therefore, was to increase teacher perception of self-efficacy in the inclusion classroom for those three domains. I considered various methods such as the traditional one-shot workshop design, action research, peer coaching, critical friends groups (CFG), PLCs, online learning, and blended learning. After careful research and much deliberation, I determined that a blended learning format combining both a face-to-face workshop with an online PLC would be the most advantageous for the intended outcome. Blended learning environments allow for the benefits of face-to-face workshops

and PLCs without all of the barriers. The benefits to the face-to-face workshops are the creation of social presence as per the CoI framework, and they enable large amount of information to be disseminated to all participants at the same time. The benefits of PLCs, are collaboration, emotional support, and empowerment. When online PCLs are employed, these benefits are used without barrier of time. In an online environment, members of the PLC will participate in collaboration absent the restraints of conforming to time allotted during the school day. This environment allows communication of participants to be flexible. Additionally, members of the online PLC will have access to perspectives outside of their own geographic location in which may lead to increased sources of self-efficacy.

### **Face-to-Face Workshop and Self-Efficacy**

Face-to-face workshops facilitate the creation of trust among participants. Creating trust is paramount to the development of self-efficacy. In the online environment, participants in PD may know very little about one another. According to Tseng and Kuo (2010)

In the online setting, the lack of social cues seems to make it harder for people to identify with each other. People may avoid close interaction and resource exchange with unfamiliar others before the interpersonal trust has been firmly established. (p. 1045)

Face to face interactions facilitate the development of strong interpersonal relationship. Once formed, these relationships carry over into the online environment. According to Tseng and Kuo (2010) it is these interpersonal relationships that allow for vicarious

experiences and verbal persuasion which are sources of self-efficacy. When participants trust one another, they are more likely to learn from one another's experience vicariously and feel encouraged to try new instructional strategies by verbal persuasion.

### **Professional Learning Communities and Teacher Self-Efficacy.**

The use of PLCs as a job embedded PD method is empirically linked to an increase in teachers' perception of self-efficacy. Mintzes et al., (2013) affirmed that teachers who take part in PLCs feel a sense of empowerment and develop confidence as they implement new instructional strategies with the support of the group. They reflect upon and make changes to the strategies until at last they have reached mastery, which is a source of self-efficacy. Teachers also learn vicariously through others in the group regarding the success of strategy implementation. Vicarious learning takes place more frequently than in other methods such as action research, coaching, and CFG simply because there are generally more people in a PLC from which to learn. The power of PLCs as they pertain to self-efficacy is the collaboration and emotional support that teachers receive from one another. Other PD delivery methods encourage reflection however only CFG and PLC offer participants reflection, collaboration with a larger group, and the access to emotional support needed to affect change in the classroom. The nature of PLCs allows teachers the opportunity to immerse themselves

in the essential work of the teaching profession; a chance to engage with colleagues in the intellectually demanding and emotionally rewarding tasks that build cohesion and confidence. They also provide a space for exploring

potentially “risky” ideas and for the social persuasion often needed to convince reluctant participants (p. 1215).

Rhyne (2011) concurred with the view that PLCs increase teachers’ perception of efficacy. Rhyne administered the TSES as a pre-test to high school teachers; the same instrument I used to measure teacher perception of self-efficacy in the traditional classroom setting. One major difference between Rhyne’s study and mine was actual PLC activities. The results showed significant increases in teacher perception of self-efficacy in all three subcategories of the TSES: student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management.

### **Blended Learning and Self-Efficacy**

The blended learning design developed in response to this study incorporates a face to face workshop with PLCs and online learning. The sources of efficacy present in the both the face to face workshop and the PLC should be present in this study. The addition of the online format also lends itself to an increase in perceived self-efficacy through the CoI format. According to Shea and Bidjerano (2010) there is a strong correlation between the CoI construct and the development of TSE particularly in blended learning environments. Furthermore, Shea and Bidjerano (2012) affirmed that students in blended courses report higher levels of teaching, social, and cognitive presence compared to their counterparts in fully online courses. This is an important finding suggesting that the face-to-face components contribute to the salience of instructional, social, and cognitive dimensions of blended courses, creating a more effective community of inquiry. (p. 322)

Effective CoIs, contribute to TSE through mastery, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and positive psychological state as was explained in the theoretical framework of this paper.

### **Traditional Professional Development**

The most common PD design is the one-shot workshop or conference (Gulamhussein, 2013). Hooker (2012) affirmed this design can help to bring awareness of issues to a large number of participants simultaneously and can increase the level of concern for individuals taking part in the workshop. By participating in workshops, teachers are exposed to new ideas and large amounts of information.

Although there are benefits to the one-shot workshop design, Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) asserted that the one-shot workshop design generally takes a lecture format, are not intensive and lack depth. Furthermore, this PD delivery method has two issues: cohesion and presenter's time and skill. One-shot workshops typically lack cohesion because there is no connectivity from one workshop to the next therefore knowledge does not build upon itself. In addition, the one-shot workshop is dependent on the skill of the presenter and the amount of time that is devoted to learning. Participants in this workshop format have one opportunity to learn the material; therefore, if the instructor is unskilled in the topic, little learning will occur (Mueller & Brewer, 2013). According to Alber and Nelson (2010), Workshops and lectures are traditional formats for staff development. These formats generally provide little follow-up or support and do not address the needs of individual participants.

Darling-Hammond et al. (2009) asserted that the majority teachers found that the PD they had received was not useful for planning and/or implementation in the classroom even though 90% of teachers have taken part in PD opportunities on a yearly basis. Most one-shot PD workshops in United States' school districts have little relevance to the teachers because they take a one size fits all approach. Furthermore, Guskey and Yoon (2009) affirmed that scheduling a few days of PD per year reinforces the idea that PD is not intertwined with day to day activities as it is unrelated to what occurs in the classroom. Because of this disconnect, teachers adopt the attitude of “putting in their time” to complete district and/or school mandates rather than learning from the experience.

Ermeling (2010) suggested that learning the content during one-shot PD workshops is not necessarily the issue; rather the dilemma occurs when teachers attempt to implement what was taught. He posits that at first, teachers have difficulty transferring learning that is acquired from a workshop into action in their classrooms. Gulamhussein (2013) described a catch-22 situation when implementing information learned from one-shot workshops by stating “to internalize a practice and change their (teachers’) beliefs, teachers must see success with their students, but student success is very hard to come by initially, as learning new skills takes several attempts to master” (Gulamhussein, 2013, p. 12). In essence, the nature of the traditional one-shot workshop design, does not lend itself to mastery of the material. It is ineffective in the classroom and subsequently may not affect the perceived self-efficacy of teachers in the inclusion classroom setting.

## **Effective Professional Development**

To benefit from professional development, it must be effective.

Gulamhussein (2013) asserted that for teachers to grasp the complexities of the PD content traditional top-down approaches, as are commonly used in the one-shot workshop design, do not suffice when transferring new information learned into action in the classroom. According to Desimone (2011), PD should be on-going with a minimum of 20 contact hours over a pre-described period of time. This process allows the participants the time necessary to experiment and reflect on the contents of the program. Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (2011) asserted that effective PD allows teachers the opportunity to reflect upon their current practice, implement new practices, and reflect upon the results of that implementation. Furthermore, effective PD must be grounded in “inquiry, reflection, and experimentation that are participant driven, and job embedded” (p. 82). In addition, PD must be collaborative and relevant, originating from the work that teachers do with their students. Lastly, effective PD is characterized by active participation of learners through the process of discussion, receiving feedback, the development of presentations, and making observations as opposed to sitting through lectures (Desimone, 2011).

**Job embedded PD (JEPD).** The use of JEPD is one way to foster active participation. According to Croft, Coggshall, Dolan, Powers, and Killion, “JEPD is a shared, ongoing process that is locally rooted and makes a direct connection between learning and application in daily practice, thereby requiring active teacher involvement in cooperative, inquiry-based work” (2010, p. 2). JEPD engages teachers during the work

day to collect student data, reflect on student learning, and observe and provide feedback to their peers ("Standards for Professional Learning," 2011). There are several models that incorporate JEPD; however, they share commonalities. All models empower teachers to have an equal voice when planning and implementing JEPD. Teachers choose what is relevant to them and work collaboratively to problem solve. Furthermore, all JEPD models are long term and have a reflection component wherein teachers implement instructional strategies and examine the outcomes of those strategies. According to Henson (2001), reflection on implementation provides empirical verification of the effectiveness of the instructional strategy, while collaborative feedback from colleagues contribute to mastery experiences, which are essential in building TSE .

There are many formats that JEPD can take. Some examples of JEPD formats are action research, coaching, critical friends groups, and professional learning communities (Croft, et al., 2010). Each of these models will be described in full in the following subtopics.

***Action research.*** Action research is used whenever teachers select a classroom problem to study, collect data on the problem and analyze it, implement a solution, reflect on the solution, and if appropriate incorporate that solution into classroom activities (West, 2011). According to López-Pastor, Monjas, and Manrique (2011) action research merges educational theory with practice. This merge is particularly important due to the changing landscape of education and the new responsibilities that teachers possess. The action research model is used individually or collaboratively. Individual action research takes place in isolation conducted by a single teacher. Collaborative action research



employs a team of teachers who collectively decide to focus on one problem, create and implement a solution, and then together reflect on the advantages/disadvantages of the solution (West, 2011). For example, a problem that a team of teachers of inclusion may encounter is the lack of social interaction that autistic children have with their general education peers. By employing action research, teachers may collect data by recording how many times per day the autistic students speak with others in the class when compared with a number of general education students to act as a control. If the teachers find that the social interactions of the autistic students are significantly less than that of the general education students, they will develop a strategy to engage all students in some form of discourse. The teachers will then reflect on the strategy to determine if the outcome of that strategy was successful in meeting the goal of increasing student interaction. If it was, then the strategy would be incorporated into classroom routines. The same action research methodology can be used by individual teachers in their classrooms without any collaboration.

*Benefits to action research.* There are many benefits to the action research model. Reil (2010) asserted that action research facilitates a progression of problem solving through a series of reflective actions. Mohr, as cited in Pine (2009), concurred and adds that teachers who participate in action research think more reflectively about problems in their classrooms and view teaching as a learning process. They focused more on student outcomes as a result of instruction rather than just on the instruction itself, and gave teachers a sense of empowerment in their ability to affect change in their classrooms.

*Barriers to action research.* While there are many benefits of action research, there are also validity and ethical considerations. There are concerns about the validity of action research results in that there is often only one data source with no triangulation from multiple sources (Check & Schutt, 2012; Pine, 2009). Furthermore, biases may inform results and assumptions may be made during the reflective process of action research. The ethical considerations of action research include gaining informed consent for minors, the possibility of engaging in abuse of power since the researcher is in a position of authority over the subjects, and confidentiality due to the access that the teacher has to student personal information such as school records and student grades (Check & Schutt, 2012).

*Peer coaching.* The peer coaching model of JEPD occurs when two people with similar interests and/or concerns work collaboratively to solve a problem. In peer coaching, there is no hierarchical structure with one person in authority and the other subservient (McDermott, 2011; Jewett & MacPhee, 2012). Instead, “peer coaching primarily relies on two or more people providing one another with both emotional support and a structured process for self-discovery” (McDermott, 2011, p. 2). With peer coaching, a pre-conference between the teacher and the coach occurs to discuss possible solutions to a problem as well as a classroom visit. Upon visiting the classroom, the coach observes the teacher in the classroom while the new instructional strategy is implemented. After the observation is complete, there is a post conference with the coach and teacher to discuss all aspects of the strategy implementation. Additionally, the teacher and coach may subsequently switch roles and repeat the process but with the

original teacher observing the original coach in the classroom. The purpose of this model is not to be evaluative of a teacher's abilities, but rather to act as a vehicle for teacher reflection and practice to improve instruction (Kretlow & Bartholomew, 2010). Using the example problem regarding autistic students and their lack of social interaction that was presented above, the peer coaching method would begin with the teacher and a peer coach brainstorming possible solutions during a pre-conference. The peer coach is another teacher who may teach the same grade level or subject and has a common interest in the problem. The peer coach would then observe the teacher in the classroom while he or she implements the solution while taking copious notes and collecting data. Finally, a post observation conference would take place between the teacher and the coach to discuss and reflect on the outcome of the solution from the perspective of both the teacher and the coach.

*Benefits of peer coaching.* The peer coaching model provides both the coach and the teacher with clarity of a problem by allowing for different perspectives, encouragement, and accountability for the implementation of strategies that may solve the problem (McDermott, 2011). Furthermore, according to Faltos (2013), peer coaching is highly collaborative, intensive and ongoing, and connected to classroom practice.

*Barriers to peer coaching.* Initially, teachers are reluctant to solicit their peers to take participate in coaching. Furthermore teachers are hesitant to be observed in their classrooms because they relate observation to evaluation. Likewise, teachers feel uncomfortable observing other teachers. They do not want their peers to feel like they are being judged. Because of these concerns, any discussions that take place in the post-

observation tend to lack depth and do not challenge the observed classroom practices. Additionally, when teachers assume the role of coach, it may be difficult to practice restraint. Teachers are used to being in charge and may have a difficult time relinquishing control even if it is not in their own classroom (Jewett & MacPhee, 2012; Murray, Ma, & Mazur, 2009).

***Critical friends groups.*** This model of JEPD elicits the participation of a group of teachers, (usually from different disciplines) who meet regularly over a course of the school year. Critical friends groups (CFG) generally meet face to face during the school day and may or may not teach the same students. All members of the group are self-directed; there is no outside instructor delivering content or sources. During these meetings, the group analyzes one another's lessons and assessments to give constructive feedback and an opportunity for reflection. This group may also plan lessons together and evaluate the effectiveness of those lessons. Critical friends groups cultivate critiques among members that are constructive and allow for new and differing perspectives (Cox, 2010; Storey & Taylor, 2011). Using the previous example problem regarding autistic students and their lack of social interaction that was presented above, teachers from each of the students' core subject areas may meet in a CFG. During that time, they may describe students' social interaction issues, plan classroom strategies that might benefit these students, and then consistently implement these strategies in each of their classes.

***Benefits to critical friends groups.*** CFGs strengthen teachers' relationships with one another and may increase awareness of research-based solutions to classroom problems. Furthermore, CFGs provide support for teachers who historically work in

isolation. Finally, CFGs allow for focused reflection on relevant issues in the classroom (Cox, 2010; Storey & Taylor, 2011; Zepeda, 2012).

*Barriers to critical friends groups.* The content of CFG discussions are solely initiated by teachers of the group as are the possible solutions to problems that may be encountered in the classroom. While on the surface, this may be perceived as a benefit in that it ensures relevancy for its members, and allows for differing perspectives inside of the group, it may also limit access to perspectives of educators outside of their group (Storey & Taylor, 2011). Furthermore, the amount of time that can be devoted to CFGs during the school day may be limiting; therefore, in-depth analysis of issues may be lacking, and since CFGs usually consist of teachers with different specialties, content specific pedagogy may be superficial (Curry, 2008). Finally if a member of the group is considered to be a competitor, teacher apprehension may be present and diminishes the effectiveness of the group (Storey & Taylor, 2011).

*Professional learning communities.* Professional learning communities (PLC) are groups of teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders who come together to explore and improve the practice of teaching to enhance student learning. Participation in a PLC is “an ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for the students they serve” (DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2010, p. 2). PLCs are similar to CFGs regarding the goals of the collaboration and some researchers do not make the distinction between the two and/or view CFG as a component of a PLC. According to DuFour (2004), professional learning community is a term that “has been used so ubiquitously that it is

danger of losing all meaning” (p. 6). There are some subtle differences between the two PD formats. PLC size is not limited and may consist of small groups of three or four professionals, district wide PLCs or national PLCs depending on the focus of the group (*Professional Learning Communities: Professional*, n.d.). Not only do PLCs vary in their membership, but they have specific implementation criteria. Pirtle and Tobia (2014) outline six criteria for the successful implementation of PLCs: structure, relevant challenges, support, trust, feedback, and support teacher self-efficacy.

PLCs must have a goal and a structure (Pirtle & Tobia, 2014). The goal of this PLC is to increase teacher of self-efficacy in the inclusion classroom setting across three domains. To achieve this goal, teachers in the PLC may analyze teacher lessons as they relate to student outcomes and adjust instruction based on the analysis or select instructional strategies based on research. The PLC will take place online via webinars, and discussions and will encompass new modules once per month for a total of six months.

PLCs must address the issues that are most relevant and challenging to the group. Teachers will discuss the challenges they encounter in the inclusion classroom and the group will identify those challenges that are the most relevant. Once these challenges are identified the group may decide on the best course of action by comparing the benefits and drawbacks of various group solutions (Pirtle & Tobia, 2014).

PLCs must also have the support of all stakeholders involved in the learning community. Support of community members may come in the form of posting timely discussions, application and group reflection of learning, and taking part in the webinars.

Support of the district may come in the form of supplying books on the subject of inclusion, and necessary supplies for the implementation of new instructional strategies. Support of the building administration may come in the form of common planning time for members of the PLC. At the study site, teachers contractually receive one planning period per school day. For middle school teachers, that amounts to 56 minutes per day, for high school teachers (who have block scheduling) that amounts to 90 minutes per day. Common planning time would be helpful for members of a PLC because it would allow members to observe one another during new strategy implementation or discuss, on a daily basis, situations that may occur in the inclusion classroom (Pirtle & Tobia, 2014).

To be effective, members of PLCs must trust one another. PLC must be non-judgmental and members should feel free to participate without fear of repercussions. When teachers trust one another and feel supported rather than evaluated, they are more likely to implement new strategies to improve student learning in the inclusion classroom than they otherwise would without this trust (Pirtle & Tobia, 2014).

Members of PLCs reflect on their own work within the learning community. According to Yost (2006) reflection is a tool that helps teachers find solutions to problems in their classrooms. When teachers solve problems, mastery experiences, which is a source of self-efficacy, increases. In effective PLCs, trust and feedback are related in that teachers are more likely to accept constructive feedback from someone they trust which leads to more in-depth reflection (Pirtle & Tobia, 2014).

PLCs must support teacher self-efficacy. According to Pirtle and Tobia (2014),

While supporting districts and schools in implementing PLCs, we have found that

when leaders create the conditions where educators support one another's practice in PLCs, teachers feel more confident and develop a strong sense of self-efficacy; they believe in their ability to influence student learning and make a difference in student outcomes and achievement. (p. 6)

Trust and participant feedback increase teacher self-efficacy when members of the PLC work on issues that are relevant to them.

Trust is a precursor to teacher reflection. According to Pirtle and Tobia (2014) "trusting relationships... develop the conditions where teachers can be vulnerable with one another and open to engaging in the kinds of professional conversations that get them to reflect deeply about their teaching" (p.4). This deep reflection may influence vicarious experiences when teachers learn from trusted others. Furthermore, mastery experiences may increase in that teachers who are in trusting relationships with their peers may be more willing to take risks in finding solutions to problems without fear of judgement and evaluation from other members of the PLC (Pirtle & Tobia, 2014).

### **Barriers to Effective PD**

There are many barriers to effective PD that include a lack of resources, ever changing priorities and untrained administrators on how to support effective professional development; however, those are not the largest barriers to effective PD (The Boston Consulting Group, 2014). In a study commissioned by The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, researchers affirmed that the largest barrier to effective PD was time (The Boston Consulting Group, 2014). The participants in this study were over 1,300 teachers, administrators, and PD experts. The authors of this study found that teachers felt that



there was not enough time embedded into their schedules for PD activities, including PLCs. Members of the National Staff Development Council recommend job embedded PD during the workday that allows teachers the opportunity to receive support for improvement while in the work setting ("Standards for Professional Learning," n.d.). Further, the United States Department of Education recognizes the importance of having time set aside in the school day for professional development. According to the department

We believe that the requirement to provide ongoing, high quality, job-embedded PD to staff in a school is clearly tied to improving instruction...the requirement that PD be "job-embedded" connotes a direct connection between a teacher's work in the classroom and the PD the teacher receives. (State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, 2009, p. 58479)

Unfortunately, many teachers feel that time during the workday to be used specifically for PD is lacking (The Boston Consulting Group, 2014).

### **Online Professional Development**

The barriers to effective PD can be mitigated by the use of an online platform for professional development. While job embedded PD is recommended by both the National Staff Development Council and the U.S. Department of Education, until there is a paradigm shift regarding the importance of PD during the workday, we are left with the dilemma of having teacher learning dictated by the amount of time that is available. There is a solution to that problem. While not job embedded per the recommendations, online PD gives teachers the opportunity to take part in effective PD without the

constraints of time. Online PD allows for faculty engagement and sustained reflection in a flexible environment that is not limited to the time of day or the space available.

Additionally, online PD may be the preferred mode of learning for teachers who are reluctant to continually connect socially to their peers as in the face to face workshop environment. Furthermore, online PD may broaden participants' frame of reference through the inclusion of members beyond their own social circles, cultural experiences, and geographic locations (Brookes, 2010; Duncan-Howell, 2010).

### **Blended Learning**

Blended learning is a PD method that integrates the benefits of both a face-to-face workshop and an online format in a thoughtful way to achieve the most favorable learning outcomes. According to Garrison and Vaughan (2008) "The basic principle is that face to face oral communication and online written communication are optimally integrated such as the strengths of each are blended into a unique learning experience congruent with the context and intended educational purpose" (p. 5). With blended learning, the online learning component is an extension of the face-to-face training thus enabling learning to be ongoing.

### **Contents of the Professional Development Program**

The results of this study indicated that secondary general education teachers perceived themselves to be less efficacious in the inclusion classroom setting when compared to the traditional classroom setting across all three subscales of the TSES: student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. The project that was created addresses the specific areas of concern for each of these domains via the

online portion through focused instruction, application of new strategies, discussion and reflection.

**Student engagement in the inclusion setting.** The results of this study revealed that general education teachers in the inclusion classroom setting perceived themselves as less efficacious in assisting families of children with disabilities. Furthermore they view themselves as less efficacious in motivating students with disabilities and in helping them to value learning. Additionally, teachers felt that they lacked the ability to facilitate self-efficacy development in their learning support students when it came to their schoolwork. As was previously mentioned in this paper, teacher and student self-efficacy are related in that as teacher self-efficacy increases so does student efficacy. According to Zepke and Leach (2010), student self-efficacy is a determining factor in student motivation. “Those with fixed self-theories (efficacy) tend to have fixed views on their own abilities, adopting performance goals for their learning and losing motivation when these are not achieved” (Zepke and Leach, 2010, p. 169). Students whose self-efficacy theories are pliable tend to view the challenges they encounter as learning opportunities and are motivated to stay engaged in the learning process (Zepke & Leach, 2010). Therefore, part of the content of the PD project is focused on strategies that increase students’ self-efficacy and subsequently motivation and students’ belief in themselves. Furthermore, a portion of the project is focused on strategies regarding working with the families of students with learning needs.

**Instructional strategies in the inclusion setting.** Study results revealed that general education teachers in the inclusion classroom setting perceived themselves as less

efficacious in crafting good questions and using a variety of assessments for their students with disabilities. Additionally, teachers perceived themselves as less efficacious in providing alternative explanations or examples as well as in implementing alternative strategies when their students with disabilities are confused. In other words, teachers feel less efficacious when differentiating instruction for learning support students in the inclusion classroom. According to Thakur (2014)

Differentiated instruction is a technique that teachers use to accommodate each student's learning style and instructional preferences. This strategy may involve teaching the same material to all students using a variety of instructional methods, or it may require the teacher to teach content at varying levels of difficulty based on the readiness, interests and ability of each student. (p. 10)

Although all students in the inclusion classroom may learn the same content, the instructional methods and the assessments used may differ for learning support students based on their ability (Thakur, 2014). For example, students who have difficulty reading due to a learning disability may be given readings with shorter passages and less complex sentences when compared with their non-disabled peers. They may also require the same type of differentiation during assessment. According to Deng and Harris (2008) the responsibility for the successful inclusion of students with disabilities in the classroom lies with the general education teacher. Unfortunately the general education teachers in this study do not perceive themselves as efficacious in instructing students with learning support needs when compared with instructing general education students. It is for this reason that part of the content of the PD project is focused on strategies to differentiate

instruction for students with disabilities in the inclusion classroom which should increase TSE.

**Classroom management in inclusion setting.** The results of this study revealed that participants felt less efficacious in their ability to direct students with disabilities to follow classroom rules. Furthermore, teachers felt less efficacious in controlling disruptive behavior of students with disabilities and feel they have difficulty calming them down. Additionally, teachers feel that they are unprepared to establish a management system to address the behavior of their students with disabilities. According to Oliver, Wehby, and Reschly (2011) disruptions affect all students in the inclusion classroom. When students are disruptive, the result is less time on academic tasks, lower grades, and loss of focus. Furthermore, the teacher spends a considerable amount of time tending to the disruptive students rather than teaching the class. Disruptive behavior can occur in any classroom, not just inclusion classrooms however there are some disabilities, for example autism and oppositional defiance disorder, that may lend themselves to more frequent outbursts of the special needs students (*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*, 2013). Soodak (2003) affirmed that the way in which the inclusion classroom is managed may quell some of the disruptive behaviors. The author asserts that classroom management strategies that build community by facilitating friendships and collaboration are a proactive beginning to a well-functioning classroom with minimal disruption. A portion of the PD project will focus on classroom management strategies that can be used to lessen disruptions in the classroom.

## **Implementation**

This section of the paper outlines the potential resources and existing supports that will be needed for the project as well as how the project will be implemented and the timeline. Furthermore, this section outlines the potential barriers to project implementation, the roles and responsibilities of myself and other stakeholders, and how the project will be evaluated. It also outlines implications of this project with regard to both local and far reaching social change.

### **Potential Resources and Existing Supports**

In order for this PD project to be implemented, various resources and existing supports are needed. The PD team who is employed by the target district possesses a wealth of information regarding the logistics of setting up a face-to-face workshop and has experience in online conferencing. They will be a source of support throughout the project. Resources that will be used during the implementation are PowerPoints and ancillary activities that were created specifically for this project, the GoToMeeting and Edweb websites, access to a computer, projector, and the internet. A large meeting room will also be needed. Depending on the number of participants, the face-to-face workshop can be held in a classroom if it is a small group, one of the libraries if it is a bigger groups and the auditorium of one of the high schools if it is a very large group.

### **Potential Barriers**

Just as in all effective PD, the biggest barrier to implementation of the program is time. Many teachers in the target school district work not only during the school day but after school by coaching sports or running clubs. Furthermore, teachers grade papers,

plan lessons and contact parents while at home after school. These commitments leave little time for PD activities. Another potential barrier is funding. The GoToMeeting website is a subscription service. The site is free for 3 participants or less, \$19 per month for up to 5 participants, \$39 per month for up to 25 participants, and \$49 per month for up to 100 participants (GoToMeeting, n.d.). The cost will be determined by the number of people that who take part in the PD program. The availability of bagels and coffee during the face-to-face workshop will also be an expense as will the items that will be used for a scavenger hunt activity.

### **Proposal for Implementation and Timetable**

To implement the PD project that was created in response to the study, the support of the administration will be needed. PD in the target school district is generally run by the head of PD for the district or by the principals and vice principals in the individual schools. While it is doubtful that the administration will allow a mandatory PD day to be used for this project, there are voluntary “trade-in” PD days that can be used for the implementation of the project. District trade-in days allow faculty to participate in a workshop during the summer to have a release day before Thanksgiving break. Once permission is granted, the project will be placed on the summer PD calendar along with a brief description. The purpose of the district PD calendar is for faculty to plan their attendance at PD should they choose to do so. Invitations will be sent to all members of the secondary education faculty that explains the purpose and format of the PD (see Appendix A). Five days before the workshop, those participants who registered for the workshop will receive a link to Misunderstood Minds which is sponsored by the Public

Broadcasting Service (PBS). Simulations on the link enlighten viewers as to what it may be like to have a disability. These simulations will be referenced during the face-to-face workshop. The one-day face-to-face workshop will be delivered in August before the school year begins during the days that are allocated by the district for PD. The face-to-face workshop will begin at 7:30 a.m. During the workshop, participants will complete the survey that was created for this study regarding teacher self-efficacy in the inclusion classroom (see Appendix B). The time allotted for this activity is 10 minutes. The results will act as a baseline pre-test for current self-efficacy perceptions. There are five goals of the face-to-face workshop. The first goal is to build relationships and trust among the participants. There are four activities that will take place that will build towards that goal (see Appendix A). The total time allotted for these activities is 1 hour 35 minutes. The participants will take a 15 minute coffee break and then begin work towards the second goal of the face-to-face workshop: to understand the history of inclusion as well as the legal and ethical responsibilities of teachers of inclusion; 1 hour and 15 minutes allotted for this goal. During this time, participants will take part in activities as well as lecture (see Appendix A). Participants will break for a 1 hour, 15 minute lunch. When they return, they will spend 40 minutes taking part in activities that were created to achieve the third goal: to gain a better understanding of what it might be like to have a disability in the inclusion classroom (see Appendix A). The fourth goal of the face-to-face workshop is to distinguish between different disabilities and how they may manifest themselves in an inclusion classroom. This will be accomplished through lecture and activities with a time allotted of 1 hour 15 minutes (see Appendix A). The fifth goal is to understand how



to begin building a relationship with a co-teacher. The time allotted for activities that support this goal is 20 minutes. Finally, the face-to-face workshop will conclude with information regarding the format of the online PD portion of the project as well as instruction on how to access Edweb and GoToMeeting. The time allotted for this section of the face-to-face workshop is 15 minutes. The workshop will conclude at 2:25 p.m.

The online PLC will take place via six different webinars that occur once per month. Each webinar is focused on a different disability, and will instruct participants in strategies that can be used in the inclusion classroom. The disabilities were chosen based on the most common disabilities that may be present in the inclusion classroom (see Appendix A). Each webinar will focus on the three domains recognized in the TSES results as they pertain to a specific disability. For instance one webinar focuses on autism spectrum disorder. In this webinar, participants will learn about classroom management, instructional strategies, and student engagement in the inclusion classroom as they pertain to autism. They will gain this knowledge from me as the instructor through PowerPoints and lecture, but more importantly they will gain knowledge through collaboration with their peers. This part of the online PD will take place synchronously through GoToMeeting software. GoToMeeting is an online platform that specializes in collaboration through high definition videoconferencing. Participants can see and hear one another through the use of their computer screens, cameras, and microphones. Computer screens can also be shared so that collaboration on the same documents can occur in real time. There is also a chat feature to the meeting which allows participants to make comments and ask questions should they prefer to do so in text rather than verbally.

The timeframe for these meetings is approximately 2 hours each and includes the time spent on instruction, questions, and collaboration to determine how each member will apply the strategies learned in their inclusion classroom the following week. The entire meeting will then be recorded and uploaded into Edweb to use as a reference therefore members will always have access to it.

After the online webinars for each module, participants will have two weeks to implement strategies and reflect on their effectiveness. Participants will post their reflections to an asynchronous discussion board using the Edweb online platform within those two weeks. In the following week, participants must respond to two of their community members. Edweb was specifically created as a forum for online PLCs to collaborate as a community of learners. The site allows videos to be posted therefore the previous week's webinars from GoToMeeting will be available on the site. Additionally, Edweb has many other features that are useful for PLCs. For instance, there is an area where participants may chat, post helpful resources, create polls and quizzes, read educator blogs, and have access to a resource library.

At the beginning of each disability webinar, participants will reflect on the strategies from the previous webinar as well as contents from the face-to-face workshop and consider how they might inform the current webinar. It is important to make the connection between content known (existing knowledge) and content learned (practice knowledge) (Piaget, 1947/2001). This iterative process allows the participant to augment existing knowledge and apply new knowledge when appropriate.

At the end of the final webinar, participants will complete the same survey that they did at the beginning of the PD program which will serve as a post-test. The replies to the post-test will be compared with the pre-test to determine if teacher perception of self-efficacy increased. The entire timeline for the online portion of the PD is 6 months, beginning in the Fall of the school year and ending in the Spring.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others**

My primary role and responsibility was to create and implement the PD program and to determine if participation in the workshop led to an increase in teachers' perception of self-efficacy in the inclusion classroom. I will be responsible for disseminating my findings to the administration, participants, and the scholarly community through publication of those findings upon the completion of the PD. The role and responsibilities of the administration is to support the PD program by allowing it to be placed on the PD schedule, approving the trade-in day for the day before Thanksgiving break, and providing the space and technical support needed for the face-to-face workshop of the PD. The responsibilities of the participants are to actively engage in the face-to-face workshop and the online PLC. The participants are responsible for implementing new strategies in their classrooms and reflecting upon the outcome of the implementation. They will also be responsible for sharing their reflections through the asynchronous discussion board and responding to other participants who have done the same.

### **Project Evaluation**

This project will be evaluated through both formative and summative assessment strategies. According to Cauley and McMillan (2010) formative assessment is used during instruction and can increase motivation and achievement. Information gained from formative assessment can be used to modify instruction as it is taking place to reach the intended goals. Conversely, summative assessment is used after instruction to evaluate learning and determine if goals have been met. Information gained from summative assessment can then be used to make changes to teaching methods and activities in subsequent lessons (Eberly Center, n.d.).

The overarching goal of increasing general education teachers' perception of self-efficacy in the inclusion classroom will be evaluated summatively through the pre-test/post-test survey results. If it is found that perceptions of self-efficacy did not increase after participation in the PD project, the project can be re-designed with the information from the assessment in mind. For example, if perception of self-efficacy increased for both classroom management and instructional strategies but not student engagement, the PD program can be modified to include more information and activities in student engagement for the next round of participants.

The smaller goals incorporated into the face-to-face workshop that eventually lead to the overarching goal of increasing perception of self-efficacy will be evaluated both formatively and summatively. The first goal, to build relationships and trust among the participants, will be assessed both formatively and summatively. Formative assessment will be made through observing the amount of participation, engagement in dialogue, and

body language (relaxed versus tense) throughout all activities. Summative assessment will be made through completion of the zoom activity and through the creation of a mission statement (see Appendix A). If participants are able to place the pictures in the correct order during the zoom activity then communication has taken place. The mission statement will be evaluated based on the content: student learning goals are incorporated, participant goals are incorporated, and the presence of a plan on how participants will achieve the goals. The second goal, to understand the history of inclusion as well as the legal and ethical responsibilities of teachers of inclusion, will be assessed both formatively and summatively. Summative assessment will be used during the Why Inclusion activity (see Appendix A) and will be based on whether or not participants can develop themes regarding inclusion and exclusion. Formative assessment will take place throughout all activities by observing the level of participant engagement and through discussions regarding the legal, professional, and ethical responsibilities of the participants with regard to inclusion. The third goal, to gain a better understanding of what it might be like to have a disability in the inclusion classroom, will be assessed formatively through discussion. After the scavenger hunt activity (see Appendix A) questions will be asked such as “How did you feel when you did not have the abilities that you normally do?” and “What do you think it might be like for students in your classroom who live with disabilities every day?” Formative assessment will also be used during the Misunderstood Minds reflection activity with questions posed such as “Do you believe that the simulations you viewed were accurate representations of what it might be like to have a disability?” “Was there anything that surprised you during the

simulations?” and “Was there anything during the simulations that gave insight into the behavior of students in your classrooms?” The fourth goal, to distinguish between different disabilities and how they may manifest themselves in an inclusion classroom, will be formatively assessed during the Create a Flipbook activity (see Appendix A) by looking over the flipbooks as they are being created to check for organization, accurate content and completion. The fifth goal, to understand how to begin building a relationship with a co-teacher will be assessed summatively. Questions such as “Do you feel as if this activity will help build a relationship between you and your co-teacher?” and “Why or why not?” will be asked.

### **Implications Including Social Change**

#### **Local Community**

General education teachers have the perception that they are less efficacious less efficacious in the inclusion classroom than in the general education classroom, particularly with regard to three domains: student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. Furthermore, the results indicated that PD was the most effective way to increase efficacy in this respect. Finally, the results indicated that teachers spent little time participating in PD regarding inclusion and were dissatisfied with the amount of PD they received regarding inclusion. The project that was created in response to this study addresses the need for PD by providing skills and strategies that recommended for use in the inclusion classroom that focus on the three domains.

This project is important to teachers, administrators, students, and their parents in that when teachers feel efficacious, they are more willing to try new strategies, persist in

the face of adversity, and show enthusiasm while teaching (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). This leads to positive student outcomes and an increase in student self-efficacy as was mentioned earlier in the paper.

### **Far-Reaching**

This project will have far reaching implications towards social change.

Polat (2011) affirmed that the goal of education is empowerment and that education is essential to human dignity. According to Polat (2011)

The principles of inclusive education require all schools to be open to all children and to seek to respond to diversity. Access without quality leaves the education system vulnerable, as this would negatively affect access and achievement as well as fail to meet the goals of equity and justice. (p. 53)

By participation in the PD program, teachers' knowledge base regarding student engagement, instructional strategies and classroom management in the inclusion classroom will increase. By increasing the knowledge base, teacher self-efficacy increases as does student efficacy and achievement. Therefore participation in the PD program may eventually lead to equity among all students (general education and students with disabilities) in the inclusion classroom. This equity empowers students and contributes to basic human dignity.

### **Conclusion**

Section 3 provided a description of the project and its goals, a rationale, and a literature review which informed the format of this project. Both Section 2 and Section 3 of this paper provided the content of the project. Also in this section was an

implementation plan that consisted of potential barriers, a timetable for implementation, and the roles and responsibilities of myself, participants and the administration. It further outlined the implications for social change, both local and far reaching. In the following section, the strengths and limitations of the project will be discussed, and a reflection of myself as a scholar, leader, and social change agent will be provided.



## Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

### **Introduction**

Section 4 of this paper outlines the strength and limitations of this project, as well as recommendations for the amelioration of those limitations. Furthermore, this section will serve as a reflection of myself as scholar, project developer and evaluator, and leader for social change.

### **Project Strengths and Limitations**

One strength of this PD project lies in its relevancy to the participants. According to Buczynski and Hansen (2010) too often PD takes a top down approach wherein administrators decide on the topics without any input from the participants who are in the classroom every day. This PD was designed specifically for teachers of inclusion per the results of the survey instrument used in this study. Another strength of this project is the collaboration that will take place as a part of the online PLC. According to Crafton and Kaiser (2011), teachers often work in isolation so when they have the opportunity to collaborate with peers regarding relevant problems that occur in their classrooms, the dialogue is not contrived but genuine and focused on solving those problems. Finally, a strength of this project is that it was created through from the perspective of adult learning theory. According to Buczynski and Hansen (2010) PD programs of the past “have been unsuccessful because they failed to take teachers' existing knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes into account” (p. 600). By omitting the vast amounts of prior knowledge that teachers possess, the format of many PD programs are more akin to pedagogy rather than andragogy. According to Beavers (2009) instructors of PD programs generally take

on the role of “teacher” with the participants taking on the role of “students”. The “teacher” leads the “students” in lecture and activities that may be completely acceptable in a K-12 classroom however adult learners have different needs than learners who are children. Adult learners need autonomy and the opportunities to use their vast experience to direct learning that is relevant to them. This autonomy can be found in the online PD project through the participants guiding discussions and determining the direction of the implementation of strategies.

One limitation of the project is that there is no follow up regarding student achievement. While teachers may perceive themselves as more efficacious when teaching in the inclusion setting, there is no mechanism included in the project that will determine if an increase in TSE actually affected student achievement. According to Mizell (2010) the ultimate purpose of any PD program is to improve the practice of teaching which will subsequently improve the learning of students. To address this limitation, teachers can implement their own action research and determine if their increased perceptions of self-efficacy actually leads to better student outcomes. Another limitation of the project is that there is no opportunity for teachers to observe one another. Croft, Coggshall, Dolan, Powers, and Killion (2010) affirm that observations give teachers immediate feedback on the implementation of strategies so that they may be modified from one class to another within the same day. To address this limitation, participants can be grouped by school for observation purposes. For example, if there are 3 participants who are teachers at the same middle school, they can observe one another. This practice would need to be

completed with the support of the administration if class coverage for the observing teacher is needed.

### **Recommendations for Alternate Approaches**

The results of this study indicated that the best course of action to increase teacher perception of self-efficacy in the inclusion classroom was to create a PD program that focuses on student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. The blended learning format that was used for this project seemed to be the best choice of format. The face-to-face component of the program acts as the catalyst to the relationship building and social presence among participants as well as for the dissemination of information (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2010). The online PLC allows for reflection and collaboration of participants (Pirtle & Tobia, 2014). Furthermore, the blended learning format has a greater effect on TSE than either face-to-face or online only format (Shea & Bidjerano, 2012). Although the blended format was determined to be the best PD format for addressing the problem, an alternative format could have been used. For example a coaching format may be somewhat successful in solving the problem. In coaching, teachers act in pairs, one observing and providing feedback to the other (McDermott, 2011; Jewett & MacPhee, 2012). According to Chong and Kong (2012) “Vicarious experience and verbal persuasion through modeling or peer coaching have been identified as useful in enhancing the efficacy of those seeking alternate practices to work with student behaviors” (p. 267). While peer coaching has been linked increased teacher self-efficacy, based on the research that was conducted for this project study, I believe that the format that was chosen was the most suitable for the problem.

### **Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, Leadership and Change**

During this project, I learned a lot about scholarship and its role in developing a project. I learned that the development of the project takes a leader. Finally, I learned that to affect change, the participation of many people is needed.

#### **Scholarship**

I used to believe that scholarship was just something that was reserved for college professors and intellectuals; however, after participating in the process of scholarship, I realized that scholarship can be exhibited by anyone who has an interest in and a passion for a topic. Scholarship feeds the natural curiosity of anyone who makes the commitment to knowledge and truth. Scholarship starts with a question, which may lead to the identification of a problem. Once that problem is known, scholarship is used to dissect it to examine the many different facets that contribute to it. This task is accomplished through extensive research of the problem from varying sources with each source building cumulatively onto the next until a synergistic whole understanding of the problem in question is realized. Further research is then undertaken and used as scaffolding in supporting new solutions to the problem adding to the scholarly research that is available to others that come after. My view of scholarship can be summed up by a quote by Bernard of Chartres. According to Gimpel (1961), as quoted in Howard (1995), Bernard of Chartres stated that

We are as dwarfs mounted on the shoulders of giants, so that although we perceive many more things than they, it is not because our vision is more piercing

or our stature higher, but because we are carried and elevated higher thanks to their gigantic size. (p. 790)

It is through the work of others that scholarship progresses.

### **Project Development and Evaluation**

Through the development of this project, I learned that staying organized and methodical is exceptionally important. Creating basic outlines with the goals that are to be achieved and then filling those outlines as more information is gained can keep organizational problems at a minimum. I also learned that when developing a project, everything must be somehow tied back to the original research problem and the literature. This connection helps give the project credibility and allows others to gain an understanding of why the project was developed in the way that it was. It also allowed me, as the developer, to reflect on every aspect of the project. I also learned that evaluation needs to be specific. It is not enough to say “formative assessment will take place through discussion.” The project developer must determine what it is about the discussion that will determine if the goal has been met.

### **Leadership and Change**

I learned that change does not occur in a vacuum and is the result of thousands of hours of combined scholarship, passion, and tenaciousness by a multitude of people. One person cannot change an entire system alone but one person can be the impetus towards change. This individual is the person who will lead the others.

Throughout this process, I have learned how to be a leader. I have learned that leading is not synonymous with dictatorship and that being a good leader means taking

advice from others such as my chairperson and co-chairperson as well as asking for help when needed. Previous to this study, I had been somewhat of a leader in my school and have created and run workshops for the district; however, it was very rare that I ever asked for advice or help for fear of seeming incompetent. This project study taught me that being a leader does not mean knowing all of the answers. I also learned from this project that change will not take place without the support of all stakeholders. For instance, without the support of the administration I would not have been able to use their resources and their email system to send out the invitations to the study. Without the support of the teachers, I will have no participants for the project, and I would have had no participants for the study itself. While it takes many people to affect change, it also takes someone to lead that change. How this project study further advances my understanding of leadership and change is still to be determined. I believe however that once the project is implemented, I will have much more to say on this topic.

### **Analysis of Self**

During this entire doctoral process, I learned a lot about myself. I learned that scholarship is not reserved for college professors but that I am also a scholar. I learned that teaching is ever-evolving as new information is acquired and that I, as a practitioner have the responsibility to always keep learning. I also learned that project development is something of which I am very familiar; however, during the doctoral process I combined it with scholarship. This afforded me a deeper understanding of the appropriate way to develop a project.

### **Analysis of Self as Scholar**

I have come to understand that the first step in any scholarly journey begins with a question; one that cannot be easily dismissed or ignored. I am a general education, middle school science teacher who has had no formal training in teaching inclusion classes or students with disabilities. Although I knew nothing about best practices for inclusion I continued to have students with disabilities, sometimes severe, in my classroom. It was a frustrating experience due to my inexperience and lack of knowledge and I truly felt like I was doing all students in my class a disservice by being their teacher. I asked myself “I wonder how many other teachers feel the same way that I do?” It was with that question that my dissertation topic was born. According to Torney-Purta (2009) it was during the acceptance speech for the Noble Prize in 1921 that Albert Einstein’s stated

The mere formulation of a problem is far more essential than its solution, which may be merely a matter of mathematical or experimental skills. To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old problems from a new angle requires creative imagination and marks real advances. (p. 825)

This quote is particularly poignant to me as I reflect on myself as a scholar.

I had previous research experience through the development of my master’s thesis however the scholarly experience was somewhat different this time. During this project study, I realized that what I considered scholarly research during my master’s thesis was nothing more than an expanded annotated bibliography of sorts. I learned that to be

scholarly means to look at an issue “from a new angle” by systematically and methodically building upon what is already known.

I feel that I have demonstrated scholarship throughout this project study. When I first decided on the problem I wanted to study, I thought that I would find some articles pertaining to the subject and use the information contained in the articles to write a paper. What I discovered was that each article just left me with more questions. My curiosity with regard to my topic grew exponentially with every new piece of information that was added until finally, it coalesced into the final project.

I have demonstrated scholarship by designing a quasi-experimental study that combined two different pre-existing measurement instruments into one survey. I then disseminated the survey electronically to secure a larger response, something the authors of the original two instruments did not do. I examined at what was pre-existing from a “new angle.”

Lastly, I have demonstrated scholarship by creating a PD program through the integration of the research. I applied research to practice in a unique way. I can examine my project with a critical eye, to determine its strengths and limitations and I can provide alternative approaches to solve the problem.

### **Analysis of Self as Practitioner**

My goal as a practitioner of education is to continuously improve my teaching. What that means is that I regularly reflect on my practice and adjust where appropriate to help my students achieve favorable outcomes. What I have learned during my doctoral journey the importance of life-long learning. Before this project, I often researched



activities that I could incorporate into my classroom. Every year I would “spruce up” my lesson plans with new and innovative techniques but I never looked at these techniques through the lens of a scholar. Now, I am making a conscious effort to practice the art and science of teaching with a renewed sense of wonderment as I search for theories that will ground my lessons in accepted best practices.

### **Analysis of Self as Project Developer**

I realized that developing the project was very familiar to me. In my profession as a middle school teacher and in my experience as an adjunct at two different universities, I am continuously creating opportunities to learn. I always begin with an objective by asking myself “what do I want my students to know or be able to do?” I then work backwards deductively, creating opportunities for learning that will help students achieve those objectives. I often use technology during instruction so it was very natural for me to incorporate online components into this project study. I used technology in the creation of the online survey and for the online PLC.

There is a difference however between what I usually do in my role as teacher and what I will be doing in my role as program facilitator. As a classroom teacher, I have a standard curriculum that I am required to follow and I use pedagogy as my theoretical basis for instruction. In the university setting, I also have a curriculum that I am required to follow however I use andragogy as the theoretical basis for instruction. When developing this project I again used andragogy as the theoretical basis however there was no curriculum framework with which to follow. Everything that was created, was developed based on scholarly study of best practices and the theoretical framework of the

project. These elements included not only the activities and information disseminated during the PD but also the format and theory to form the foundation of the project. While the steps in creating the project itself were not foreign to me, not having the scaffolding of a curriculum was a new experience.

### **Reflection of the Importance of the Work**

NCLB mandates that all teachers be highly qualified and that all students will reach proficiency on standardized tests that are administered by the state (No Child Left Behind, 2009). Unfortunately teachers in this study may not consider themselves as highly qualified in the inclusion setting as is evidenced by their perceived lack of efficacy. Furthermore, students in the target school district score lower on the state's PSSA tests than their non-disabled peers leaving many of them short of proficiency ("2010-2012 PSSA & AYP Results," 2014). While some might say that the scores are lower for students with disabilities due to the nature of the disabilities themselves, the reality remains that empirical evidence exists that ties teacher self-efficacy with student achievement so regardless of disability status, students who have teachers who lack efficacy are at a disadvantage. According to Bruce, Esmonde, Ross, Dookie, and Beatty (2010), "TSE is a reliable precursor to, and predictor of, student achievement" (p. 1600). Further, Bruce et al. (2010) affirmed that participation in PD can help to increase teacher self-efficacy.

The PD project fulfills a need for training of general education teachers teaching in the inclusion setting. As mentioned earlier in this paper, the target district's PD for general education teachers in the inclusion setting has not addressed the increase in

number of students with disabilities attending school. Furthermore, most of the district sponsored PD regarding inclusion is only available to special education teachers and aides. Because of this dilemma, teachers feel less efficacious and as a result of this state, student outcomes may be less positive than they could be. Through the implementation of the PD project that was created in response to this study, participant self-efficacy may increase which may result in student achievement gains. Furthermore, as more and more teachers participate in the PD, the collective efficacy of the teachers in the district may increase. Finally, this project study adds to the scholarly literature regarding TSE and inclusion. As future scholars look to affect change of their own, they may build upon this study.

### **Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research**

This study has implications for social change both locally and beyond. This project has applications for both teachers and students. Finally, this project can be used as a springboard to conduct further research.

### **Implications for Social Change**

This project study has potential for social change at the local level. According to Theoharis (2010) the first step in providing social justice for students with disabilities is to “break the silence.” The author asserted that too often school leaders adhere to the status quo and are reluctant to make changes towards social justice for students with disabilities fearing that they will be labeled as a troublemaker. Theoharis also asserted that social justice for students with disabilities is achieved through a “moral commitment to creating inclusive schools by eliminating separate/pullout/segregated programs” and

calls for school wide inclusion of all students with disabilities (p. 366). I submit that social justice is not attained by mere inclusion. It is attained by giving teachers the knowledge and resources needed to educate these students so they may reach their full potential. This project study has, in essence, “broken the silence” by illuminating the target district’s inadequacy of PD that is available to general education teachers of inclusion. It also reveals the consequences of that inadequacy, namely lower TSE, and the possibility of fewer positive outcomes for students with disabilities. This project study may be the impetus for more extensive district PD regarding inclusion.

### **Future Research and Applications**

Future research could be conducted as a follow up study to determine if participation in the PD actually leads to increased teacher self-efficacy. A study could also be directed to determine if there was an increase in student achievement after the teachers participated in PD. Research can be conducted to determine if the blended learning format chosen for that was chosen for the PD was effective. If so, that format could be applied to any other PD endeavors the target district deems as appropriate.

### **Conclusion**

In this section, the project’s strengths, limitations, limitations remediation and alternative approaches were discussed. This section also included an analysis of what it means to be a scholar, project developer, and leader. Furthermore, this section included a reflection of what I learned during the doctoral processes regarding scholarship, program development, and the practice of teaching and learning. Finally, the importance of what was learned was discussed as were implications for social change and directions for

further research. Through the doctoral process, I have come to view teaching and learning with new eyes, one of a scholar and practitioner. While my doctoral journey may be over, the lessons I have learned and the confidence I have gained in my own abilities will be with me in the next chapter of my life.

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## Appendix A: The Project

### **Invitation to Participate in the PD Project**

Dear Colleagues,

The number of students with IEPs who are taught in an inclusion setting steadily increased over the past decade. Furthermore, with the new teacher evaluation system and the requirements of NCLB, more emphasis is being placed on teacher accountability and their role in student achievement. Unfortunately in the past, there has been little opportunity for professional development (PD) with regard to inclusion for general education teachers. That fact caused me to create a PD program that specifically focuses on strategies for student engagement, instructional, and classroom management in the inclusion classroom.

I would like to invite you to take part in this PD opportunity. This program will take the form of one face-to-face workshop followed by participation in an online professional learning community (PLC). The purpose of the face-to-face workshop is to build trust and relationships with other participants, familiarize participants with the history of inclusion and professional responsibilities, gain a better understanding of the experiences of students with disabilities, share information on how various disabilities may manifest themselves in the classroom, give strategies to build relationships with co-teacher, and to disseminate information regarding the online PLC format. The face-to-face workshop is scheduled to begin at 7:30 a.m. and conclude on 2:25 p.m. on [insert date].

The goal of the online PLC is to deliver information regarding strategies that can be used in the inclusion classroom. It also serves as a collaborative learning environment where teachers can share their successes, instructional tips, and reflect on the practice of teaching. The online PLC includes 6 different modules that will cover a time span of 6 months with one module per month. The first module will take place via a webinar on the GoToMeeting website on [insert date]. After the module, participants will have 2 weeks to apply newly learned strategies and comment on their outcomes via the asynchronous Edweb discussion board. Participants are then expected to reply to 2 other participants on that same board within one week of the initial discussion post's due date. Each of the 6 modules will follow the same online format.

Please respond to this email if you are interested in taking part in this exciting PD opportunity. I will contact you as the start date draws closer with more information.

Thank you,

Pamela Sime-Cummins

### Face-to-Face Timeline

#### Goal # 1 - Relationship Building and Trust (1 Hour, 35 Minutes)

##### Activities

Introductions (15 minutes)

Name

What they teach

Any personal info they want to share

Why they decided to take part in the professional development

Pair/Share Two truths and a lie about personal experience with inclusion

Ice Breaker (20 minutes)

People Sort

Commonalities

Team building/Communication activity (30 minutes)

ZOOM

Collaboration activity (30 minutes)

Create a mission statement for the PLC

\*coffee break and opportunity to socialize (15 minutes)

*Bagels and coffee will be provided*

#### Goal # 2 - Understand History of Inclusion and Professional Responsibilities (1hour, 25 minutes)

##### Activities

Why inclusion (30 minutes)

Change in Teacher Responsibilities (5 minutes)

Laws relating to the history of inclusion PowerPoint (15 minutes)

Professional Responsibilities PowerPoint (15 minutes)

Legal

IEP

504

Modification versus adaptations

Ethical

reflect back on “why inclusion activity” (10 minutes)

\*Lunch (60 minutes)

#### Goal # 3 - Gain a better understanding of the experiences of a child with special needs (40 minutes)

##### Activities

Scavenger Hunt Simulation (30 minutes)

Reflect on misunderstood minds video from PBS (10 minutes)

**Goal # 4 - Distinguish between the different manifestations disabilities (1 hour, 10 minutes)**

## Activities

Lecture (30 minutes)

Specific Learning Disabilities

Reading

Writing

Math

Communication Disorders

Speech

Language

Other Health Impairment

ADHD

Autism

Intellectual Disabilities

Emotional disabilities

Create a flipbook activity (45 minutes)

**Goal # 5 – Understand How to Begin Building a Relationship with a Co-teacher**

## Activities

Developing relationships with the co-teacher/aid

Modification versus adaptations

**Discussion of the Format of PLC (20 minutes)**

## Activities

Lecture using a PowerPoint (20 minutes)

What is a PLC?

Roles and responsibilities of members

Content discussed with input of all members

Introduce format

GoToMeeting

Edweb



## Face-to-Face Activities

### Goal #1 Relationship Building and Trust

Purpose: Enable participants to feel comfortable talking and sharing with one another and ease them into the process of forming relationships

Introduction activity- Participants will introduce themselves by offering the following information to the group:

- a. Name
- b. What they teach
- c. Any personal info they want to share
- d. Why they decided to take part in the professional development
- e. Two truths and a lie about personal experience with inclusion

\*If it is a large group, participants will be divided into table groups where they will introduce themselves to those at their table

\*If it is a small group, participants will speak to the entire group

#### Ice Breaker Activity Part 1: People Sort

- Two sides of the room (the left and the right) will be designated as places to meet
- Call out various choices and participants must go to the side of the room with their preference

Left	Right
Dogs	Cats
Mountains	Beach
Evening	Morning
Summer	Winter
City	Country
Books	Movies

#### Ice Breaker Activity Part 2: Commonalities

Say a category and have participants find someone who has the same answer. For example, the instructor will say “find someone with the same favorite place to vacation as you.” Participants will then intermix, socialize, and learn something about one another.

#### Categories-

- \* Favorite vacation place
- \* Favorite movie
- \* Favorite food
- \* Favorite hobby

Evaluation: Formative assessment through observing the amount of participation, engagement in dialogue, and body language (relaxed versus tense).

### **Goal #1 - Relationship Building and Trust**

Team Building and Communication Activity- Zoom Children's Book by Istvan Banyai

Purpose: To build teamwork and communication skills among participants

Before the face-to-face workshop, enlarge and laminate pictures from the Zoom picture book. The zoom picture book is a series of illustrations with each one being a larger picture of the previous one (Banyai, 1998). Participants randomly are given one picture. They need to put the pictures in order without allowing anyone to see the pictures themselves. They can only describe what they see.

Evaluation:

Summative- if participants are able to place the pictures in the correct order than communication has taken place.

### **Goal #1- Relationship Building and Trust**

Create a Mission Statement Activity

Each participant will think about the following prompts and write down their thoughts in addition to anything else they feel should be included:

- What are your goals for students in the inclusion classroom?
- What are your goals for this blended learning experience?
- How will you work together to accomplish those goals

Large group: participants will share their ideas in groups and when everyone in the group agrees, they will share their thoughts with the larger group who will then agree on the ideas that should be incorporated into the mission statement.

Small Groups: sharing will occur with the entire group simultaneously.

Instructor mediated discussion will take place incorporating the group's ideas into a single mission statement. The mission statement will then be written on chart paper and hung on the wall as a reminder of the group's mission. Furthermore, the mission statement will be posted on the front page of the Edweb PLC.

Evaluation:

Summative: The mission statement will be evaluated based on the content: Are student learning goals incorporated? Are participant goals incorporated? Is there a plan on who to achieve the goals?

Formative: Observations during the activity will be made to determine if all participants were engaged in the process of writing the statement

## Goal # 2 - Understand History of Inclusion and Professional Responsibilities

### Why Inclusion Activity

Purpose: For participants to reflect on when they were students and felt both “included” and “excluded” from the class.

### Procedure:

1. Instructor starts by modeling the activity and will describe a personal situation where he/she felt included, and one where he/she felt excluded.
2. Give participants 10 minutes to free write based on the prompts on the slide
3. If it is a large group, have participants talk in their table groups about how they felt when they were included and excluded. Have a group recorder list any commonalities within the group on two pieces of flipchart paper- one for included and one for excluded. Group will hang their lists on the wall to be kept up as a reminder of the importance of inclusion throughout the day. Through instructor mediated discussion, group will read their lists to the other participants and similarities will be noted. If there is something that one group added that another group really agrees with, they can add it to their list as well.

If it is a small group, participants’ free writes will be shared on two pieces of flipchart paper one for included and one for excluded. Participants will hang the paper on the wall as a reminder of the importance of inclusion throughout the day.

\*\*let participants know that they should share their stories and feelings only if they feel comfortable doing so.

After the participants hang their papers and discuss them ask the following questions:

Are there any recurring themes or similarities that can be deduced from the “included” list?

Are there any recurring themes or similarities that can be deduced from the “excluded” list?

What can we do as teachers to make sure that all students in our classes feel included?

### Evaluation:

Summative: Will be based on whether or not participants can develop themes regarding the inclusion and exclusion.

Formative: Level of participant engagement will be observed during the activity with careful consideration for those that did not feel comfortable sharing personal histories regarding inclusions and exclusion.

### **Goal # 3 - Gain a better understanding of the experiences of a child with special needs**

#### Scavenger hunt activity

The purpose of this activity is to simulate what it might be like to have a disability. It is NOT to create sympathy, but empathy for students with disabilities.

- 1) Prizes will be hidden around the room. Prizes may include: Pilot pens™ in different colors, handheld pencil sharpeners, a \$5 gift card for WAWA, a \$5 gift card for Starbucks, small bottles of hand sanitizer, etc.
- 2) Participants will be broken down into two groups. One group will be the “students” and the other group will be the “instructors”.
- 3) “Students” will get clues written clues to the items as well as a math problem and a tongue twister sentence. Before participants can pick up an item, they need to share the tongue twister and answer to the math question with an “instructor”. Only then can they pick up the item.

Participants will find these items with one caveat; some of them will need to find the items while simulating a disability. Participants will take one of the following roles:

- Reading Disability- all participants will be given written clues for the whereabouts of all prizes however, for those participants who are simulating reading disability, the vowels will be left out.
- Math Disabilities- All participants will need to complete a math problem correctly and tell the “instructor” the answer before they are allowed to pick up the prize that they found. Participants who are not simulating a math disability will receive simple addition and subtraction problems. Participants who are simulating a math disability will receive a difficult word problem.
- Speech Impairment- Participants will need to coherently say the tongue twister to the “instructor”. Participants who are not simulating a speech disability will just say the sentence to the “instructor”. Participants who are simulating a speech disability will need to have a plastic spoon in their mouths when they share the tongue twister with the “instructor”. It is the instructor who will decide if the participants said the tongue twister clearly enough to retrieve the prize.
- No disability at all

Participants will be given 5 minutes to find the items (more if it is a larger group).

The simulation will be run a second time but with the roles reversed. The “instructors” will become the “students” while the “students’ become the instructors”

Evaluation:

Formative assessment through discussion. Questions will be asked such as “How did you feel when you did not have the abilities that you normally do?” and “What do you think it might be like for students in your classroom who live with disabilities every day?”

Misunderstood Minds Reflection Activity

Before participants attend the face to face workshop, they will be required to watch the simulation videos under Misunderstood Minds of the PBS website:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/misunderstoodminds/intro.html>

During this activity, participants will reflect on those videos and answer the following questions:

- Do you believe that the simulations you viewed were accurate representations of what it might be like to have a disability?
- Why or Why not?
- Was there anything that surprised you during the simulations?
- Was there anything during the simulations that gave insight into the behavior of students in your classrooms?

Evaluation:

Formative assessment through discussion questions mentioned above.

#### **Goal # 4 - Distinguish between the different manifestations disabilities**

Create a Flipbook Activity

The purpose of the flipbook activity is to create a quick reference guide for teachers of inclusion.

The flipbook that will be created will be filled in during both the face to face workshop and the online PLC as we go through each of the disabilities. Participants will be given 7 pieces of unlined paper to create their flipbooks. They will fold their paper as per the illustration:

	<b>Understanding Disabilities</b>
	<b>SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES</b>
	<b>COMMUNICATION DISORDERS</b>
	<b>OTHER HEALTH IMPAIRMENTS</b>
	<b>AUTISM</b>
	<b>INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES</b>
	<b>EMOTIONAL DISABILITIES</b>

After folding the paper, participants will put the following headings on each of the papers:

Description of possible characteristics of that may present themselves in the classroom

- Strategies:
  - o Student engagement
  - o Instruction
  - o Classroom management

Evaluation:

Formative assessment- I will look over the flipbooks as they are being created to check for organization and completion.

### **Goal # 5 – Building relationships for Coteaching**

CoTeacher Questionnaire Role Play Activity

When you first begin a relationship with your co-teacher, it is helpful to have an understanding of one another's teaching style.

Please fill out the following information as it pertains to your teaching/classroom. Then turn to the person next to you and compare your answers. Talk about similarities and differences as if the person was going to co-teach with you with one taking the role of the regular education teacher and one taking the role of the special education teacher. Come up with a plan on how the two of you would work if you were to teach in the same classroom. This same technique can be used if you ever have a coteacher in the classroom.

My 3 biggest strengths as a teacher are...

Things I could improve upon are...

Five descriptive words about me are...

My teaching style is...

What a coteacher can expect from me is...

What I expect from a co-teacher is...

My educational philosophy is...

When I plan, I...

I plan \_\_\_\_\_ day(s) in advance

Evaluation:

Summative: Assessment through discussion. Questions such as “Do you feel as if this activity will help build a relationship between you and your coteacher?” and “Why or why not?” will be asked.



**PowerPoints Face-to-Face Workshop**



Teaching in the  
Inclusive Classroom

## Overview

### Morning

- Relationship Building and Trust

### Coffee Break

- Understand History of Inclusion and Professional Responsibilities

### Lunch

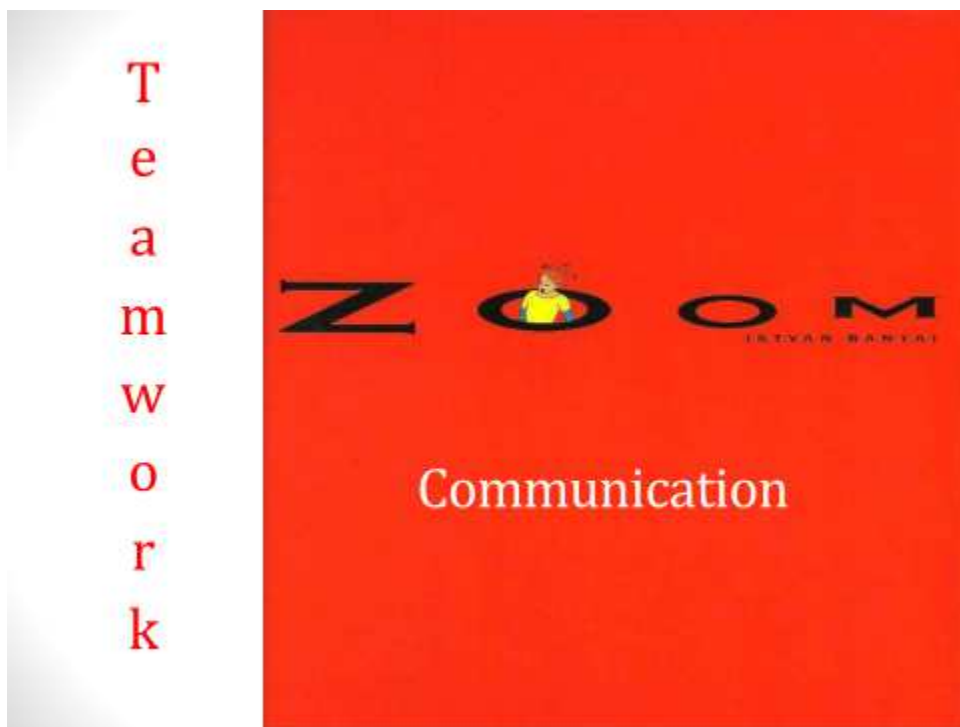
- Experience a disability
- The special needs child
- Affective strategies for co-teaching
- Format of the Professional Learning Community

## Introductions

- Please introduce yourself
  - Name
  - What you teach
  - Any personal info you want to share
  - Why you decided to take part in the professional development
  - Two truths and a lie about your personal experience with inclusion



Ice Breaker Activity- Part 1 People Sort  
Part 2 Commonalities



Zoom Activity

## Mission Statement

Some questions to guide you:

- What are your goals for students in the inclusion classroom?
- What are your goals for this blended learning experience?
- How will you work together to accomplish those goals

Create a mission statement activity

## Why Inclusion?

- Think about when you were in school
- Describe a situation where you felt included. What was the situation and how did it make you feel?
- Describe a situation where you felt excluded. What was the situation and how did it make you feel?

Why inclusion activity

## Change in Teacher Responsibilities

- Change in the number of students with disabilities that are taught in an inclusion classroom

Year	Percent of a Students with Disabilities
1976	8.3
1980	10.1
1990	11.4
2000	13.3
2010	13.0

Source: National Center for Education Statistics ("Digest of Education Statistics," n.d.).

Within a relatively short period of time, the responsibilities of general education teachers in school districts across America have transitioned from teaching a relatively homogeneous student population with regard to social and academic skills to teaching an increasingly diverse population in which lessons must be differentiated to meet all students' needs.

## Reasons for Change in Teacher Responsibilities- The Laws

- Brown v. Board of Education, Topeka, Kansas
- Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC) v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
- Mills v. Board of Education, District of Columbia
- Passage of The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA)
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) called for least restrictive environment
- Gaskin versus the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

- Brown versus Board of Education 1954- based on 14<sup>th</sup> amendment equal protection clause in section 1: states shall not “deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.” The supreme court found that by segregating black students from white students, this law was violated because their education was not equal.
  - Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC) v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania 1971 and Mills v. Board of Education, District of Columbia 1972

Special education advocates applied the same principle to special education students citing that by segregating them into self-contained classrooms, their education was not equal to their nondisabled peers. The result of these decisions led to the passage of IDEA

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 1975- Under IDEA, schools are required to educate students in the least restrictive environment (LRE). If disabled students are capable of success in the general education classroom with supports and adaptations in place, then they must be included in those classrooms under the equal protection clause of the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment ("IDEA—the Individuals with Disabilities," 2012). This law has led to a substantial increase in the number of students with disabilities that are enrolled in what was formally the general education classroom.
  - Development of the Least Restrictive Environment



- 1976–1977 school year, students with disabilities made up 8.3% of the total school population. In 2009–2010, they made up 13.1% of the population.
- 81% of students with disabilities are in an inclusion classroom for at least part of the day.
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) 2001 - requires all students in America must earn a score of proficient or above on state level standardized tests by the 2013–2014 school year, including students with disabilities. It was designed to close the achievement gap between regular education students and students with disabilities
- Gaskin vs Commonwealth of Pennsylvania 2005-
  - LRE is now enforced for all cases of disability, not only the less severe cases
  - Schools are held accountable
  - Outlines how adherence to IEP is monitored and reported

## Professional Responsibilities

- IEP
- Section 504
- Accommodations versus Modifications
- Ethical

In this section, we will discuss your professional responsibilities of teaching in an inclusion classroom

## IEP versus 504

	IEP	504
Legal	Part of IDEA	Part of Rehabilitation Act of 1973
What it provides for students with disabilities	Individualized education through special education	Changes to the learning environment to accommodate learning needs
Eligibility	Presence of at least one of the specific learning disabilities specified in IDEA	Any other disability in which disrupts student learning
The Plan	Includes current educational levels and goals as well as any accommodations that the child needs and who is responsible for them. Goals are regularly assessed through progress monitoring	List accommodations to be made and who will make them. Assessed annually but can be changed as needed

Source: Understood for Learning and Attention Issues, 2014

## Accommodations versus Modifications

### Accommodations

- The lessons and curriculum are the same as that for general education students with a few minor adjustments

### Modifications

- The substance of the curriculum may be changed in order to meet the specific needs of the student

Source: Wright, 2005.



### **Quantity**

Students may be asked to complete fewer homework problems than the traditional education students

### **Time**

Students may be given additional time to complete assignments

### **Support**

Aid may be present in the room to support the students, read tests etc.

### **Instruction**

Include concrete example and/or visual aids

### **Participation**

Give students with disabilities jobs in the classroom such as handing out papers

### **Difficulty**

Allow for the use of aids such as calculators or spell checkers

### **Assessment**

Allow for varying assessment. For example instead of having students write their response, the child with a disability may be allowed to illustrate or verbalize their response.

## Modifications

- Students are not expected to learn the same material as the general education students
- Alternate assessments
- Instruction is based on student need
  - Ex- When other students in the class are learning about the landfills and biodegradable substances, the modified student may do a recycling activity

Source: Wright, 2005

Here the class will reflect on the “Why Inclusion” activity through instructor mediated discussion

## Scavenger Hunt

- Hidden around the room are various office supplies.
- Your job is to find the office supplies and bring them back to your seat.
- Whatever you find is yours to keep.

The purpose of this activity is to raise awareness of the challenges that students with disabilities may face by simulating what it might be like to have a disability. It is NOT to create sympathy, but empathy for what some students go through every day. It's important to note that at the end of this exercise, participants can stop being "disabled" whereas our students cannot.

## Misunderstood Minds

- Do you believe that the simulations you viewed were accurate representations of what it might be like to have a disability?
- Why or Why not?
- Was there anything that surprised you during the simulations?
- Was there anything during the simulations that gave insight into the behavior of students in your classrooms?

Reflect back on the misunderstood minds simulation video that was to be viewed before the workshop

## Create a Flipbook

- The flipbook will be used to take notes on the following disabilities and during the online portion of the PLC
- Once the flipbook is constructed, place the following headings on the front:
  - Understanding Disabilities
  - Specific Learning Disabilities
  - Communication Disorders
  - Other Health Impairments- ADHD
  - Autism
  - Intellectual Disabilities
  - Emotional Disabilities

- Explain the purpose of the flipbook
- Hand out 7 pieces of unlined paper
- Model how to make the flipbook

## Flipbook Continued...

- On the inside of the flipbook, add the following headings for each disability:
  - Description
  - Strategies:
    - Student engagement
    - Instruction
    - Classroom management



## Prevalence of Disabilities in the Classroom

Disability	Percentage of Students with Disabilities 2011-2012 *	Percentage of all Students 2011-2012 **
Specific Learning Disabilities	36	4.3
Communication Disorders	21	2.8
Other Health Impairments	12	1.5
Autism	7	.9
Intellectual Disabilities	7	.9
Emotional Disabilities	6	.8

Source: National Center for Education Statistics

\* "Digest of Education Statistics," 2011

\*\* "Digest of Education Statistics," n.d.,

Explain how different disabilities manifest themselves in different ways. In order to fully understand a disability, one must be able to recognize it and create strategies specific to these disabilities. The following slides will outline how the most common disabilities manifest themselves. The online PLC will focus on strategies that can be used in the classroom to support students with these disabilities. It is important to note however that the following information is not all inclusive and there may be some presentation of "symptoms" that may show up in the classroom that have not been mentioned in the following slides. Those can be discussed, as encountered, in the online PLC.

## Specific Learning Disabilities

- Includes disorders in Reading, Writing, Math
- Students with specific learning disabilities may have difficulty with the following tasks:

Reading	Writing	Math
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decoding</li> <li>• Rate/fluency</li> <li>• Comprehension</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spelling</li> <li>• Grammar</li> <li>• Punctuation</li> <li>• Writing organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Memorizing math facts</li> <li>• Accurate calculation</li> <li>• Fluent calculation</li> <li>• Math reasoning</li> </ul>

Source: *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 2013*

## Communication Disorders:

- Includes disorders in Speech and Language
- Students with specific learning disabilities may have difficulty with the following tasks:

Speech	Language (can be present in both spoken or written)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound production</li> <li>• Articulation</li> <li>• Phonological knowledge</li> <li>• Coordination of tongue, jaw, breathing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocabulary</li> <li>• Sentence structure</li> <li>• Verbal expression</li> <li>• Combining sentences into coherent thought</li> </ul>

Source: *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 2013*

Communication disorders are not due to hearing impairment, cerebral palsy, cleft palate, traumatic brain injury or any other neurological disorder

## Other Health Impairments

- One of the categories of IDEA
- Deficit in strength or alertness, or an increased alertness to the environment which makes it difficult to focus on learning.
- It must be detrimental to classroom performance for it to be covered under IDEA
- Range of disabilities such as ADHD, asthma, Tourette's, and diabetes
- Manifestation of the disability is determined by which disability is present

Source: "IDEA- the Individuals With," 2012

## ADHD

- There is a discrepancy in incidence of ADHD.
- The American Psychiatric Association reports that 5% of all children have ADHD <sup>1</sup> whereas the CDC reports that the incidence is much higher at over 11% <sup>2</sup>
- Children with ADHD may exhibit the following characteristics:

### ALL<sup>1</sup>

- Makes careless mistakes
- Inattentive/distracted
- Lacks follow through
- Disorganized/forgetful
- Work avoidance

### Hyperactivity<sup>1</sup>

- Impulsive
- Talks excessively
- Interrupts others
- Difficulty waiting turns
- Fidgets, moves around excessively

<sup>1</sup> *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, 2013*

<sup>2</sup> "Attention-deficit /hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)," 2014

- Out of all of the other health impairments that are mentioned in IDEA, we will go over ADHD since there are so many children that are in our classrooms who have been diagnosed with it.
- There are differences in ADHD. While the term ADHD stands for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, many student only exhibit the attention deficit and not the hyperactive component

## Autism

- Covers a large range of disorders
- Characterized by communication deficits and social impairments
- Asperger Syndrome and pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified are the milder cases that will be the in inclusion classroom most often.
- Intelligence may or may not be affected. Many autistic children have above average intelligence
- Children with Autism may exhibit have difficulty with the following:
  - Initiating social interactions
  - Flexibility
  - Maintaining eye contact
  - Moving from one activity to the next
  - Change in routine
  - Understanding social cues and body language
  - Repetitive tactile stimulation

Source: *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 2013*

## Intellectual Disabilities

- Can range from mild to severe
- Lower than average I.Q. (70-75)
- Children with Intellectual Disabilities may exhibit have difficulty with the following:
  - Reasoning- both concrete and abstract
  - Problem solving
  - Planning
  - Experiential learning
  - Academic learning
  - Judgement
  - Communication
  - Participation in social activities

Source: *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 2013*

## Emotional Disabilities

- Unable to learn that is not due to intellectual or other factors <sup>1</sup>
- Wide range of disabilities fall into this category
- Includes<sup>2</sup>
  - Oppositional defiance disorder
  - Schizophrenia
  - Depression
  - Anxiety disorders
- Children with Intellectual Disabilities may exhibit have difficulty with the following <sup>1</sup> :
  - Interpersonal relationships
  - Appropriate behavior
  - Physical symptoms due to anxiety
  - Mood regulation

<sup>1</sup> Education, 2015

<sup>2</sup> *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*, 2013

## Co-Teaching

- Co-teaching is the presence of two teachers in the classroom, the traditional classroom teacher and a special education teacher, in order to support student learning in the inclusion classroom
- Forming a relationship between you and your co-teacher is more effective if you both have a better understanding of one another's teaching style

After this slide, have participants fill out the Co-teaching questionnaire.

## Co-Teaching Formats

- Different co-teaching formats may be utilized depending on the day's lesson
  - Teach and observe
  - Teach and circulate
  - Parallel teaching
  - Station teaching
  - Alternative teaching
  - Team teaching

Source: Cook, 2004

- Teach and observe- one teacher instructs, the other students during the learning process
- Teach and circulate- one teacher instructs, the other supports students unobtrusively
- Parallel- class is divided with both teachers sharing the same information to separate groups of students
- Station- class is divided into groups with both teachers teaching different information. Then the groups switch teachers, and the teachers teach the information to the new group
- Alternative- one teacher facilitate instruction for the majority of the students however some students may need more individual attention so the second teacher will facilitate instruction for that smaller group of students
- Team- both teachers teach simultaneously in a tag team approach

## Professional Learning Communities (PLC)- What is it?

- A PLC is a group of teachers and/or administrators that collaborate with one another for the benefit of students
- PLCs are less about teaching and more about learning from one another
- Have a goal and a structure
- All members of the PLC must be engaged in the process of sharing, reflection and learning

Source: Pirtle & Tobia, 2014

## Professional Learning Communities (PLC)- Roles and Responsibilities

- Must be open to giving and receiving feedback
- Implement learned instructional strategies
- Regularly reflect on the practice of teaching and on student learning
- Participate in online webinars and discussions



## Professional Learning Communities (PLC)

What do **YOU** want to focus  
on during the PLC?

Ask members about what their biggest classroom concerns are regarding inclusion and what they would like to have included in the PLC

## Professional Learning Communities (PLC)- Format

- Each webinar is a separate disability module
- There is a total of 6 modules
- For each module:
  - Attend webinar
  - Implement new strategies learned
  - Within 2 weeks of the webinar, post reflections to the Edweb's asynchronous discussion board
  - Within 1 week, comment on two participants' posts

- Instruct members on how to use the GoToMeeting website. Project the website and show them the features of the software
- Instruct members on how to use the Edweb website. Project the website and show them the features of the software

**PowerPoint for Online PLC Module 1**

# Specific Learning Disabilities

## Workshop Reminder Specific Learning Disabilities

- Includes disorders in Reading, Writing, Math
- Students with specific learning disabilities may have difficulty with the following tasks:

Reading	Writing	Math
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decoding</li><li>• Rate/fluency</li><li>• Comprehension</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spelling</li><li>• Grammar</li><li>• Punctuation</li><li>• Writing organization</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Memorizing math facts</li><li>• Accurate calculation</li><li>• Fluent calculation</li><li>• Math reasoning</li></ul>

Source: *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (2013)*

## Student Engagement

- 1) Check for understanding regularly through questioning
- 2) Ask students to paraphrase instructions and content
- 3) Relate instruction to something familiar to the student
- 4) Ask open ended questions that require a thoughtful response
- 5) Increase student autonomy by allowing choice
- 6) Vary instructional strategies
- 7) Mix lower and higher level instruction

Source: Strickland (2013)

1, 2 This ensures that the students “stay with” the teacher during instruction  
3-7 Makes the lessons more interesting for the students

## Instruction

- 1) Chunk tasks into smaller steps
- 2) Slow the rate of speaking
- 3) Support instruction through the use of different modalities- visual, kinesthetic, auditory
- 4) Utilize closure activities to summarize instruction both during and at the end of class
- 5) Reduce course material when necessary
- 6) Give adequate wait time

Source: Strickland (2013)

1. Chunking breaks larger tasks into smaller, more manageable parts
2. Students may have difficulty understand long, complex sentences that are spoken too quickly
3. Varying instruction format helps students learn in the way they are most comfortable. For example, some students are hands on learners. By varying instruction, you ensure that at least part of the time, students will be taught in the way that they learn best (multiple intelligences).
4. Closure activities can not only be used at the end of the class to summarize the day's lesson, but also when the teacher moves from one concept to the next. These activities summarize the learning that has taken place.
5. For example, instead of giving 20 homework problems, only give 10.
6. Some students take longer to process information than others.

## Instruction Specific to Reading

- 1) Teach students about how to use a book's organization to predict the content- title, headings, figures, graphs, glossary
- 2) Begin with short, familiar words and build upon them when teaching decoding
- 3) Increase spacing between lines of text
- 4) Allow for alternative assessment for book reports or labs
- 5) Use graphic organizers to connect ideas
- 6) Label classroom objects
- 7) Read material aloud
- 8) Use audiobooks when needed
- 9) Focus on word sounds more than spelling when encountering unfamiliar words
- 10) Provide study guides for reading
- 11) Have students visualize what they are reading after every paragraph

Source: Strickland (2013); Richards (2008)

3. Increasing the spacing reduces clutter
4. Alternative assessment can be the creation of a video, or skit
6. Labeling classroom materials gives student extra reading practice. For example, a when students get a pair of scissors from a drawer label "scissor", they will have encountered the spelling of that word many more times than if the drawer was not labeled
11. Asking questions such as "how old is the man?" and "What is he wearing?" can make reading more concrete

## Instruction Specific to Writing

- 1) Allow student to use a computer
- 2) Allow use of speech recognition software
- 3) Give shorter writing assignments
- 4) Make wide-ruled loose leaf paper available
- 5) Do not deduct points for grammatical errors or spelling mistakes on rough drafts
- 6) Use oral exams if writing is too difficult or structure tests so that the writing required is minimal
- 7) Teach mnemonic devices
- 8) Have students read their papers aloud to you privately
- 9) Give students a checklist that they can use when proofreading their work
- 10) Allow for alternatives to written assignments

Source: Strickland (2013)

- 1, 2- technology can be a great tool for learning. By allowing students to use a computer, they will have access to word processing programs for editing, along with spell check and grammar check so that they may see their mistakes. Additionally, text to speech software such as Dragon, Naturally Speaking©, allows student that have difficulty with the writing processes to turn their speech into text.
3. Instead of assigning a 5 paragraph essay, start with a 3 paragraph essay and build up to the 5 paragraph essay throughout the year if possible
4. Using wide-ruled paper allows students to see their words more clearly
5. On rough drafts, just stick with the basic content. As students progress throughout the writing piece, conventions can be added but at first, students should feel successful at writing to gain confidence.
6. Sometimes the process of writing is so difficult for the student that he or she may concentrate more on writing the words than on the content of the tests themselves. If the student does not necessarily need an oral exam but he or she still needs writing support, tests can be given that are fill in the blank style. With this format, students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of the content without the distraction of having to write everything.
7. Mnemonic devices can be helpful for spelling ex. I before E except after C
8. When student read their papers aloud, they may concentrate more on the words themselves that the content. They will hear grammatical errors or if writing flow is lacking. An alternative is that the teacher reads the paper aloud to the student. When the student actually hears the exact words, they can often find their own mistakes. To avoid embarrassment, make sure to do this privately and not in front of the class.

## Instruction Specific to Math

- 1) Use mnemonic devices for math
- 2) Have students illustrate word problems
- 3) Give students manipulatives for those students who are kinesthetically inclined
- 4) Allow students to use graph paper to keep their columns in order
- 5) Arrange for peer tutoring
- 6) Allow students to highlight relevant words in a word problem
- 7) Avoid worksheets that are cluttered
- 8) Have students document their progress

Sources: Strickland, 2013; University of Washington, 2013

1. Please excuse my dear aunt Sally is a mnemonic device for the order of operations (parentheses, exponents, multiplication/division, add/subtract)
- 2,3 Visualization of material may make it more concrete for the student
7. Cluttered worksheets can be a distraction
8. By documenting their progress, students can see which math concepts they feel comfortable with as well as the concepts that they need to work on



## Classroom Management

- 1) Arrange chairs in a horseshoe configuration where possible
- 2) Seat students away from distractions such as windows, doors, and pencil sharpeners
- 3) Post only information that is necessary to the day's lesson on the board
- 4) Do not use answer sheets when testing. Allow students to write directly on the test
- 5) Limit the amount of notes that students need to copy from the board or PowerPoint
  - Give students copies of the notes or a skeletal outline of the notes instead
- 6) Give assignments in both verbal and written form
- 7) Write homework assignments on the board in the same place everyday
- 8) Recorded or videotape complex lessons and place online so that students may access them anytime
- 9) Check student assignment planner regular to ensure the student is using it

Source: Strickland (2013)

1, 2, 3, All help to avoid distractions

4, 5 students may have difficulty transferring information from the test to the answer sheet or from the board to their paper.

6, 7 by keeping everything in the same place, students know what to expect

## PowerPoint for Online PLC Module 2

# Communication Disorders

## Let's Catch Up

- Since the last time we meet, which strategies have you used in your classroom?
- Were there any successes?
- Was there anything you felt could have gone better?
- Was the outcome what you expected?
- In your discussions with other members of the PLC, was there anything that you learned or found interesting?

## Workshop Reminder

### Communication Disorders:

- Includes disorders in Speech and Language
- Students with specific learning disabilities may have difficulty with the following tasks:

Speech	Language (can be present in both spoken or written)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound production</li> <li>• Articulation</li> <li>• Phonological knowledge</li> <li>• Coordination of tongue, jaw, breathing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vocabulary</li> <li>• Sentence structure</li> <li>• Verbal expression</li> <li>• Combining sentences into coherent thought</li> </ul>

Source: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 2013

Communication disorders are not due to hearing impairment, cerebral palsy, cleft palate, traumatic brain injury or any other neurological disorder

## Webinar Reflection

- Student Engagement
- Instruction
- Classroom Management

Think about our webinar pertaining to specific learning disabilities:

Which student engagement strategies can you use in the classroom to help students with communication disorders?

Which instructional strategies can you use in the classroom to help students with communication disorders?

Which student classroom management strategies can you use in the classroom to help students with communication disorders?

## Student Engagement

- 1) Incorporate the interests of students when speaking to students and when they speak to the teacher
- 2) Ask questions that are open-ended
- 3) Slow speech
- 4) Speak to the student directly
- 5) Give a lot of praise when appropriate
- 6) Highlight students' strengths
- 7) Speech difficulties should be downplayed
- 8) Do not rush a students' speech or finish their sentences

Source: Kaderavek, (2015); Strickland (2013)

2. By asking open-ended questions students have a greater opportunity to practice their speech. As they practice, the hope is they will feel more comfortable speaking to others.
3. To increase comprehension, students with language issues need time to process what the teacher is verbalizing
4. Speaking directly to students makes instruction more personalized
- 5,6 Praising and highlighting the strengths of students may help the student to feel more confident and willing to participate more.
7. Repeat words or phrases that have been mispronounced in the of a questions so that the student does not feel criticized
8. Leads to student frustration and diminishes confidence

## Instruction

- 1) Model active listening and proper speech
- 2) Use manipulatives, tactile stimulation and visual cues
- 3) Incorporate vocabulary into everyday activities when possible
- 4) Practice reading and writing skills often
- 5) Practice oral language activities through role play or the creation of skits
- 6) Encourage speech often through cooperative learning
- 7) Use assistive technology where appropriate- text to speech systems etc.

Source: Special Education Support Services, (n.d); Strickland (2013)

- 1) Keeping eye contact, announce each word
- 2) Helps to make material more concrete for students who do not understand concepts due to language difficulties.

## Classroom Management

- 1) Create procedures for students that need help
- 2) Be in close proximity to student with communication disorders when giving instructions and then have them repeat the instructions privately
- 3) Keep routines and schedules
- 4) Provide a scribe when possible for tests and quizzes
- 5) Be aware that seemingly defiant behaviors such as not following instructions or talking out of turn may be a miscommunication issue.
- 6) Pay close attention to body language and gestures

Source: Special Education Support Services, (n.d); Strickland (2013)

1. Sometimes students with communication issues have a difficult time verbalizing what they need help with. Instead these students can be given a small colored card. When the student has a question, he or she can just place the card on the desk and when appropriate, the teacher can speak with the student privately.
2. allows them to see how the mouth moves to make the sounds
6. Sometimes students cannot verbalize what they are thinking so it is important to read the body language of these students

### PowerPoint for Online PLC Module 3

## Other Health Impairments- ADHD

### Let's Catch Up

- Since the last time we met, which strategies ,have you used in your classroom?
- Were there any successes?
- Was there anything you felt could have gone better?
- Was the outcome what you expected?
- In your discussions with other members of the PLC, was there anything that you learned or found interesting?



## Workshop Reminder

### Other Health Impairments:

- One of the categories of IDEA
- Deficit in strength or alertness, or an increased alertness to the environment which makes it difficult to focus on learning.
- It must be detrimental to classroom performance for it to be covered under IDEA
- Range of disabilities such as ADHD, asthma, Tourette's, and diabetes
- Manifestation of the disability is determined by which disability is present

Source: "IDEA- the Individuals With," 2012

## Workshop Reminder

### ADHD:

- There is a discrepancy in incidence of ADHD.
- The American Psychiatric Association reports that 5% of all children have ADHD <sup>1</sup> whereas the CDC reports that the incidence is much higher at over 11% <sup>2</sup>
- Children with ADHD may exhibit the following characteristics:

#### ALL<sup>1</sup>

- Makes careless mistakes
- Inattentive/distracted
- Lacks follow through
- Disorganized/forgetful
- Work avoidance

#### Hyperactivity<sup>1</sup>

- Impulsive
- Talks excessively
- Interrupts others
- Difficulty waiting turns
- Fidgets, moves around excessively

<sup>1</sup> *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, 2013*

<sup>2</sup> "Attention-deficit /hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)," 2014

## Webinar Reflection

- Student Engagement
- Instruction
- Classroom Management

Think about our webinars pertaining to specific learning disabilities and communication disorders:

Which student engagement strategies can you use in the classroom to help students with communication disorders?

Which instructional strategies can you use in the classroom to help students with communication disorders?

Which student classroom management strategies can you use in the classroom to help students with communication disorders?

## Student Engagement

- 1) Create kinesthetic lessons when possible
- 2) Re-focus attention by asking a simple question to the student if it appears focus is waning,
- 3) Teach student to self-monitor attentiveness
- 4) Introduce and practice Mindfulness in the classroom

Source: Strickland (2013); Zeidan, F., et al (2010)

- 1) Allowing students to move around while learning will help keep them engaged
- 3) Student can have a behavior chart at their desk and every few minutes, at different intervals, the student can quietly be prompted to place a checkmark on the chart if they feel that they have been attentive.
- 4) Mindfulness focuses students on the present with no thought to the past or future. Mindfulness can increase attention span and calm students. It may take some class time to initially teach mindfulness however once the students understand how to do it, it may be possible to practice it during the first few minutes of every class. Practicing mindfulness allows students to focus on the “here and now” and may keep them attentive and engaged for longer periods.

## Instruction

- 1) Give the student a stress ball or other non-disruptive tactile stimulation
- 2) Add color to hand-outs and PowerPoint notes to keep students interested
- 3) Chunk instruction allowing time for movement in-between **WHAT?**
- 4) Vary reinforcements for on-task behavior
- 5) Directions should be verbal and written
- 6) Using graphic organizers can unclutter the page
- 7) Have students ponder and write questions about what they would like to learn about before teaching a lesson
- 8) Utilize a projected online stopwatch so that students may keep track of how much time is left to complete an assignment
- 9) Have students use a planner and communicate with parents on a regular basis so they can support instruction at home
- 10) Place notes, PowerPoints and activities online for at home access

Source: Strickland (2013); The Student Coalition for Action in Literacy Education. (2005)

- 3) This is especially important in 90 minute classes. The University of Northern Carolina at Chapel Hill advises that the attention span of students 1+ student's chronological age so a student who is 13 years old has an attention span of 14 minutes. For students with ADHD, that span is even less.
- 5) When verbally giving directions, go step-by-step when possible.
- 7) For instance, if teaching about the holocaust, students can write down questions that they may already have about it before the lesson it taught. That will prime the students for what will come next during the lesson.
- 10) Having lessons online allows students access to the lessons even if they left their work at school. It also gives parents the opportunity to view what the student is doing in class so they may support the student at home.

## Classroom Management

- 1) Allow students to listen to music using earphones
- 2) Give students more space
- 3) Allow these students to help during class
- 4) Be firm with expectations for class behavior
- 5) Seat these students in the front of the class
- 6) Determine the best lighting
- 7) Allow students to chew gum
- 8) Give students time limits and keep to a schedule
- 9) Provide an extra set of textbooks
- 10) Give student separate spiral notebooks with pockets inside a 3-ringed binder
- 11) Give immediate consequences for misbehavior

Source: Stevens (2015)

- 1) Many students, regardless of whether or not they have ADHD, listen to music at home while studying so they are used to those sounds. Students with ADHD are hypersensitive to regular classroom noises such as the turning of pages, or other students moving around in their chairs so in order to keep them focused, the use of music and earphones is warranted to cancel out environmental noise
- 2) Students with ADHD need to spread out their work so it is not confined. Also, they may have a difficult time sitting still and upright in a chair and staying focused. They may be more comfortable hunching over or sitting on the floor to work. This is because in these other positions, there is more freedom of movement. Furthermore, these positions are most likely the same positions that they are in at home when they are studying.
- 3) Allow students to hand out papers or run errands in order to keep them moving.
- 4) If students are not focused on their work, they are doing something other than their work which may make noise and disrupt the rest of the class.
- 5) In the front of the class, there are fewer distractions between the teacher and the student. Furthermore, having these students sit in the front allows the teacher to focus on the student's behavior to make sure he/she is on track. The front of the room however may not be the best place in every situation. For example, if there is a window or a noisy fan in the front of the room, it would be better not to seat students with ADHD there. Also, if a student is extremely hyperactive, the back of the room may be best so that they can move around a bit without disrupting the rest of the class.
- 6) Sometimes dim lights help students with ADHD to remain calm and focus on their learning however some students with ADHD need brighter lights to keep them

focused. Lighting should be regulated according to the individual student. In order to give the students the light that they need without affecting the rest of the class, a desk lamp can be used for enhanced brightness or sunglasses can be used for room darkening.

- 7) As long as it is not disruptive to others. If it is against school policy, talk to the principal first.
- 8) While these students may need more time than others to complete assignments, the extra time should not be unlimited.
- 9) One textbook remains at home, the other remains in the classroom.
- 10) Spiral pages do not get lost as easily as single sheets so they are ideal for taking notes. Having the spiral inside the 3-ringed binder allows students to neatly place hand-outs into their notebook without shoving them into the pockets. Students can keep extra pencils in the pockets of the spiral notebook and the notebooks should be different colors for each class.

## PowerPoint for Online PLC Module 4

# Autism

## Let's Catch Up

- Since the last time we meet, which strategies have you used in your classroom?
- Were there any successes?
- Was there anything you felt could have gone better?
- Was the outcome what you expected?
- In your discussions with other members of the PLC, was there anything that you learned or found interesting?

## Workshop Reminder

### Autism

1. Covers a large range of disorders
2. Characterized by communication deficits and social impairments
3. Milder forms of autism are Asperger's Syndrome and pervasive developmental disorder.
4. Intelligence may or may not be affected. Many autistic children have above average intelligence
5. Children with Autism may exhibit have difficulty with the following:
  - Initiating social interactions
  - Flexibility
  - Maintaining eye contact
  - Moving from one activity to the next
  - Change in routine
  - Understanding social cues and body language
  - Repetitive tactile stimulation

Source: *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 2013*



## Webinar Reflection

- Student Engagement
- Instruction
- Classroom Management

Think about our webinars pertaining to specific learning disabilities, communication disorders and OHI:

Which student engagement strategies can you use in the classroom to help students with communication disorders?

Which instructional strategies can you use in the classroom to help students with communication disorders?

Which student classroom management strategies can you use in the classroom to help students with communication disorders?

## Student Engagement

- 1) Remember that students who are autistic may have higher than average I.Q.s
- 2) Provide class wide one-on-one peer tutoring
- 3) Use of video modeling for social interaction initiation
- 4) Use scripted cards for discussion initiation during cooperative learning activities

Source: Hart & Whalon (2011)

1. Students with autism may have the same or higher I.Q.s as other students in the class therefore intellectual stimulation is as important to them as to all other students
2. Students are paired, study together and tutor one another. This creates situations in which social interaction can be practiced and give the student with autism a sense of belonging to the class.
3. Students with autism have difficulty initiating social interactions. Although difficult to incorporate during class, students can be assigned the videos for homework. There is some pre-planning necessary for this. You can videotape the student during social interactions and upload the video to an iModeling app for reflection at home with his/her parents guiding him/her. Or, the teacher can video a role-play that exhibits social interactions and the students can watch that. Regardless of which way the teacher would like to implement it, it is important to contact the special education teacher and collaborate with him/her
4. For example when teaching about the human body the student with autism could be given a card that has question on it like “What is an example of homeostasis?” or “How does the cardiovascular system work with the respiratory system?” These are basically scripted prompts to initiate conversation.

## Instruction

- 1) Do not use sarcasm in the classroom. Likewise do not use idioms or anything that might have a double meaning
- 2) Be direct and state instructions that leave no ambiguity
- 3) Use simple sentences for more severe autism
- 4) Say exactly what you mean
- 5) Post agenda/possible questions on the board before class begins
- 6) Provide alternatives to disruptive behaviors
- 7) Use appropriate communication tools
- 8) Provide a transition to a new topic by connecting it to an old one to keep the student from fixating on one topic

Source: Organization for Autism Research (n.d); Strickland (2013); Vismara & Rogers (2010)

1. Students with autism do not understand sarcasm. They look upon it as the teacher being mean to students even if the sarcasm is not directed towards him/her. Additionally, students with autism take things literally so the use of idioms and double meanings can be confusing.
3. Instead of saying "Please go up to the board" say "go up to board"
4. Body language and facial expressions may not be understood
5. This helps prime for instruction
6. I once had a student with Asperger's who repetitively touched others. I put our class guinea pig on his desk during instruction so that he could stroke the pet rather than touch other students. Worked like a charm.
7. These can be picture charts for non-verbal students or instructional technology such as text-to-speech generators. When students can effectively communicate, there is less student frustration and uncooperative behavior decreases.
8. For example, if a student is fixated on the civil war and he/she is in math class, begin the transformation from one subject to the next by asking the student about how many soldiers he/she thinks were in the civil war, what percentage of the soldiers were on the north versus south side etc. Eventually the fixation may move to the math topic at hand.

## Classroom Management

- 1) Avoid sensory overload
- 2) Give students warning before making changes
- 3) Keep to a class routine so the student knows what to expect however within the class schedule, vary activities
- 4) Provide time-out area
- 5) Have hands-off rule to avoid touching of other students
- 6) Do not take student behaviors personally
- 7) Use visual supports
- 8) Teach self-management

Source: Organization for Autism Research (n.d); Strickland (2013)

1. Loud noises, and bright lights may be difficult for students with autism and may cause them to panic. Clear classroom clutter.
2. For example, if the teacher plans on changing the set-up of the classroom, he/she should inform the student in the days before that they should expect the classroom to look different. Additionally, students should be warned of planned fire drills.
3. Class schedules should be adhered to however having the same activities within the routine may create inflexibility in the student
4. When students get overwhelmed, make sure there is a place where they can go to- for instance, a desk could be placed outside of the classroom so when a time out is needed, the student could go there to calm him/herself. Make sure the student knows that this is NOT a punishment but rather a time to re-group
6. Repetitive questions and argumentative behaviors may be due to a fierce curiosity about a subject however the communication skills needed to converse appropriately is lacking
7. Visual supports are important during instruction however they are also important for classroom management by labeling supplies, agendas etc.
8. Students can be given checklists to evaluate their behavior. This fosters independence and allows students to adjust if they find themselves off track. It also acts as a reminder for appropriate behaviors.

## PowerPoint for Online PLC Module 5

# Intellectual Disabilities

## Let's Catch Up

- Since the last time we meet, which strategies have you used in your classroom?
- Were there any successes?
- Was there anything you felt could have gone better?
- Was the outcome what you expected?
- In your discussions with other members of the PLC, was there anything that you learned or found interesting?

## Workshop Reminder Intellectual Disabilities:

- Can range from mild to severe
- Lower than average I.Q. (70-75)
- Children with Intellectual Disabilities may exhibit have difficulty with the following:
  - Reasoning- both concrete and abstract
  - Problem solving
  - Planning
  - Experiential learning
  - Academic learning
  - Judgement
  - Communication
  - Participation in social activities

*Source: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 2013*

## Webinar Reflection

- Student Engagement
- Instruction
- Classroom Management

Think about our webinars pertaining to specific learning disabilities, communication disorders, OHI, and autism:

Which student engagement strategies can you use in the classroom to help students with communication disorders?

Which instructional strategies can you use in the classroom to help students with communication disorders?

Which student classroom management strategies can you use in the classroom to help students with communication disorders?

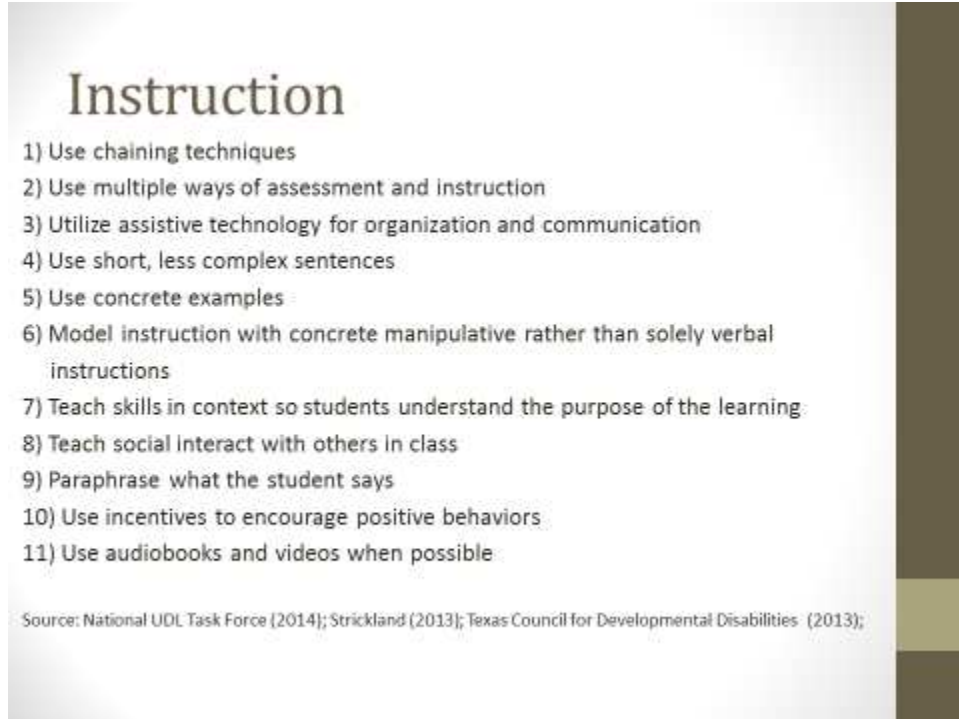
## Student Engagement

- 1) Provide nurturing environment through positive feedback
- 2) Engage student by asking them their preferred method of instruction and then incorporating that in the classroom
- 3) Practice relaxation techniques to reduce stress
- 4) Use cooperative learning techniques to encourage socialization
- 5) Utilize technology that teaches concepts through games and fun activities
- 6) Allow students to hand out papers and give them jobs in the classroom
- 7) Use voice tone that is appropriate for the child's age

Strickland (2013); Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (2013)

2. This can be done at the beginning of the year in the form of a survey. Give the survey to all students so that the student with the disability does not feel singled out.
5. iPad apps such as spell city, math drills Accelerated Reader
6. Helps students feel more responsible and needed.
7. Although students with disabilities may read at a second grade level while they are in high school, that does not mean they should be spoken to like a second grader. Doing this erodes student confidence.





## Instruction

- 1) Use chaining techniques
- 2) Use multiple ways of assessment and instruction
- 3) Utilize assistive technology for organization and communication
- 4) Use short, less complex sentences
- 5) Use concrete examples
- 6) Model instruction with concrete manipulative rather than solely verbal instructions
- 7) Teach skills in context so students understand the purpose of the learning
- 8) Teach social interact with others in class
- 9) Paraphrase what the student says
- 10) Use incentives to encourage positive behaviors
- 11) Use audiobooks and videos when possible

Source: National UDL Task Force (2014); Strickland (2013); Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (2013);

1. Teach in small increments, apply information, build on previous learning, apply etc. in a sequential order
3. I-Pad apps such as First, Then™ for scheduling and iConverse™ for communication.
10. Think outside of the box for this. In my classroom a student with Down syndrome was allowed to feed the class pet if he exhibited certain pre-determined behaviors during that class

## Classroom Management

- 1) Give students more time when working on assignments or decrease the amount of work
- 2) Teach other students in the class to ignore behaviors that are attention-seeking by modeling
- 3) Teach when it is appropriate to ask questions, or sharpen pencils etc.
- 4) Praise appropriate behavior often and correct inappropriate behavior immediately
- 5) Group student heterogeneously when appropriate

Source: Strickland (2013)

2. When students with intellectual disabilities act out with attention getting behavior, reacting to it might reward the behavior by giving the student the attention he/she wants. Model how you would like the rest of the students to react to these behaviors.
3. Do not take it for granted that students with intellectual disabilities understand the appropriate way to ask questions etc.
5. When there is a skill that students are intellectually able to handle, group them with more advanced peers. This helps model thinking skills for the disabled students and allows for social interaction

## PowerPoint for Online PLC Module 6

# Emotional Disabilities

## Let's Catch Up

- Since the last time we meet, which strategies have you used in your classroom?
- Were there any successes?
- Was there anything you felt could have gone better?
- Was the outcome what you expected?
- In your discussions with other members of the PLC, was there anything that you learned or found interesting?

## Workshop Reminder

### Emotional Disabilities:

- Unable to learn that is not due to intellectual or other factors <sup>1</sup>
- Wide range of disabilities fall into this category
- Includes<sup>2</sup>
  - Oppositional defiance disorder
  - Schizophrenia
  - Depression
  - Anxiety disorders
- Children with Intellectual Disabilities may exhibit have difficulty with the following <sup>1</sup> :
  - Interpersonal relationships
  - Appropriate behavior
  - Physical symptoms due to anxiety
  - Mood regulation

<sup>1</sup> Education, 2015

<sup>2</sup> *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual*, 2013

## Webinar Reflection

- Student Engagement
- Instruction
- Classroom Management

Think about our webinars pertaining to specific learning disabilities, communication disorders, OHI, autism, and intellectual disabilities:

Which student engagement strategies can you use in the classroom to help students with communication disorders?

Which instructional strategies can you use in the classroom to help students with communication disorders?

Which student classroom management strategies can you use in the classroom to help students with communication disorders?

# Student Engagement

1. Provide plenty of opportunities for engagement through group collaboration
2. Provide for varying activities throughout each class
  - Mix direct instruction, individual activities and group work
3. Provide for challenging activities to keep the student interested

Source: Strickland (2013)

## Instruction

1. Teach test-taking and organization strategies
2. Give students alternative ways that they can ask for help without feeling stigmatized
3. Chunk assignments so students do not get overwhelmed
4. Have student create a portfolio of their classroom successes
5. Use online programs to track behaviors and reward appropriate behaviors
6. Explain the rationale behind classroom rules

Source: Strickland (2013)

1. Academic frustration can lead to misbehavior
2. You and the student can agree upon a non-verbal cue, like touching their nose, to use when they need help
4. Having tangible evidence of success may increase student self-efficacy and motivate them to continue working towards success
5. One of the best websites I have found for this is Class Dojo. Teachers can give students dojo points when they help others, come prepared, and are on task.

## Classroom Management

1. Seat students in close proximity to the teacher
2. Reinforce good behavior through modelling and verbal praise
3. Recognize evidence of behavior escalation
4. State expectations for behavior
5. Follow through with discipline when warranted
6. Provide structure and routine
7. Deescalate inappropriate behaviors by conversing with the student about the benefits of positive behavior
8. Implement a behavior plan
9. Avoid battles for control

Source: Strickland (2013); Wright (n.d.)

3. Biting lips, biting nails, making fists, grumbling, grimacing
9. Arguing with students only gives them the sense that they have control.



## Appendix B: Survey Monkey: Teacher Self-Efficacy Survey

### Teacher Efficacy

#### Instructions

Thank you for participating in our survey. The purpose of this survey is to determine if there is a difference between teacher's perceptions of their personal efficacy when teaching in a general education classroom environment versus an inclusion classroom environment. The term inclusion pertains to the placement of special needs students into the general education classroom with the use of an individualized education program (IEP).

This is a three part survey and should take you no more than 5 minutes to complete. The first two parts consist of Likert type items and the third part asks for descriptive data. The first part of the survey includes 12 questions that should be answered in the context of your teaching in a general education classroom. The second part of the survey repeats those 12 questions to reflect on how you would feel in the context of teaching in an inclusion classroom. The third and final part of the survey asks a few questions such as "how many years have you been teaching" to help categorize the data.

You are under no obligation to complete this survey and may stop at any time. All survey answers are anonymous and confidential. Completing this survey will act as your informed consent as per the protection of participant protocols recommended by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Next

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## Teacher Efficacy

### Teacher's Sense of Self Efficacy Scale-General Education Classroom

Please answer this section of the questionnaire as it pertains to how you feel about teaching in the general education classroom

Directions: This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for teachers in their school activities. Please indicate your opinion about each of the statements below about teaching in the general education classroom.

#### 1. Evaluate the following statements.

Teacher Beliefs	How Much Can You Do?								
	Nothing 1	2	Very little 3	4	Some influence 5	6	Quite a bit 7	8	A great deal 9
How much can you do to control the disruptive behaviour of children with learning support needs in the classroom?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How much can you do to help your students value learning?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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**Teacher Efficacy****End of Part 1**

You have just completed part 1 of 3. Thank you. Please continue to part 2 and complete the 12 questions in part 2 pertaining to the inclusion classroom.

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**Teacher Efficacy**

**Teacher's Sense of Self Efficacy Scale-Inclusion Classroom**

Please answer this section of the questionnaire as it pertains to how you feel about teaching in the inclusion classroom

Directions: This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for teachers in their school activities. Please indicate your opinion about each of the statements below about teaching in the inclusion classroom.

**2. Evaluate the following statements.**

Teacher Beliefs	How Much Can You Do?								
	Nothing 1	2	Very little 3	4	Some influence 5	6	Quite a bit 7	8	A great deal 9
How much can you do to control the disruptive behaviour of children with learning support needs in the classroom?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How much can you do to motivate students with learning support needs who show low interest in school work?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How much can you do to get students with learning support needs to believe they can do well in school work?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How much can you do to help your students with learning support needs to value learning?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To what extent can you craft good questions for your students with learning support needs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How much can you do to get children with learning support needs to follow classroom rules?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How much can you do to calm a student with learning support needs who is disruptive or noisy?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How well can you establish a classroom management system with children with learning support needs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies with children with learning support needs?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students with learning support needs are confused?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How much can you assist families of children with learning support needs in helping their children do well in school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How well can you implement alternative strategies for children with learning support needs in your classroom?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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**Teacher Efficacy****End of Part 2**

You have just completed part 2 of 3 and are almost done. Thank you. Please continue to part 3 and answer the final descriptive questions.

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## Teacher Efficacy

### Descriptive Data

This questionnaire was designed to gain a better understanding of your experience and training to help us interpret the data.

Directions: Please answer these brief descriptive questions as they pertain to your experience and point of view regarding inclusion and the inclusion classroom.

#### 3. What grade(s) do you currently teach? (choose all)

- 7th
- 8th
- 9th
- 10th
- 11th
- 12th

#### 4. What subject do you primarily teach?

- Math
- Science
- Social Studies
- English
- Art
- Music
- Physical Education
- Social Studies
- English
- Art
- Music
- Physical Education
- Family and Consumer Science
- Technology
- Art
- Music
- Physical Education
- Family and Consumer Science
- Technology
- Other (please specify)

#### 5. How many years have you been teaching?

- 0-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-10 years
- 11-14 years
- 15-18 years
- 19-22 years
- 23-26 years
- 27-30 years
- 31-34 years
- 35+ years
- 
- 23-26 years
- 27-30 years
- 31-34 years
- 35+ years

#### 6. Have you ever taught in an inclusion classroom?

- yes

**6. Have you ever taught in an inclusion classroom?** yes no**7. How many years have you taught inclusion (if you have)?** I have never taught an inclusion class 0-3 years 4-6 years 7-10 years 11-14 years 15-18 years 19-22 years 23-26 years 27-30 years 31-34 years 35+ years**8. How many college courses have you taken that focused specifically on managing an inclusion classroom?** 0 1 2 3 4 5+**9. How many college courses have you taken that focused specifically on students with learning disabilities in an inclusion setting?** 0 1 2 3 4 5+

**10. Over the last three years, how many hours of professional development regarding inclusion have you taken part in?**

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9+

**11. Have you ever received any formal training on best practices for implementing inclusion and for teaching students with disabilities?**

- yes
- no

**12. Evaluate the following statements**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am satisfied with the amount of Organizational support in the form of professional development, that I have received regarding the implementation of inclusion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



## Appendix C: TSES

**Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale<sup>1</sup> (short form)**

<b>Teacher Beliefs</b>		<b>How much can you do?</b>									
Directions: This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for teachers in their school activities. Please indicate your opinion about each of the statements below. Your answers are confidential.		Nothing									A Great Deal
		Very Little									
		Some Influence									
		Quite A Bit									
1.	How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
2.	How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
3.	How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
4.	How much can you do to help your students value learning?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
5.	To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
6.	How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
7.	How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
8.	How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
9.	How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
10.	To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
11.	How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
12.	How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	

## Appendix D: TSES - Learning Difficulties

**Appendix 1. Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale – Learning Difficulties**

This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kind of things that create difficulties for teachers with pupils with learning difficulties. Please indicate your opinion about each of the statements below.

Teacher beliefs	How much can you do?									
	Nothing	Very little	Some influence	Quite a bit	A great deal					
1. How much can you do to control the disruptive behaviour of children with learning support needs in the classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
2. How much can you do to motivate students with learning support needs who show low interest in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
3. How much can you do to get students with learning support needs to believe they can do well in school work?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
4. How much can you do to help your students with learning support needs to value learning?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
5. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students with learning support needs?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
6. How much can you do to get children with learning support needs to follow classroom rules?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
7. How much can you do to calm a student with learning support needs who is disruptive or noisy?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
8. How well can you establish a classroom management system with children with learning support needs?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
9. How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies with children with learning support needs?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
10. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students with learning support needs are confused?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
11. How much can you assist families of children with learning support needs in helping their children do well in school?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	
12. How well can you implement alternative strategies for children with learning support needs in your classroom?	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	

## Appendix E: Permission To Use TSES

**From:** Pamela Sime [mailto:[pamela.sime@waldenu.edu](mailto:pamela.sime@waldenu.edu)]

**Sent:** Friday, July 13, 2012 6:37 PM

**To:** [mxtsch@wm.edu](mailto:mxtsch@wm.edu); [anitahoy@mac.com](mailto:anitahoy@mac.com)

**Subject:** Permission to use your Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale in a Doctoral Study

Dear Dr Tschannan-Moran and Dr Woolfolk,

My name is Pamela Sime and I am a doctoral student in the Higher Education and Adult Leadership program at Walden University. I am writing to ask your permission to use and/or modify your Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale. My research question is "What effect does professional development (PD) training have on the self-efficacy of middle school general education teachers in the included classroom". Essentially, in many school districts students with disabilities are placed into general education classrooms without the teacher being trained on how to best meet the needs for these students. What I have done is created a PD program that would provide strategies for these teachers so that their included students can get the support that they need to be successful. I am using a pre-test/post-test design where teachers will take the efficacy inventory both before and after the PD training to determine if the training has made a difference in their perceived efficacy. I would like to modify the scale to add the word "included" for the statements. For instance, I would like to modify your statement "How much can you do to help your students think critically?" to read "How much can you do to help your included students think critically?"

Please email me back with your permission to use the scale if you choose to allow it and with your permission to modify it to better meet the needs of my study. I look forward to hearing from you and thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Pamela Sime

## Original E-mail

**From :** Megan Tschannen-Moran [[mxtsch@wm.edu](mailto:mxtsch@wm.edu)]

**Date :** 07/23/2012 01:07 PM

**To :** 'Pamela Sime' [[pamela.sime@waldenu.edu](mailto:pamela.sime@waldenu.edu)]

**Subject :** RE: Permission to use your Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale in a Doctoral Study

Pamela,

You have my permission to use the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (formerly called the Ohio State Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale) that I developed with Anita Woolfolk Hoy in your research. You can find a copy of the measure and scoring directions on my web site at <http://wmpeople.wm.edu/site/page/mxtsch> . The scoring directions are provided there as well.

Please use the following as the proper citation (even though the earlier name was used in that article):

Tschannen-Moran, M & Woolfolk Hoy, A. (2001). Teacher self-efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17, 783-805.

I will also attach directions you can follow to access my password protected web site, where you can find the supporting references for this measure as well as other articles I have written on this and related topics. You might also be interested in the dissertations of two of my students who studied teacher self-efficacy in relation to included students: Sheila Ashley and Pamela Aerni.

I would love to receive a brief summary of your results.

All the best,  
Megan Tschannen-Moran

## Original E-mail

**From :** Anita Hoy [[anitahoy@mac.com](mailto:anitahoy@mac.com)]

**Date :** 07/14/2012 03:48 PM

**To :** Pamela Sime [[pamela.sime@waldenu.edu](mailto:pamela.sime@waldenu.edu)]

**Subject :** Re: Permission to use your Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale in a Doctoral Study

You are welcome to use the TSES as needed in your research.

*Anita*

Anita Woolfolk Hoy, Professor  
Educational Psychology & Philosophy  
School of Educational Policy and Leadership  
The Ohio State University  
Columbus, OH 43210

phone: [614-292-3774](tel:614-292-3774)  
fax: [614-292-7900](tel:614-292-7900)

## Appendix F: Permission To Use TSES - Learning Difficulties

**Pamela Sime <pamela.sime@waldenu.edu>**

7/23  
/12

to lisa.woolfson

Hello,

My name is Pamela Sime and I am a doctoral student at Walden University. I am doing a study on teacher self-efficacy (TSE) when instructing students with disabilities and I would like your permission to use your scale in my study. I am looking to give teachers the original survey and your survey to see if there is a difference between TSE in a general academic class versus an included classroom and if there is, to quantify that difference. If this is alright with you, please let me know. I have already received permission from Dr. Hoy to use the original scale. Thanks so much for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you.

Pamela Sime



**Lisa Woolfson <lisa.woolfson@strath.ac.uk>**

7/23  
/12

to me

Dear Pamela,

That is absolutely fine with me, assuming you reference it accordingly.

Sound an interesting piece of work. I wish you good luck with it.

Best wishes

Lisa

**Professor Lisa Woolfson**  
**Head of School of Psychological Sciences and Health**  
**University of Strathclyde**  
**40 George St, Glasgow G1 1QE**  
**TEL: +44 (0) 141 548 2580**

The University of Strathclyde is a charitable body, registered in Scotland, with registration number SC015263.

## Appendix G: Permission To Use District Email

Omitted due to confidentiality

November 4, 2014

Ms. Pam Sime

Dear Ms. Sime:

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled The Perceived Self-Efficacy of Secondary General Education Teachers in the Inclusion Classroom in a Suburban Pennsylvania School District [REDACTED]. As part of this study, I authorize you to use the district email to send an invitation with a link to the study survey in order to recruit participants. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion. Furthermore, I authorize you to use the district email to send reminders of the study to potential participants four days, eight days, and eleven days after the survey opens. Upon completion of the doctoral study, an email containing a link that leads to the final doctoral study will be sent to administrators, professional development coordinators and faculty of the [REDACTED].

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include: Access to the school district email. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,



Superintendent of Schools

[REDACTED]

## Appendix H: Permission To Use CoI Diagram

Mar 13

**Pamela Sime** <pamela.sime@waldenu.edu>

to terrya

Hello Dr. Anderson,

My name is Pamela Sime and I am working on my dissertation at Walden University. My topic is general education teachers' perception of self-efficacy in the inclusion classroom and I am creating a professional development (PD) program that has a blended learning format. I am writing to request your permission to use your diagrams for both the Community of Inquiry Framework and the Practical Inquiry Model in my dissertation. If you are agreeable, please shoot me an email back stating as such.

Thank you in advance for your consideration,

Pamela Sime



Mar 13

**Terry Anderson**

to me

Go ahead Pamela and good luck

I assume you have seen resources at <https://coi.athabascau.ca>

Terry

Terry Anderson, Ph.D.  
Professor  
Centre for Distance Education  
Athabasca University  
1200 10011 109 St.  
Edmonton, AB Canada  
T5J 3S8      Ph 780 497 3421  
                    Fax 780 497 3416

Google Scholar profile: <http://tinyurl.com/terrydanderson>

## Appendix I: Email Letter to Participants

### Invitation Email:

My name is Pamela Sime and I am both a teacher in the district as well as a student at Walden University. I am in the process of completing my doctoral study regarding the perceived self-efficacy of general education teachers in the tradition classroom setting when compared to the inclusion classroom setting.

The number of students with IEPs who are being taught in an inclusion setting has been steadily increasing. It made me question how teachers feel regarding their ability to instruct all students successfully considering the myriad of disabilities that are encountered. Furthermore, I question if teachers in the district feel they are supported by the administration in the form of professional development (PD) regarding teaching inclusion.

You are invited to take part in a research study of “The Perceived Self-Efficacy of Secondary General Education Teachers in the Inclusion Classroom in a Suburban Pennsylvania School District.” This study aims to determine if there is a difference in perceived self-efficacy of general education teachers in the inclusion setting when compared to the traditional setting and if there is a correlation between teacher self-efficacy and administrative support in the form of professional development/training. I am inviting you to participate because you have taught inclusion and/or general education classes in your local school.

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to complete a 3-part online survey that should take you no more than 5 minutes to answer. The survey can be accessed at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/teacherefficacyinclusion>.

### Guiding Questions:

1. Is there a difference in perceived teacher self-efficacy with regard to instructing special needs students in an inclusion classroom when compared to instructing general education students in a general academic classroom?
2. Is there an association linking prior experience and organizational support in the form of PD with general education teachers’ perceptions of their ability to instruct disabled students in the inclusion classroom?

Here are some sample questions from the online survey:

\_\_\_\_ How much can you do to control the disruptive behavior of children with learning support needs in the classroom?

\_\_\_\_ How much can you do to control to motivate students with learning support needs who show interest in school work?

\_\_\_\_ How much can you do to get students with learning support to believe they can do well in school work?



Your participation is strictly voluntary. You may stop at any time. There is no payment, thank you gifts, or reimbursements provided should you decide to participate in this study.

Any information you provide in the survey will be kept anonymous. I will not know who participated since the survey is completed online. Clicking on the link and completion of the survey serves as informed consent. This invitation may be printed out for your records. I do not anticipate any risks associated with participation in this study.

Responses to the survey are not a reflection of teacher competency but rather a way to formulate a plan that may help all of us better understand the needs of teachers of inclusion. No identifying information will be asked in the survey either directly. For example, the information regarding location of employment and your personal identity were purposefully omitted from the survey. After the requisite number of participants is reached, the survey will close and the raw data will be transferred to my password protected personal computer. The raw data will be deleted after 5 years. The Survey Monkey website may capture the IP address of the computer in which the survey is taken; however, this will in no way be linked to individual respondents.

Should you have any questions regarding your participation or about the study, please contact me at [pamela.sime@waldenu.edu](mailto:pamela.sime@waldenu.edu) . If you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant, please contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Walden University by emailing [irb@waldenu.edu](mailto:irb@waldenu.edu) or calling 800-925-3368, ext. 3121210.

Sincerely,

Pamela Sime

Clicking on this link, [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/teacherefficacyinclusion\\_serves](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/teacherefficacyinclusion_serves) as informed consent.

Reminder email to be sent on days 4, 8, and 11 if needed:

This letter serves as a reminder email that it is not too late to take part in the Teacher self-efficacy Survey. The link is <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/teacherefficacyinclusion>. You are under no obligation to fill out the survey and you may discontinue the survey at any time by closing out the Survey Monkey website. Clicking on the survey link serves as your informed consent per the original invitation email.

Thank you for your time,

Pam Sime

Email to be Sent at the Conclusion of the Study:

With the support of the Walden University as well as the Central Bucks School District staff and administration, I recently completed a study which aimed to ascertain if there was a difference in perceived self-efficacy of general education teachers in the inclusion setting when compared to the traditional setting. Furthermore, the study sought to determine if there was a correlation between teacher self-efficacy and administrative support in the form of professional development/training. I am pleased to report that the study has been completed. To read the study in its entirety please go to [*placeholder for website to be filled in after completion of the study*].

I sincerely thank everyone who contributed,

Pam Sime

## Appendix J: IRB Permission

**IRB**Nov 18 (11  
days ago)

to me, Mary, Louis, Doctoral

Dear Ms. Sime,

This email is to notify you that the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has approved your application for the study entitled, "The perceived self-efficacy of secondary general education teachers in the inclusion classroom in a suburban Pennsylvania school district."

Your approval # is 11-18-14-0083722. You will need to reference this number in your doctoral study and in any future funding or publication submissions. Also attached to this e-mail is the IRB approved consent form. Please note, if this is already in an on-line format, you will need to update that consent document to include the IRB approval number and expiration date.

Your IRB approval expires on November 17, 2015. One month before this expiration date, you will be sent a Continuing Review Form, which must be submitted if you wish to collect data beyond the approval expiration date.

Your IRB approval is contingent upon your adherence to the exact procedures described in the final version of the IRB application document that has been submitted as of this date. This includes maintaining your current status with the university. Your IRB approval is only valid while you are an actively enrolled student at Walden University. If you need to take a leave of absence or are otherwise unable to remain actively enrolled, your IRB approval is suspended. Absolutely NO participant recruitment or data collection may occur while a student is not actively enrolled.

If you need to make any changes to your research staff or procedures, you must obtain IRB approval by submitting the IRB Request for Change in Procedures Form. You will receive confirmation with a status update of the request within 1 week of submitting the change request form and are not permitted to implement changes prior to receiving approval. Please note that Walden University does not accept responsibility or liability for research activities conducted without the IRB's approval, and the University will not accept or grant credit for student work that fails to comply with the policies and procedures related to ethical standards in research.

When you submitted your IRB application, you made a commitment to communicate both discrete adverse events and general problems to the IRB within 1 week of their

occurrence/realization. Failure to do so may result in invalidation of data, loss of academic credit, and/or loss of legal protections otherwise available to the researcher.

Both the Adverse Event Reporting form and Request for Change in Procedures form can be obtained at the IRB section of the Walden website:

<http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/researchcenter/orec>

Researchers are expected to keep detailed records of their research activities (i.e., participant log sheets, completed consent forms, etc.) for the same period of time they retain the original data. If, in the future, you require copies of the originally submitted IRB materials, you may request them from Institutional Review Board.

Please note that this letter indicates that the IRB has approved your research. You may not begin the research phase of your doctoral study, however, until you have received the **Notification of Approval to Conduct Research** e-mail. Once you have received this notification by email, you may begin your data collection.

Both students and faculty are invited to provide feedback on this IRB experience at the link below:

[http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=qHBJzkJMUx43pZegKlmdiQ\\_3d\\_3d](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=qHBJzkJMUx43pZegKlmdiQ_3d_3d)

Sincerely,  
Libby Munson  
Research Ethics Support Specialist  
Office of Research Ethics and Compliance  
Email: [irb@waldenu.edu](mailto:irb@waldenu.edu)  
Fax: 626-605-0472  
Phone: 612-312-1283

Office address for Walden University:  
100 Washington Avenue South, Suite 900  
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Information about the Walden University Institutional Review Board, including instructions for application, may be found at this link:  
<http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/researchcenter/orec>