

Rowan University

Rowan Digital Works

Theses and Dissertations

4-22-1998

Inclusion in the elementary specialty areas: art, library, music and physical education

Dawn Danley
Rowan University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd>



Part of the [Disability and Equity in Education Commons](#)

Let us know how access to this document benefits you - share your thoughts on our feedback form.

Recommended Citation

Danley, Dawn, "Inclusion in the elementary specialty areas: art, library, music and physical education" (1998). *Theses and Dissertations*. 1934.

<https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd/1934>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Rowan Digital Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Rowan Digital Works. For more information, please contact LibraryTheses@rowan.edu.

**Inclusion in the Elementary Specialty Areas:
Art, Library, Music and Physical Education**

by
Dawn Danley

A Thesis Project

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master of Arts Degree in Learning Disabilities
May 1998**

Approved by _____
Dr. Stanley Urban. Ph.D., Professor

Date Approved: April 22, 1998

Table of Contents

Abstract.	1
Mini-Abstract.	3
Chapter I.	4
Need for the Study.	4
Value of the Study.	6
Purpose of the Study.	6
Research Questions.	6
Definition of Terms.	7
Chapter II.	9
Summary.	13
Chapter III.	14
Instrumentation.	14
Pilot Study.	15
Procedure.	16
Chapter IV.	17
Chapter V.	23
Summary.	23
Discussion.	23
Appendix A.	26
Appendix B.	31
Appendix C.	35
Appendix D.	41
Bibliography.	43

ABSTRACT

Dawn Danley

INCLUSION IN THE ELEMENTARY SPECIALTY AREAS:

ART, LIBRARY, MUSIC AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

1998

Dr. Stanley Urban

Seminar in Learning Disabilities

Graduate Division of Rowan University

In compliance with providing the least restrictive environment, children with varying degrees of disabilities are being included into the general education classroom. This study focused on facilitating the inclusion of children with moderate to severe special needs into the elementary specialty areas including library, music, art and physical education. This study was conducted in a school district in southern New Jersey using inter-office mailings.

Data was collected by providing a completed student profile and a sample needs assessment to teachers in each specialty area. The teachers completed the sample needs assessment based on their perceived knowledge regarding the child that was to be included into their class. The areas of need assessed include instructional adaptations, behavior, academics, communication needs and health issues. The data was tabulated according to importance based on the teacher's input.

The findings indicated that the most common concern was in the area of instructional adaptations. Comments on the sample needs assessment stated that the student profile was a useful tool in facilitating inclusion of a child with moderate to

severe special needs but was considered lengthy and therefore not a realistic option for all included children.

MINI-ABSTRACT

Dawn Danley

INCLUSION IN THE ELEMENTARY SPECIALTY AREAS:

ART, LIBRARY, MUSIC AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

1998

Dr. Stanley Urban

Seminar in Learning Disabilities

Graduate Division of Rowan University

In compliance with providing the least restrictive environment, children with varying degrees of disabilities are being included into the general education classroom. This study focused on facilitating the inclusion of children with moderate to severe special needs into the elementary specialty areas including library, music, art and physical education.

The findings indicated that the most common concern was in the area of instructional adaptations. Comments on the sample needs assessment stated that the student profile was a useful tool in facilitating inclusion of a child with moderate to severe special needs but was considered lengthy and therefore not a realistic option for all included children.

Chapter I

Introduction

Inclusion - that is what most of us strive for in life. To "tend to include, especially taking everything into account..." (Webster, 1983). We would all like others to include us in their plans or activities since this means that we are a success in society. Inclusive education, or inclusion, has been a prominent topic in education for several years. The additional work and planning necessary to "embrace", or include, children with disabilities into the regular education classrooms, particularly by "taking everything into account" has had an affect on students, teachers and administrators. Among the issues to be addressed in responsible inclusion are scheduling, training, collaboration, assessing, grading and support of the regular classroom teacher. These pre-requisites are among the challenges of including a child with disabilities into a regular education classroom.

Need for the Study

In Webster's dictionary, synonyms for inclusion are the words "embrace" and "enclose" (Webster, 1983). Although numbers are increasing as training occurs, there are few specialty area teachers, that "embrace" a child with moderate to severe disabilities especially if the student is being placed into their general education classroom. In an attempt to help teachers develop a more positive attitude about including children with disabilities, this study will formulate a standardized series of steps that will ease the tension and anxiety among specialty area teachers when including a child with moderate to severe disabilities.

In reviewing the literature, few studies were found that focus on facilitating inclusion for a child with disabilities into specialty areas such as art, music, library and physical education. It is paramount to focus on these specialty areas as these are

often the first subject areas in which a child with special needs is mainstreamed. There is paucity of studies or even anecdotal accounts dealing with this topic. Most of the literature discusses inclusion as it relates to academic aspects of a general education classroom. Some of these suggestions can also be used in the specialty areas but there needs to be focused study on facilitating the inclusion of children with moderate to severe disabilities into the specialty areas.

There are serious challenges when including children with moderate to severe disabilities into the specialty areas. First, although there are limitations regarding class size in a special education class but there are no limitations placed on the number of children with special needs who are included in the general education specialty areas classrooms (NJAC 6:28).

Secondly, in New Jersey, special education courses are not a requirement to be certified as an elementary teacher. Although there are many fine universities, including Rowan University, that offer good undergraduate training in the field of education, no special education course is required to graduate. Yet, these will be the teachers that will be required by law to accept and teach children with varying disabilities in their classrooms. The absence of the initial introductory training leaves all teachers at a disadvantage, despite the wonderful advantage of all the strategies they have obtained to teach general education students. None of the specialty area teachers that were interviewed for this study had training in special education in their undergraduate studies.

Inclusion would be facilitated if a needs assessment could be created to evaluate each teacher's perceived needs or questions about including a specific child into their class given the specialty area curriculum. The focus of this study will be to establish a procedure that would facilitate this process and, therefore, ease the tension often involved in including a child with moderate to severe disabilities into specialty subjects such as art, music, library and physical education. The avenue that this

researcher will be focusing on is a needs assessment that encompasses all areas of concerns for these particular teachers. The hope is that once the special education teacher is able to assess the needs of each specialty area teacher, he or she can assist in the process of solving the challenges presented without wasting valuable time on attempting to assess the concerns.

Value of the Study

This study will be a valuable source of information when seeking assistance in dealing with the challenges of including a child with special needs in such subject areas such as art, music, library and physical education. This needs assessment will be useful district-wide as it will more objectively focus the specialty area teacher and the special education teacher into collaborative planning to solve the problems presented. It may also serve as a tool to ease the specialty area teacher's anxiety in accepting a child with moderate to severe disabilities into his or her classroom as it will provide a form of addressing their fears or concerns.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to establish a procedure to assess the needs of teachers who will be responsible for educating a students with severe special needs in their specialty area classroom, including elementary art, music, library and physical education.

Research Questions

In order to accomplish the general purposes of this study, the data obtained is used to answer the following questions:

1. What are the concerns and questions of specialty area teachers when including a child with moderate to severe special needs?

2. What is a realistic plan of action to address the challenges faced when including a child with severe special needs into art, music, library and physical education?

3. Do specialty area teachers feel that a needs assessment would facilitate communication and problem solving between themselves and the special education teacher?

Definition of Terms

To better clarify and understand this paper, the following list of terms and their definition as used in this paper:

Child with moderate to severe disabilities - a child who has been classified as autistic, chronically ill, communication handicapped, emotionally disturbed, educable mentally retarded, multiply handicapped, orthopedically handicapped or socially maladjusted pursuant to the NJAC 6:28-3.5 (d). The focus of this project is limited to children who are the most difficult to include and with whom the adaptations are most complex; therefore, any child, other than a simple learning disability, can be included in this category.

Inclusion - According to Webster's Dictionary, it is the act of including, to consider part of a whole, especially taking everything into account (Webster, 1983). Keeping that in mind, this paper defines inclusion as the practice of providing a student with disabilities an education in the general classroom with the appropriate supports and accommodations.

Mainstreaming - the act of including a student with disabilities into the regular education classroom for part of the time. Main instruction is received in the special education classroom.

Specialty Areas - those subjects in elementary schools which are normally taught out of the homeroom class, specifically, art, music, library and physical education.

Functional Skills - skills deemed necessary to live, work and participate in the environment (Hamre-Nietupski et al, 1992). As a student, the environment would be the school and for those students who are included, that would be the general education classroom. Generally, these skills include daily living skills such as tying one's shoe or sight words such as "exit" or "restroom".

Communication System - any system whether an augmentative device, such as technology, that speaks for the child or a picture exchange system which allows the child the ability to communicate.

Individual Education Program (IEP) - a legal document mandated by law (NJAC 6:28-3.6) which includes information about the child with a disability including their educational goals and objectives.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

With the passing of P.L. 94-142 in 1975, education of children with disabilities has been a critical issue in education. This mandatory legislation guarantees that every school system will provide an education for children with disabilities. Currently, P.L. 94-142 is part B of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEAL, 101-476). The major provisions of IDEA are: 1) extensive efforts must be made to identify all children with disabilities, 2) each child with a disability has the right to a free and appropriate public education, 3) the student must be educated in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) consistent with their educational needs, 4) an Individualized Education Program (IEP) must be developed for each student which among other important information, denotes that child's goals and objectives for the year (Huefner, 1997).

The interpretation of the "Least Restrictive Environment" as stated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990 has forced all educators, lawmakers and the courts to interpret the phrase "Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)". One of the interpretations of LRE has led us into the movement of inclusion. There is a great deal of information about inclusion ranging from the definition of inclusion to position papers on whether inclusion has a positive effect on children with a disability and their nondisabled peers to articles on the success or failure of inclusion in specific situations to, more recently, "how to" articles and books.

The actual definition of inclusion has been unclear from the beginning (Fuchs and Fuchs, 1994). The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) defines inclusion as "the placement of all students with disabilities in general education classrooms without regard to the nature or severity of the student's disabilities, their ability to behave and

function appropriately in the classroom, or the educational benefits they can derive" (Kauffman & Hallahan, 1995). The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps (TASH) precedes its definition of inclusion with the statement: "...inclusion begins with the educational and moral imperatives that students with disabilities belong in general education classrooms and that they receive the supports and services necessary to benefit from their education in the general education setting." (Kauffman & Hallahan, 1995). TASH then continues in its definition that inclusion should be available to all and that the necessary supports should be in place in order to allow the student to be successful in the general education setting (Kauffman & Hallahan, 1995).

As defined in this paper, inclusion will be considered as the practice of providing a student with disabilities an education in the general classroom with the appropriate supports and accommodations. The best definition for appropriate supports and accommodations is defined by The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC): "Such settings should be strengthened and supported by an infusion of specially trained personnel and other appropriate supportive practices according to the individual needs of the child." (Kauffman & Hallahan). It is imperative that while inclusion is the practice, that it is done with the appropriate support to create an atmosphere of learning and success for the child with disabilities and their nondisabled peers. This paper will provide a set of procedures to be followed to facilitate the appropriate supports and accommodations needed for a student with severe disabilities to be included in the general education setting.

Although there are a myriad of articles discussing the appropriateness of inclusion, few address measures being taken to facilitate inclusion. The fact is that children with disabilities, even those with more severe disabilities will be placed in the general education classroom. And, more than likely, inclusion will initiate in the specialty areas (Heenan, 1994). There are few articles on facilitating the inclusion of children with disabilities in the general education specialty areas such as art, music,

library and physical education. What steps have been taken to ensure that each child is given the appropriate supports to increase success in the general education specialty area classrooms?

When reviewing the literature specifically on the inclusion of children with disabilities into the specialty areas, physical education is the one area that had the most articles (Block, 1995; Miller, 1994; Heenan, 1994; Craft, 1994). All of the aforementioned articles dealt with the challenge of including a child with a physical disabilities into a physical education program. These articles are important in that they provide excellent suggestions of how to include a child with severe disabilities. However, none of them stated a set procedure. The articles assumed that the teacher in the specialty area was confident and had the resources available to teach a child with a severe disability appropriately. There is no mention of the attitude of the teacher, which literature supports as an important aspect of successful inclusion.

The area of music was also touched on in an article dealing with a student with communication deficits in the music class (Humpal & Dimmick, 1995). Again, these articles were helpful in suggesting activities for a child with visual or auditory disabilities. The purpose of such a set of procedures would be to make it available and useful with any child with moderate to severe disabilities, regardless of the disability, in facilitating that child's inclusion in the general education setting. While the articles were helpful in that they gave suggestions of specific activities and equipment to use, none of the articles had an established procedure that would, in general, facilitate the inclusion of the child with disabilities into these classrooms.

All articles assumed that the teachers involved had positive attitudes towards children with disabilities and that they practiced good teaching strategies. There were several articles on good teaching practices that afford the teacher guidelines to be used with both the general population and those with disabilities (Sage, ed, 1994; Goodlad & Lovitt, ed., 1993; Stainback & Stainback, 1990). These guidelines include a

positive classroom environment, one that is pleasant, managed well with an atmosphere that is conducive for all students to learn. This includes collaborative planning with a special education teacher when a child with disabilities is included (Sage, ed., 1994). High expectations on the part of the teacher are also important so that each student is challenged to do his or her best. The instructional presentation is also key to best instruct all children. The consensus is that a multi-sensory approach allows all children to have success. The classrooms with more academic engaged time are also cited as giving the students more opportunities to engage in receiving immediate feedback from the teacher. This is important in that it gives the child parameters, which in turn contributes to the positive environment. Finally, the progress of the student should be carefully monitored throughout the year.

Along with good teaching practices, Stainback and Stainback list some good inclusion practices (Stainback & Stainback, 1990). To facilitate the inclusion of a student into any environment, those involved should know why the student is in the general education setting and, if it applies, the role of the aide in the classroom. Some classroom routines may need to be modified in order to make the child with a disability an active participant in the classroom. All children, including the child with a disability, have age-appropriate expectations. This includes following classroom and school rules and regulations. Two rules that apply to the teachers are: 1) do things with the child with a disability rather than for him or her and, 2) never talk about the child in their presence unless you include them in the conversation. The other major variable is that the regular education children need to be taught how to react to disruptive behavior - whether from a peer or a peer with a disability.

Another important condition for successful inclusion is the creation of a positive classroom environment. This includes the positive attitude of the teacher toward the child with a disability (Goodlad and Lovitt, ed., 1993; Stainback and Stainback, 1990; Miller, 1994; Gable, et al, 1991; Smith and Hilton, 1997). Although there seems to be

increasing acceptance, not all teachers have a high regard for inclusion. Yet, in order to create a positive environment, one must be convinced of the benefits of inclusion for a specific child. One of the frequently mentioned and biggest road blocks to successful inclusion is the teacher's attitude toward teaching children with disabilities.

Summary

The literature clearly indicates that a variety of conditions must be met in order for children with disabilities to experience success within the general education classroom. Among the most important variables are teachers who are sensitive to and concerned about students with moderate to severe disabilities, knowledge of realistic and useful instructional procedures, and the need for a team or collaborative approach, thus conceptualizing inclusion not just as inclusion but "supported inclusion".

Chapter III

Design of the Study

Instrumentation

A review of existing questionnaires and survey instruments which had been reported in the literature was undertaken. Most of the questionnaires or needs assessments available dealt with how inclusion is working in a district as a whole, attitudes of teachers toward children with disabilities or problems and concerns expressed by teachers regarding inclusion, mostly in the area of academics (reading and math).

The needs assessment constructed for this study was original with some input from other assessment (see Appendix A). A five point likert-type scale was used, five being very comfortable with the comment posed, four being comfortable, three being don't know, two being uncomfortable with the comment posed and one being very uncomfortable. A total of twenty-four statements were formulated based on similar needs assessments in the literature and input from colleagues. The twenty-four comments were grouped into five areas of concern. There are eight comments involving adaptations to be made for the child, six comments probe the teacher's comfort with dealing with behavioral issues, five comments dealing with language and communication styles, two comments involving the health status of the student, and, finally, there are three statements which probe the teacher's comfort with the child's ability to perform academically in the classroom.

The teachers circle their response to each comment. Then, they choose the five most important topics to them and rate them from one to five (one being most important) in accordance to what they felt was their need in accessing information about a particular aspect of the child's behavior, language/communication, adaptations, health or academic areas.

A student profile was also formulated to provide an easily accessible and compact information sheet about a child with disabilities (see Appendix B). The profile is based on a worksheet IEP At A Glance. It provides specific information about a child concerning that child's academic levels, IEP (Individual Education Program) goals that would apply to the class, behavior management concerns and suggestions and communication concerns. It also has a sentence commenting on whether the child will have one-on-one support in the classroom. Attached to the student profile is a curriculum guideline. The curriculum guideline was formulated through teacher interviews. It is to be used to give the specialty area teachers a general guideline for reading and math levels. This should clarify any confusion about, for example, what a first grade reading or math level means according to the district's standards. The guideline was formulated through interview with teachers at each grade level (K-5) in the district. This is a district-specific guideline. In order to make this guideline specific to the children in a different district, the guidelines may need to be altered accordingly.

Pilot Study

Once formulated, the needs assessment was then reviewed by an art teacher, a music teacher, a school librarian and a physical education teacher to assess the ease with which it could be completed and the practical value of the information attained. Notes were made on improving the needs assessment. Based on the feedback received, a few minor format adjustments were made with the exception of a comment that was added in the academic section due to a teacher's concern about the actual academic knowledge base a child has, such as colors, shapes, letter or number recognition and so on. The comment "I know the level of this child's general academic knowledge (e.g. shapes, colors, numeral recognition, etc...)" was added.

Procedure

This study was conducted in a school district with an enrollment of approximately 3,640 students. The district is located in southern New Jersey and contains four elementary schools and one middle school. The total elementary population (grades K-5) is approximately 2,440 students. Of that population, approximately 320 children are classified as eligible for special education (including children who are eligible for speech only).

A simulated student profile was created for each specialty area based on a case study contained in Case Studies for Inclusive Schools (Anderson, 1997). All art teachers received a copy of the simulated student profile based on IEP goals related to art. All music teachers received a copy of the simulated student profile based on IEP goals related to music and so forth. Appendix C contains a cover letter explaining the purpose of the sample needs assessment and a simulated student profile based on the specialty area. A copy of the curriculum guidelines and the sample needs assessment was also enclosed. The letter indicated that they were to use the simulated student profile as if they were receiving this student in their classroom, then, they were to fill out the needs assessment and return it.

Fourteen specialty area teachers including three art teachers, three music teachers, three librarians and five physical education teachers in the district received this letter. The letters were sent in inter-office mail on November 10, 1997. Four physical education, one music, two art and three library sample needs assessments were returned for a total return rate of 71%.

Chapter IV

Results

The purpose of this study is to establish a procedure to assess the needs of teachers who will be responsible for educating students with moderate to severe disabilities in their specialty area classroom, including elementary art, music, library and physical education. The data collected from the sample needs assessment sent to each specialty area teacher emphasized their concerns with including the student presented to them on the student profile into their classroom. The sample needs assessment measured the teachers perceived comfort level with the student in the areas of adaptations, behavior, communication, health, and academics. Of the twenty-four comments, eight assessed comfort with adaptations, six dealt with behaviors, five assessed comfort with the student's communication, three dealt with academics, and two dealt with health issues.

The responses of the art teachers to the sample needs assessment indicated that the following items were ranked as most important (see Table 1). The top concerns of the art teachers dealt with the adaptations to be made for the student. Concerns included accessibility of adaptations, the reason for the adaptations and how to adapt IEP goals to the art class. It was interesting to note that there was one comment concerning adaptations for fine motor and it was mentioned as a number five priority for only one of the art teachers. Other concerns of the art teachers included academic knowledge and behavioral issues. The issue of attention seemed a priority for one of the art teachers as it was listed twice by the same teacher as a concern.

Table 1
 Ranked Responses of the Art Teachers
 to the Needs Assessment (N=2)

Rank Order of Importance	Comment	Perceived Degree of Knowledge with the Issue
1	The adaptations made for this child are readily accessible to me.	*
1	I know the reasoning for the adaptations made for this child.	*
1	I know this child's IEP goals as related to my class.	*
2	I know the level of this child's general academic knowledge (e.g. shapes, colors, numeral recognition)	*
2	I know how to deal with a behavioral outburst if it were to occur.	*
3	I know how to reengage this child's attention to the lesson.	*
3	The adaptations made for this child are readily accessible to me.	*
4	I know what to expect as normal as far as unusual noises or drooling or other behaviors from this child.	*
4	I know the health issues concerning this child.	*
5	I know the ability of this child to sit and attend.	*
5	I am comfortable with adapting the fine motor activities in my class according to this child's physical needs.	**

*subjects indicated their desire for more information than was contained in the student profile.

**subjects indicated a comfort level with the information provided in the student profile.

The responses of the physical education teachers to the sample needs assessment indicated that the following items were ranked as most important (see Table 2).

Table 2
 Ranked Responses of the Physical Education Teachers
 to the Needs Assessment (N=4)

Rank Order of Importance	Comment	Perceived Degree of Knowledge with the Issue
1	I know the health issues concerning this child.	*
1	I know the health issues concerning this child.	*
1	I am comfortable with adapting the physical aspects of my classroom according to this child's physical needs.	**
2	The adaptations made for this child are readily accessible to me.	*
2	I am comfortable with adapting the fine motor activities in my class according to this child's physical needs.	**
2	I am comfortable with adapting the physical aspects of my classroom according to this child's physical needs.	**
3	I know how to deal with a behavioral outburst if it were to occur.	*
3	I know how to deal with a behavioral outburst if it were to occur.	**
3	I know the health issues concerning this child.	*
4	I know what to expect as normal as far as unusual noises or drooling or other behaviors from this child.	*
4	I know the reasoning for the adaptations made for this child.	*
4	I am comfortable with using a peer to help this child in my classroom.	**
5	I know how to reengage this child's attention to the lesson.	*
5	The adaptations made for this child are readily accessible to me.	**
5	I know the reasoning for the adaptations made for this child.	**

*subjects indicated their desire for more information than was contained in the student profile.

**subjects indicated a comfort level with the information provided in the student profile.

Table 2 shows that the top concerns of the physical education teachers were the health issues. The physical education teacher also expressed the need for more knowledge on the adaptations aspect of including this particular student (Denisa) into their classroom. Again, the data shows that the need to know about the accessibility of the adaptations and the reasoning for them is important. Although most of the responses on the comments involved adaptations, the top priority were health issues. It is interesting that although the physical education teachers placed certain items as a priority to discuss with the special education teacher, they did feel comfortable with the information provided to them.

The responses of the library teachers to the sample needs assessment indicated that the following items were ranked as most important (see Table 3). The top concerns of librarians were more of a mixture of concerns as compared to the other specialty areas. Their top concerns include the child's health issues, adaptations and communication issues. Other concerns include the child's behavior specifically his/her ability to sit and attend and to complete work independently.

The responses of the music teachers to the sample needs assessment indicated that the following items were ranked as most important (see Table 4). The top concerns of the music teacher were the adaptation and health issues. Other concerns included communication and behavioral issues.

The data collected shows that a major concern throughout all specialty areas is in the aspect of adaptations made for the child. Specifically, the two most noted as a concern were the need to know the reasoning for the adaptations made and that the adaptations were readily accessible. The next noted important concern of the teachers was that of health issues concerning the child.

Table 3

Ranked Responses of the School Library Teachers
to the Needs Assessment (N = 3)

Rank Order of Importance	Comment	Perceived Degree of Knowledge with the Issue
1	I know the health issues concerning this child.	*
1	I know this child's IEP goals as related to my class.	*
1	I know the reasoning for the adaptations made for this child.	*
2	I know the health issues concerning this child.	*
2	I know that my curriculum can be adapted for this child.	*
2	I have ideas on how to ask questions in order for this child to be able to participate better in class.	*
3	I know how to deal with a behavioral outburst if it were to occur.	*
3	I know the reasoning for the adaptations made for this child.	*
3	I know the ability of this child to sit and attend.	*
4	The adaptations made for this child are readily accessible to me.	*
4	I know the ability of this child to sit and attend.	*
4	I know how to deal with a behavioral outburst if it were to occur.	*
5	I know this child's ability to complete independent work.	*
5	I know the appropriate expressive language expectations for this child.	*
5	I know this child's IEP goals as related to my class.	**

*subjects indicated their desire for more information than was contained in the student profile.
**subjects indicated a comfort level with the information provided in the student profile.

Table 4
 Ranked Responses of the Music Teacher
 to the Needs Assessment (N=1)

Rank Order of Importance	Comment	Perceived Degree of Knowledge with the Issue
1	I know that my curriculum can be adapted for this child.	*
2	I know how well this child can see/hear.	*
3	I am comfortable with adapting the fine motor activities in my class according to this child's physical needs.	**
4	I know the appropriate expressive language expectations for this child.	*
5	I know how to deal with a behavioral outburst if it were to occur.	*

*subjects indicated their desire for more information than was contained in the student profile.
 **subjects indicated a comfort level with the information provided in the student profile.

There are two questions proposed by this paper that are yet to be answered. One is that of the teacher's perception that the needs assessment would be helpful in facilitating communication with the special education teacher. The other is whether the proposed procedure is a realistic plan of action. The comments given by the specialty area teachers were beneficial in answering these questions (Appendix D). The comments suggest that the needs assessment is lengthy for the use with every child with moderate to severe needs but that the student profile was viewed positively as an item that would be helpful. One comment suggested giving the student profile to the specialist with the IEP goals that pertain to each specialty area, then, allow the teacher to have experience with the student. Once there has been a few exposures to the child, the needs assessment can be used as a guide to open questioning during consultation about the concerns for the child in that particular class.

Chapter V

Summary

In compliance with providing the least restrictive environment, children with varying degrees of special needs are being included into the general education classroom. This study focused on facilitating the inclusion of children with moderate to severe special needs into the elementary specialty areas including library, music, art and physical education. This study was conducted in a school district in southern New Jersey using inter-office mailings.

Data was collected by providing a completed student profile and a sample needs assessment to teachers in each specialty area. The teachers completed the sample needs assessment based on their perceived knowledge regarding the child that was to be included into their class. The areas of need assessed include instructional adaptations, behavior, academics, communication needs and health issues. The data was tabulated according to importance based on the teacher's input.

The findings indicated that the most common concern was in the area of instructional adaptations. Comments on the sample needs assessment stated that the student profile was a useful tool in facilitating inclusion of a child with moderate to severe special needs but was considered lengthy and therefore not a realistic option for all included children.

Discussion

This paper was able to answer all of the questions presented in chapter one. Unfortunately the need to find a realistic method to minimize consultation time by using the needs assessment prior to experience with the child was found to be time

consuming and therefore not realistic. Extended research must be done on the effectiveness of a procedure that would include giving the specialty area teacher advance notice of the child and his/her disabilities through the use of a tool such as the student profile, allowing the teacher to have experience with the child and then providing them with the needs assessment as a guideline for questions and concerns about the child. Consultation with the special education teacher is still necessary for successful inclusion. The goal was to minimize the need for many meetings, but this paper simply reinforces the need for special education teachers to meet with teachers who have children with special needs included in their classrooms.

The comments received from the specialty area teachers provide important information. The student profile was perceived as a helpful tool in preparing them for a child with moderate to severe special needs. In order to make the student profile even more helpful, the following information should be included:

1. A statement about the specific area goals as matched to the specialty area's curriculum under "Primary goals which the student will work on in this class:". Perhaps in the meeting with the special education teacher these goals could be discussed and created specific to the program and the individual child.
2. A sentence commenting on whether the child is ambulatory, uses a wheelchair, walker, cane, seeing-eye dog or braille.
3. A list of possible adaptations that the child will need in that specialty area classroom.
4. A procedure or suggestion on how the specialist should grade the child. This could also be discussed in the meeting and an agreement could be made as to the best method to be used.

The sample needs assessment appears to cover the areas of concern for the teachers. No additional comments were made as to an important need that was not addressed. In retrospect, the sample needs assessment could be improved in that one

of the responses available was that of "don't know". The attempt was to create a five point likert-type scale. The "don't know" answer skewed the results in that this answer appeared to be used by the teachers as a comment that they need more information rather than it being the intended neutral response. In following studies in this area, it would be helpful if the needs assessment was designed with a different comment in the middle position that would mean a neutral type response such as "not applicable".

The issue of including children with moderate to severe disabilities into specialty area classrooms is lacking supported research in the literature available. Further research is important to the success of these children placed in the specialty area classrooms. For further studies it would be important to modify this study in the aforementioned methods and then to increase the size of the sample of specialty area teachers. Ideally, interviewing with the teachers would also be included.

The conclusion of this study is that there are concerns in each specialty area that can not be left unattended. This study was valuable in that it initiated a closer look at procedures on including children with moderate to severe special needs. It is obvious from the return rate, responses and comments that it is an issue important to teachers. Therefore, the need to facilitate the child's inclusion is paramount. The student profile is very helpful and should be used in all situations. Yet, with all of this preparation and paperwork, it appears that consultation with the special education teacher is still an integral part of facilitating the inclusion of a child with special needs into the specialty areas. It is doubtful that this aspect will ever be eliminated.

Appendix A

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Child's name: _____

Teacher's name: _____

Circle one: Art Music Library Physical Education

Please circle a comment for the following statements.

_____ I am comfortable with adapting the physical aspects of my classroom according to this child's physical needs.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I am comfortable with adapting the fine motor activities in my class according to this child's physical needs.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know how well this child can see/hear.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know the reasoning for the adaptations made for this child.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know the health issues concerning this child.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know where the equipment for this child is kept.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ The adaptations made for this child are readily accessible to me.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I am comfortable with using a peer to help this child in my classroom.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know the ability of this child to sit and attend.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know how to deal with a behavioral outburst if it were to occur.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know what to expect as normal as far as unusual noises or drooling or other behaviors from this child.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know how to reengage this child's attention to the lesson.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know what this child's language limitations are.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ If applicable, I know how to utilize this child's alternative communication system.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ If applicable, I know how this child is supposed to use the alternative communication system.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I have ideas on how to ask questions in order for this child to be able to participate better in class.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know the appropriate expressive language expectations for this child.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know this child's ability to complete independent work.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know this child's reading level.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know this child's writing capabilities/adaptations.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know the level of this child's general academic knowledge (e.g. shapes, colors, numeral recognition, etc...).

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know that my curriculum can be adapted for this child.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know this child's IEP goals as related to my class.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

_____ I know how I will be grading this child.

very comfortable comfortable don't know uncomfortable very uncomfortable

Please choose five important topics of the ones listed and assign a number to each, 1 being most important for you to discuss with the special education teacher and 5 being least important to you.

Which time period is the best for you to meet and discuss these issues with the special education teacher?

before school during your prep after school

What day would be best for you to collaborate with the special education teacher? (circle as many as apply)

Mondays Tuesdays Wednesdays Thursdays Fridays

Appendix B

Student Profile

Student's Name: _____

Student's Age: _____

Approximate reading level: Pre-reading K 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th

Approximate math level: Pre-K K 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th

IEP at a Glance

_____ This student will have a one-on-one support staff in your room with him/her. (check if appropriate)

Primary goals which the student will work on in this class:

How the student communicates:

Things that work with this student:

Things that do not work with this student:

Age-Appropriate Curriculum Goals

Pre-Kindergarten: *Reading* - letters are being introduced along with pre-reading skills such as listening to a story, answering questions about the story, learning that words are associated with speech and name recognition in print.

Math - Numerals 1-12 are introduced, one-to-one correspondence, big/little, shapes.

Kindergarten: *Reading* - Letters and, by the end of the year, some sight words are recognized.

Math - Numerals are recognized (0-31), one-to-one correspondence counting (0-12), introduction to addition and subtraction, big/little, money is introduced.

1st Grade: *Reading* - Knows the sounds of the letters and their blends. Can read phonetically by the end of the year. Initially, directions are read to them but progress to students reading directions on own. By January, a student can write a sentence independently with a minimum of seven words.

Math - Numerals recognized (0-100), 2-digit addition and subtraction, coins, time. Very simple word problems progressing to two-step problems. Counting money and making change, place value and fractions.

2nd Grade: *Reading* - An increase in reading vocabulary. Speed is increased. Inferences and conclusions are emphasized.

Math - two- and three-digit addition and subtraction, using regrouping in addition. Count to 1,000 and tell time to five minute intervals.

Age-Appropriate Curriculum Goals

3rd Grade: *Reading* - Knowledge and application of phonetic principles, including exceptions. Can generalize, categorize and classify information and facts. Develops ability to summarize. Draws conclusions and predicts outcomes and develops ability to make inferences.

Math - Complete mastery of addition and subtraction facts through 18. Multiplication is introduced and mastered. Division and fractions are introduced, money - using the decimal point in money addition and subtraction problems, more complex word problems. Tell time to the minute.

4th Grade: *Reading* - On level with 4th grade Social Studies and Science textbooks. Also on level are children's magazines such as Ranger Rick, Kid's National Geographic, Cricket and Sports Illustrated for Kids.

Math - two-digit multiplication progressing to four-digit. Long division up to four digits, five-digit addition and subtraction. Addition and subtraction of fractions with like and unlike denominators. Elapsed time to the minute and measurement.

5th Grade: *Reading* - On level with 5th grade Social Studies and Science textbooks.

Math - All operations using whole numbers progressing to decimals and fractions. Using money, measurement and calculators.

Appendix C

November 10, 1997

Dear Specialist,

My name is Dawn Danley. I am a teacher of the Multiply Handicapped at Signal Hill School. I am in the process of completing my thesis project and am asking for your help.

In response to concern about children with more severe disabilities being placed in your classroom as a result of inclusion, my thesis is about compiling a set of procedures, or tools, to facilitate the inclusion of children with disabilities into your class. I hope to find a quick and easy, yet thorough, method of improving communication among those collaborating about a child with disabilities. Enclosed you will find a 'Student Profile' and a 'Sample Needs Assessment'. Use the 'Student Profile' as if you were receiving the child stated in your classroom. Fill out the 'Sample Needs Assessment' based on the 'Student Profile' given.

Also, if you have any comments on improving these tools, please feel free to write them directly on the 'Sample Needs Assessment' or on a separate sheet of paper. Remember, the goal is to make a better tool that will be useful to us.

Please return the 'Sample Needs Assessment' by Friday, December 19 via interoffice mail. Again, I know how valuable your time is and I really appreciate you taking the time to help in making it easier to find solutions for the challenges of including a child with special needs in your classroom.

Again, thank you so much for your time - it is greatly appreciated. The final form will be sent to you for the use in your classroom. Hopefully it will be of great help.

Sincerely,

Dawn Danley
Signal Hill School

Student Profile

Student's Name: DenisaStudent's Age: 7Approximate reading level: Pre-reading K 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5thApproximate math level: Pre-K K 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5thIEP at a Glance

This student will will not have a one-on-one support staff in your room with him/her.

Primary goals which the student will work on in this class:

- ① Follows rules/procedures in the class.
- ② Maintains appropriate behavior.
- ③ Improves fine motor.
- ④ Copies simple shapes and lines.

How the student communicates:

Verbally intelligible.

Things that work with this student:

High Five
Stickers

Things that do not work with this student:

Time Out - she enjoys being on her own

Student Profile

Student's Name: DenisaStudent's Age: 7Approximate reading level: Pre-reading K 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5thApproximate math level: Pre-K K 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5thIEP at a Glance

This student ~~will~~ will not have a one-on-one support staff in your room with him/her.

Primary goals which the student will work on in this class:

- ① Increase upper body strength.
- ② Improve balance.
- ③ Follows simple game rules.
- ④ Maintain appropriate behavior.

How the student communicates:

Verbally intelligible.

Things that work with this student:

High Five

Stickers

Things that do not work with this student:

Time Out - she enjoys being on her own.

Student Profile

Student's Name: DenisaStudent's Age: 7Approximate reading level: Pre-reading * 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5thApproximate math level: Pre-K (K) 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5thIEP at a GlanceThis student will will not have a one-on-one support staff in your room with him/her.

Primary goals which the student will work on in this class:

- ① Improve speech clarity.
- ② Maintain appropriate behavior.
- ③ Maintain attention for 30 minutes during large group instruction.
- ④ Differentiate between sounds in the environment (loud/soft, fast/slow).
- ⑤ Follows rules to simple games/songs.

How the student communicates:

Verbally intelligible.

Things that work with this student:

High Five

Stickers

Things that do not work with this student:

Time Out - she enjoys being on her own.

Student Profile

Student's Name: DenisaStudent's Age: 7Approximate reading level: Pre-reading K 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5thApproximate math level: Pre-K K 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5thIEP at a Glance

This student ~~will~~ will not have a one-on-one support staff in your room with him/her.

Primary goals which the student will work on in this class:

- ① Follows rules/procedures in the class.
- ② Maintain attention for 30 minutes during large instruction.
- ③ Answers questions about a story read to her.
- ④ Retells story read to her.

How the student communicates:

Verbally intelligible.

Things that work with this student:

High Five
Stickers

Things that do not work with this student:

Time Out - she enjoys being on her own.

Appendix D

Comments from the Teachers on the Needs Assessment

Each teacher completed the form and then had the option to make comments. Some of the comments received include:

"I like the tool, it is long, I don't know if I would do it for each child depending on how many children I have. I like the student profile perhaps if you include on it, IEP for that specialist, or any adaptation that you would like the specialist to include, it may be easier. Then after 2 or 3 classes you can meet with the teacher and ask specific questions you may need or give the assessment after to see if the specialist needs help in any other area. But because of all the work in a given day I probably would not do the needs assessment for each child - I would get a hold of the teacher and ask for specific help in the area I needed it."

"Profile did not tell me very much about the student. I would need to see and evaluate the student to better answer many of these questions. However, any type of communication from CST would be helpful...."

Comments on several of the questions (#4, 6, 9, 12, 21, 23) - "need more info about child". Comment on question #5 - "not on IEP at a Glance"

"I like the briefer format of your IEP - sometimes there is too much info. to 'wade through.' Any adaptations, modifications, changes, etc. made for any student would be based on the IEP and experience with the student in my classroom. It is important to keep the lines of communication open between the child's teacher and the Specialist. What works in one "special" may not be applicable to another class."

Bibliography

- Anderson, P.L. (1997). *Case Studies for Inclusive Schools*. Austin, TX: ProEd.
- Craft, D.H. (1994). Implications of Inclusion for Physical Education. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance*, 65, 54-55.
- Fuchs, D., & Fuchs, L.S. (1994). Inclusive Schools Movement and the Radicalization of Special Education Reform. *Exceptional Children*, 60, 294-309.
- Gable, R.A., Laycock, V.K., Maroney, S.A. & Smith, C.R. (1991). *Preparing to Integrate Students with Behavioral Disorders*. Reston, VA: The Council for Exceptional Children.
- Hamre-Nietupski, S., McDonald, J. & Nietupski, J. (1992). Integrating Elementary Students with Multiple Disabilities into Supported Regular Classes: Challenges and Solutions. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, Spring, pp. 6-9.
- Heenan, J. (1994). Inclusive Elementary and Secondary Physical Education. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance*, 65:1, 48-50.
- Huefner, D.S. (1997). The Legalization and Federalization of Special Education. In J.W. Lloyd, E.J. Kameenui & D. Chard (Eds.), *Issues in Educating Students with Disabilities* (pp.343-362). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- "Inclusion: What Does it Mean for Students with Learning Disabilities?" (1993). Reston, VA: Division for Learning Disabilities of the Council for Exceptional Children.
- Kauffman, J.M. & Hallahan, D.P. (Eds.)(1995). *The Illusion of Full Inclusion*. Austin, TX: Pro-Ed.
- Martin, E.B. & Etz K. (1995). The Pocket Reference - A Tool for Fostering Inclusion. *Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance*,66:3, 47-51.
- Miller, S.E. (1994). Inclusion of Children with Disabilities: Can We Meet the Challenge? *Physical Educator*, 51:1, 47-52.
- Schrag, J.A. (1993). Restructuring Schools for Better Alignment of General and Special Education. In J.I. Goodlad & T.C. Lovitt (Eds.), *Integrating General and Special Education* (pp. 213-215). New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Stainback, W. & Stainback, S. (1990). *Support Networks for Inclusive Schooling*.
Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Company.

Webster, N. (1983) J.L. McKechnie (Ed.). *Webster's New Universal Unabridged
Dictionary* (2nd ed.) (pp. 923). New York, NY: New World Dictionaries/Simon &
Schuster.