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Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: Are Public School Social Workers Viable Candidates as Section 504 Coordinator

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SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973:
ARE PUBLIC SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS VIABLE CANDIDATES AS
SECTION 504 COORDINATOR

MELISSA J. MURPHY

Submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Social Work

AUGSBURG COLLEGE
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

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MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK
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MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

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ABSTRACT

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973: ARE PUBLIC SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS VIABLE CANDIDATES AS SECTION 504 COORDINATOR

SURVEY RESEARCH

MELISSA J. MURPHY

JUNE 29, 2000

There has been a resurgence of the use of Section 504 in the public school system in part because of the increase in diagnosed ADHD among children. Schools need to legally provide accommodations and/or modifications to a child diagnosed with a disability which significantly inhibits one or more major life activity. Traditionally, school administrators have had the responsibility of writing and coordinating Section 504 plans. Studies have shown that many of the Minnesota Public School Districts have been out of compliance with Section 504 guidelines. School social workers' primary responsibility is to work with children in the schools that are experiencing difficulties based upon physical, emotional or academic difficulties. The capabilities and qualifications of school social workers support the idea for this group to be Section 504 Coordinators. A school social worker, with their Systems Theory training, provide the knowledge and experience with disabilities to create, implement and monitor Section 504 plans. The mail survey conducted with 168 Minnesota Public School Social Workers found that 88.6% believe that school social workers are indeed capable and qualified as Section 504 Coordinators.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate Minnesota Public School Social Worker's training and involvement in Section 504. It is also sought to answer the question, are school social workers capable and qualified to be a Section 504 Coordinator?

Background

A school social worker has the responsibility of assisting and advocating for children and families. It is imperative then for school social workers to be aware of policies regarding Section 504. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires that federally funded recipients make their programs and activities accessible to all individuals with disabilities (Office of Monitoring and Compliance Equal Educational Opportunity, 1994). Public school systems also provide services to a disabled child under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997) otherwise known as special education. IDEA has 13 categories under which a child can qualify for services but has specific criteria for qualification in each category. The 13 categories involve disabilities which are physical, mental and emotional. Section 504 covers the same disability areas, however the guidelines are not as stringent. For a child to qualify for services

under IDEA they must meet four criteria areas: 1) severe classroom underachievement, 2) severe discrepancy on standardized tests, 3) exclusionary factors, 4) severely impacts life activities. Section 504 is brief and simply prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in all programs receiving federal financial assistance. The best thing about Section 504 is that it is very broad and non-specific. It is the responsibility of a federally funded school to provide accommodations for children with disabilities (Morrissey, 1993).

Kardon (1995) feels that school social workers could be viable candidates for case managing 504 accommodation plans due to the fact that most plans are behavioral. Kardon (1995) further explains that school social workers support the value of recognizing individual uniqueness and diversity of need.

The Section 504 can be viewed much like the Systems Theory of social work. The child's needs are looked at holistically and that is how the need is identified. The child does not automatically qualify for a Section 504 accommodation plan because they have a diagnosis. The disability must substantially interfere with at least one major life function. Once a child is identified as benefiting from a Section 504 accommodation plan the Coordinator creates the plan with the "team". Team members include the parent or legal guardian, teacher and student. Section 504 plans include accommodations which are made within the classroom. A student who is on a Section 504 plan

is in the mainstream classroom. Accommodation plans can be used as a checklist of accommodations or a narrative description of the accommodations. Please refer to appendix A for an example of the checklist accommodation plan.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, was enacted to eliminate discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

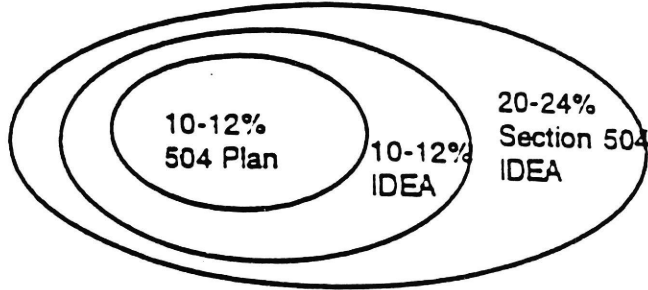
Attitudes of schools in the past toward children with disabilities or behaviors not yet understood as disabilities were not a priority or even dealt with educationally. The Law Advisory Manual (1998) describes the attitudes as the following:

In the beginning, public education was neither compulsory nor constitutionally required to be offered. It was a good idea politically and most legislatures quickly provided for it, but if a dumb kid was going to place too much burden on the system, the parent was pretty much quickly told, "Keep him home" (p.601).

The scope of Section 504 coverage is larger than that of the IDEA coverage (Guernsey & Klare, 1993). By definition, every student who qualifies under IDEA also qualifies under Section 504 (Julnes, 1994). Approximately 10-12% of all students may qualify under both Section 504 and IDEA (OMCEEEO, 1994). In addition, approximately 10-12% of all students may qualify under only Section 504. Therefore, 20-24% of all students may be protected under

Section 504 which has been illustrated in 1.1.

Illustration 1.1
Percentage of IDEA/Section 504

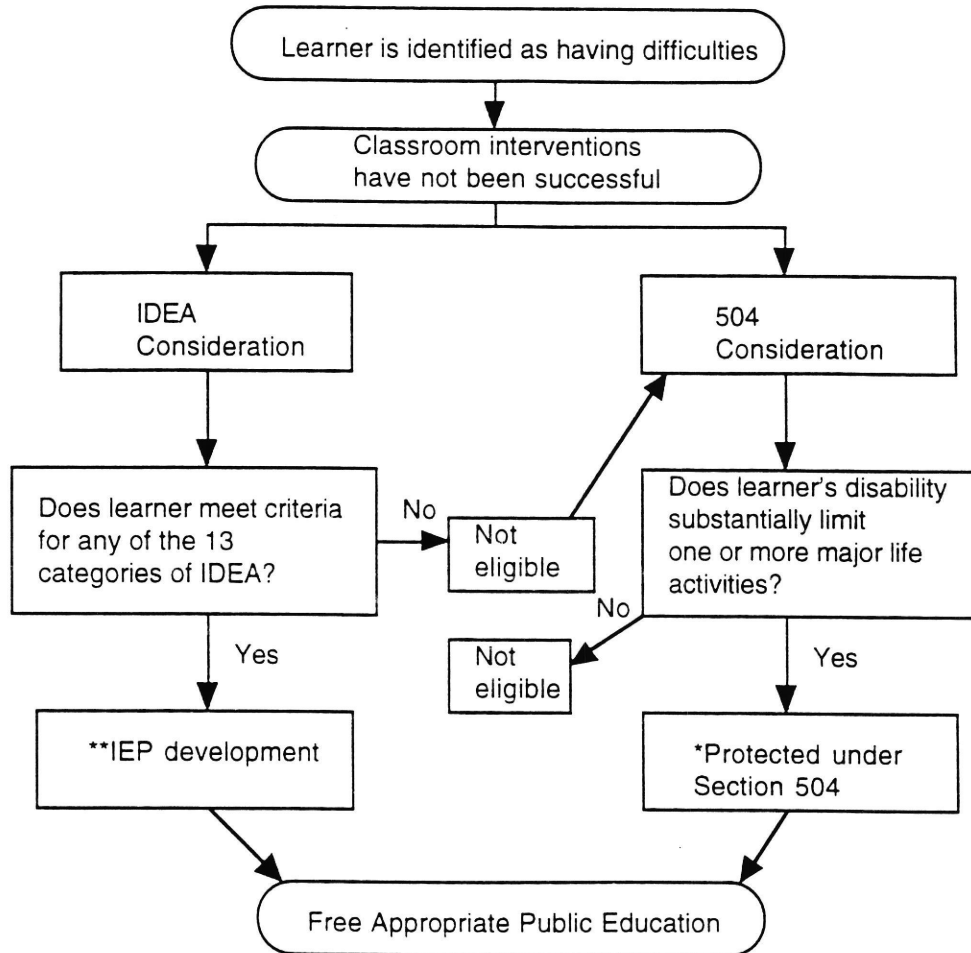


The differences between IDEA and Section 504 are then illustrated in the flow chart in illustration 1.2.

Statement of the Problem

The problem to be addressed is the growing need for Section 504 accommodation plans and the public school's ability to be in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Are school social workers capable and qualified candidates as a Section 504 Coordinator? What type of training, if any, have school social workers received and what is their current involvement in Section 504? Are school social workers willing to take on the role of a Section 504 Coordinator with already heavy caseloads?

Illustration 1.2
IDEA/Section 504 Flow Chart



*Unfunded federal mandated program

**Funded federal mandated program

Many schools need to develop policies and procedures to comply with the Section 504 guidelines (CASE, 1991; OMCEEO, 1994). This need has become more apparent as a result of the increased frequency of Section 504 litigation against schools (Zirkel, 1994a). Schools must increase their levels of compliance and provide quality education for all students despite disabilities. The researcher developed a mail survey which was distributed to 168 of the 839 Minnesota Public School Social Workers identified by Minnesota List Service. The survey included quantitative questions as well as qualitative questions to assist in answering the following research questions.

Research Questions

1. What are the effects of the following demographic characteristics on social worker's level of training and involvement in Section 504: a) gender, b) years as a school social worker, c) social work role, d) degree, e) school setting, f) district enrollment, g) school enrollment.
2. Have school social workers received training in Section 504 and if yes, what type of training?
3. What level of involvement do school social workers currently have in Section 504?
4. Do school social workers view themselves as being capable and qualified Coordinators of Section 504?

Summary

In summary, children attending public schools have the right to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Students identified with disabilities may access services through IDEA or with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. IDEA is widely known as special education and has stringent criteria for students to qualify for services while Section 504's qualifications are more liberal, meaning that Section 504 provides accommodations in a broader spectrum for students and in a larger scope of activities than does IDEA. This thesis will 1) explore Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 in more depth, 2) roles of school social workers working with children with disabilities, 3) compliance issues of administrators as Section 504 Coordinators, and 4) give recommendations based on the research completed on school social workers and their awareness, involvement and feelings toward becoming a Section 504 Coordinator.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The awareness of the components of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 has increased in school districts (Hopko et al., 1992; Martin, 1994; Meno, 1992; Zirkel, 1994a). Yet, several sources stated that many school districts did not understand the requirements or implications of Section 504 (Office of Civil rights (OCR), 1991; Office of Monitoring and Compliance Equal Educational Opportunity (OMCEEEO), 1994). School districts which lack the necessary level of awareness of the components of Section 504 often fail to comply its guidelines. An increase in parent and student litigations against schools has resulted from schools' noncompliance (Johnson, 1986). Consequently, school principals need to assess their awareness levels and teachers' awareness levels of the components of Section 504 to assure compliance. The purpose of this study was to investigate public school social workers training and current involvement in Section 504 as well as school social worker's perceptions of their capability to be qualified coordinators of Section 504. Responsibilities of a Section 504 Coordinator may include: 1) identifying students for consideration of a 504 plan, 2) communication between school and families 3) assisting with pre-referral interventions, 4) coordinating meetings, 5) creating Section 504 accommodation plans, 6) monitoring Section 504

accommodation plans, and 7) educating school and families regarding the guidelines of Section 504.

This chapter will focus on four aspects of Section 504 as they appear in the literature: (a) a historical background and definition, (b) the resurgence of Section 504, (c) school social workers' role with children with disabilities, and (d) public school compliance with Section 504.

A Historical Background and Definition

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act was a spin off of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Civil Rights Act, part of the Great Society initiative of President Lyndon B. Johnson, focused on racial discrimination. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 focuses on free, appropriate public education (FAPE) for all children (Law Advisory Group, 1998). In its original draft, the contents of Section 504 were somewhat similar to that of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Heward & Orladsky, 1988). Nevertheless, before Section 504 was passed, the Executive branch and Congress exerted a minimal effort to address the area of civil rights for individuals with disabilities (Benton & Gerry, 1982). Lack of political action was probably due to the significant level of public sentiment against the development of more civil rights legislation (Davis & Lunger, 1987). As a result, the courts provided four basic rights that were used to shape the guidelines of Section 504: the right to education, the right to treatment, the right

to procedural fairness, and the right to equal participation (Benton & Gerry, 1982).

Although Section 504 was passed by Congress in 1973, the Act was scrutinized by policy makers for several years before it was finally implemented on May 4, 1977. Shortly after Congress passed the Act in 1973, the responsibilities for Section 504 were transferred from the Department of Health Education and Welfare (HEW) to the Office of Civil Rights (OCR). Consequently, the OCR was assigned the complex task of defining who was covered under Section 504 and of refining the regulations of the Act. Numerous issues were discussed during that period. Some individuals from government and society expressed opposition to including alcoholics, drug addicts, and homosexuals under the protection of Section 504 (Benton & Gerry, 1982). Out of the three groups of individuals, only homosexuals were excluded from the coverage of Section 504.

Any agency or organization which receives federal financial assistance including grants, loans, and contracts, must adhere to the guidelines of Section 504 (OMCEEEO, 1994). Since most public schools accept federal assistance, they are included in the agency and organizations which adhere to the Section 504.

Section 504 of the Act protects persons from discrimination based upon their handicapping condition. A person is handicapped under Section 504 if he or she:

1. has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities;
 2. has a record of such an impairment; or
 3. is regarded as having such an impairment. (OMCEEEO, 1994).
- Major life activities is defined as functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working. [34 CFR 104.3(j)(2)(ii)] (Beckerleg, 1998; Hampton, 1998).

Section 504 is also referred as Public Law 93-112 which is illustrated in Appendix B.

Hampton (1998) describes "red flags" schools should use in identifying children that may benefit and have the legal right to a Section 504 plan. The "red flags" are the following:

1. When parents frequently expresses a concern about their child's performance
2. When suspension or expulsion is being considered for any learner
3. When retention is being considered
4. When a learner shows a pattern of not benefiting from teacher instruction
5. When a learner returns to school after a serious illness or injury
6. When a learner is referred for evaluation, but is determined

not to do an evaluation under IDEA

7. When a learner is evaluated and is found not to qualify for special education services under IDEA

8. When a learner exhibits chronic health condition

9. When a learner has been identified as having an attention disorder (ADD) deficit or attention deficit with hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

10. When a learner is identified as "at-risk" or exhibits the potential for dropping out of school

11. When a substance abuse is an issue

12. When disability of any kind is known or suspected

13. When a new building or remodeling is being considered.

(p. 15)

It is to be noted that the previously stated "red flags" are not automatic qualifying factors for a 504 plan but are only consideration to be investigated and/or evaluated. Hampton (1998) further explains types of disabilities that often times necessitate Section 504 plans, these are: AIDS, asthma, ADD/ADHD, cancer, emotional disabilities and even extreme eating disorders.

Interventions and modifications for students qualifying for Section 504 can be creative and meet the needs of the individual child which makes the 504 plan a valuable tool for school social workers. The social worker can use the Section 504 accommodation plans to

advocate for the children and families to ensure their rights to a free appropriate public education.

The Resurgence of Section 504

In the last several years, the frequency of the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), advocacy groups and the legal system of applying the guidelines from Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to education has increased (Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE), 1991; Champagne, 1994). Parent Advocacy groups have educated parents on their children's disabilities and empower parents to advocate for school programs either under Section 504 or IDEA. Parent Advocacy groups include PACER (Parents Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights), C.H.A.D.D. (Children with Attention Deficit Disorder) and the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning. A possible explanation for the increase in Section 504 plans is the increased awareness of children diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficit Disorder with Hyperactivity (ADHD). "It is estimated that children with ADD constitute 3% to 5% of the current school-age population, which would represent 1.35 to 2.25 million children" (Davila, Williams, & McDonald, 1991, p. 1).

School officials have now devoted more attention to their level of compliance (Meno, 1992; OMCEEEO, 1994). Powell and Wedl (1994), from the Minnesota Department of Education, stated that

school districts were not well informed on the guidelines of Section 504 and may believe that their compliance with other regulations covered their Section 504 responsibilities. Cline (1990) reported concern for administrators' apparent lack of knowledge in the area of Section 504 and for schools' low level of compliance with section 504. Cline also supported Powell and Wedl by stating that administrators believed that their compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Act (IDEA) of 1986, ensured their compliance with Section 504. IDEA is the federal law which mandates public schools to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities who meet criteria for the 13 special education categories. Section 504, once again is federally mandated, however schools do not receive additional funding for children qualifying for Section 504.

School Social Worker's Role with Children and Disabilities

The impact of Section 504 on school social workers could be profound. Many school social workers complain of high caseloads and may fear that Section 504 will increase already high caseloads and with no state or national requirement of caseloads to ease the pressures for school social workers (M. Linz , personal communication, May 1999). "It behooves social workers as student and family advocates to become as familiar with Section 504 as we are with IDEA" (Kardon, 1995, p. 52.) However, Section 504 could

quite possibly be the answer school social workers have been looking for. Kardon (1995, p. 52) explains that Section 504 can be kind to social workers by allowing them the opportunity to "expand evaluative and direct service roles within the schools". Section 504 is similar to the model of social work practice which concentrates on ability, meeting needs and identifying strengths.

The literature that has been reviewed sets the tone for administrators to take the lead in the development and monitoring of the Section 504. School systems, however, are moving more into site based management and departing from the traditional model of school organization of a hierarchical chain of command (Thorne-Beckerman, 1999). This opens the door for a more collaborative approach to the relationship between teacher, parent, child, and school staff. Shared decision making and empowerment are familiar concepts for social workers and are a familiar component in the development for Section 504 plans. Many of the accommodations are behavioral in nature needing to take into account the student's social environment and how it relates to their disability. With the new reforms in school systems it is time for school social workers to seize the opportunity to become a key player in this host setting. School social workers' perspectives and roles in the school system are often underutilized. Traditionally, a school social worker promotes parent and student participation in the education process and identifies the

student's individual needs (Link,1991). A definition given by Minehan as described through Franklin (1998, p. 213) of the social work profession; "... is concerned with the interactions between people and their environment which affect the ability of people to accomplish their life tasks, alleviate distress, and realize their aspirations and values." This definition would also promote the importance for school social workers to take a leading role in the development and implementation of Section 504 in the public school system.

Public School Compliance with Section 504

The literature review of research that assessed a school social worker's involvement in Section 504 was not found. Consequently, the scope of this review was extended to research that addressed the principal's awareness and teacher's awareness of special education and Section 504.

The State of Minnesota developed two assurance of compliance questionnaires and distributed to each school district in the State of Minnesota. School districts were required to return the questionnaires to the Minnesota Department of Educational Monitoring Office (MDEMO) by November 15th of each school year. A completed assurance of compliance questionnaire reflects the nondiscrimination policies of an organization or agency.

The first Section 504 questionnaire was sent out by the MDEMO

to each district in Minnesota as an addendum to the 1993-1994 Assurance of Compliance with State and Federal Laws Prohibiting Discrimination Form (the 1993-1994 Assurance of Compliance form did not include questions pertaining to Section 504). The Section 504 questionnaire requested each district to answer, "yes" or "no", to two basic compliance questions. The first question was, "(has) the district designated at least one person to coordinate its efforts to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973?" In addition, the first question requested the following, "if 'yes', provide the name, telephone and fax number in the space below." The second question was, "has the district adopted grievance procedures that incorporate due process standards that allow for prompt and equitable resolution of Section 504 complaints?"

The 1993-1994 Section 504 compliance questionnaire was returned by 364 out of 392 Minnesota public school districts. The results from the returned questionnaires were the following: 16 school districts did not provide a name for their Section 504 Coordinators and 79 districts stated that they did not have a grievance procedure for Section 504. Once, again it should be noted that any school district that receives federal funds must designate a Section 504 Coordinator and must have a grievance process if it employs more than 50 people.

The second questionnaire, Assurance of Compliance with State

and Federal Laws Prohibiting Discrimination (ED-00199-05), was sent out by the MDEMO for the 1994-1995 school year. There was a specific part listed as "504 Policy Adoption" on the questionnaire. In that part, there were four questions about compliance that required the respondent to answer "yes" or "no". Question number one was, "has your district adopted a policy statement of nondiscrimination on the basis of a person's disability?". Next, question number two was, "if a district has 15 or more employees, has the district taken initial and continuing steps to notify participants, beneficiaries, applicants and employees that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability?" Then, question number three was, "...the 504 Coordinator: has the district designated an employee(s) to coordinate its compliance efforts to process 504 complaints?" This question also requested the following, "if, 'yes,' provide name, telephone and fax number below." (in a provided box). Finally, question number four was, "has the district adopted and published (if more than 50 employees) a grievance procedure for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging discrimination on disability?"

The 1994-1995 Assurance of Compliance Questionnaire was returned by 334 of the 379 Minnesota public school districts. The responses to each of the four questions were as follows: (a) 10 districts responded "no" to "has adopted a statement of nondiscrimination", (b) 13 districts responded "no to "has notified

individuals that they do not discriminate on the basis of disability", (c) 16 districts answered "no" to "has a Section 504 Coordinator", and (d) 37 districts answered "no" to "has a grievance procedure". The number of districts that answered "no" to question number two and four may have been due to the district's number of employees falling below the requirements stated on the compliance questionnaire. Nevertheless, each district that did not return a questionnaire was out of compliance with Section 504.

The considerable level of noncompliance in school districts with Section 504, as reported by the two compliance questionnaires, should raise principals' level of concern as well as with school social workers. "Our group identification as school social workers will be maintained by the efficacy of our practices and by our ability to define ourselves as competent and resourceful at solving school problems" (Franklin, 1998, p. 215).

Children in need of Section 504 plans are those children in which school social workers are providing service. School social workers could use the role of Section 504 Coordinator as an avenue to affect the school system at more of a macro level than that of the micro level. School social workers must provide leadership to advocate for children with disabilities and for schools to be compliant with federal laws.

"Section 504, and its expansive view of individual uniqueness

and diversity of need is here. The question is, Where are We?"
(Kardon, 1995, p. 52).

Summary

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal mandate which provides accommodations and modifications for children with disabilities. Section 504 is an unfunded mandate, unlike that of IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997). Public school districts are required to provide a coordinator and a grievance procedure for Section 504. There have been assurance questionnaires conducted by the state of Minnesota which reports there are public school districts out of compliance with Section 504. The resurgence of Section 504 and the roles of school social workers ask the question, "are school social workers viable candidates as a Section 504 Coordinator?" The next question is, "do school social workers perceive themselves as being capable and qualified as a Section 504 Coordinator?"

Chapter III

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter will specifically provide descriptions of the relationship between the purpose of the study and the methodology used to conduct the study. Components to be covered are: 1) research questions, 2) description of the research design, 3) definition of variables, 4) definition of population and sampling procedures, 5) measurement issues, and 6) data collection.

Research Questions

1. What are the effects of the following demographic characteristics on social worker's level of training and involvement in Section 504: a) gender, b) years as a school social worker, c) social work role, d) degree, e) school setting, f) district enrollment, g) school enrollment.
2. Have school social workers received training in Section 504 and if yes, what type?
3. What level of involvement do school social workers currently have in Section 504?
4. Do school social workers view themselves as being capable and qualified Coordinators of Section 504?

Research Design

The literature review was clear that there is limited research

and literature directly connecting school social workers with Section 504 and their role in Section 504. The rationale of the research was to lead into the area of exploratory research. The research hopes to create new insight into the roles of school social workers and to spark new interest for other researchers to continue exploring the roles of school social workers, specifically with Section 504. The study will include Minnesota Public School Social Workers. A questionnaire has been developed to survey a sampling of the targeted group. The questionnaire involves both closed ended questions and open ended questions. The research is interested in identifying demographic factors of school social workers, training of school social workers in Section 504, current involvement in Section 504, perceptions of school social workers toward becoming a Section 504 Coordinator and finally, if they are interested in further training in Section 504. The open ended questions will investigate the perception of the school social worker toward their role of coordinator and if they are interested in receiving additional training on Section 504.

Definition of Variables

The research is investigating school social workers and their training in Section 504 as well as their current involvement in Section 504. School social workers are defined as any person

employed in a public school setting who are registered by the Minnesota List Service. The school social worker may be involved with special education or general education. The research will then look further into demographics which are the following: a) gender, b) years as a school social worker, c) role as school social worker, d) degree, e) school setting, f) enrollment of district, and g) enrollment of school. Correlations may be then made between the demographics of the school social worker with the training opportunities and level of involvement in Section 504.

Conceptually this study focuses on school social workers and the role they currently have with Section 504 and what role they could develop to create better Section 504 compliance in public school systems. If social workers then take on a larger role such as Section 504 Coordinator, what could this mean to their developing role in the school system? This moves us towards specifically asking school social workers about their experience and training in Section 504 which provides the operational definition. The operational definition provides the specifics of where social workers are as far as training and current involvement.

Population Description and Sampling

The questionnaire was distributed to a sampling of Minnesota School Social Workers. The population included all registered school social workers grades K-12. The social workers included were either

special education social workers or general education social workers. A list of 839 school social workers was obtained from the State of Minnesota List Service. The Minnesota List Service is all inclusive, providing names of all school social workers licensed in the public school system. It is currently a requirement for Minnesota Public School Social Workers to be licensed. The list is categorized by the school social worker's zip code. This researcher chose to use 20% of the 839 school social workers for the sampling size. Questionnaires were mailed to 168 school social workers. A systematic sampling procedure was used to determine the candidates for the mail survey. The systematic sample starting point was with the third name on the list. From the starting point the researcher counted every ten school social workers until a sampling of 20% or 168 school social workers had been chosen to complete the sampling size.

Measurement Issues

Levels of measurement for the survey research are nominal and ordinal measures. The first part of the questionnaire involved demographics which the the researcher hoped to find correlations with the second part of the survey of training and involvement. The second part of the survey asked social workers to identify the sources of training and their involvement, if any, in Section 504 and finally asked social workers if they desired further training in the area of Section 504.

Measurement error is a concern with the mail survey. The researcher assumed that school social workers have prior knowledge of Section 504. If, in fact, school social worker does not have prior knowledge of Section 504, the second part of the questionnaire may not measure what the researcher planned for data collection. A possible limitation of the questionnaire is the lack of questions directed toward, who currently is Section 504 Coordinatr in the respondent's school district and asking if they want to be a Section 504 Coordinator.

Within the systematic error is also the case of desirability bias. The questionnaire is random and anonymous, however, a professional may feel they need to know and understand Section 504 due to the fact that a colleague is collecting data. The surveyed school social worker may feel that if they are not involved or have limited knowledge of Section 504 it will reflect poorly on school social workers in general. The results from the surveys must be viewed with caution since the reliability and validity of the survey has not been established.

Nevertheless, the results may be used by educators to revise current Section 504 delivery models to increase the use of school social workers as Section 504 Coordinator to ensure compliance, advocacy for children with disabilities and accommodation and or modifications related to their disabilities.

Data Collection Instruments

The questionnaire was separated into two sections which contains a total of 29 items. Part one contains seven items (Roman numerals I-VII) which will identify the respondent's demographics. Part two contains the remaining 22 items (numbers 1-4 which include letters a-k on question number 2) which illustrate the respondent's experiences and attitudes.

A cover letter was sent to the 168 school social workers along with the questionnaire. The cover letter: a) asked the school social worker to assist the researcher by completing the questionnaire, b) explained how to complete the questionnaire, c) explained how to return the questionnaire, and d) expressed the researcher's gratitude for completing the questionnaire. In addition, a one time mailing, without a follow up, will be used to ensure anonymity of the respondents.

The researcher distributed the questionnaire to several school social workers from District #728 to review the questionnaire and provide the following information: a) the amount of time to complete the questionnaire, b) semantic problems, and c) suggestions for relevant additions or deletions.

Data analysis procedures involve statistical analyses. This type of analysis is used specifically when a sample is drawn from a population and the researcher attempts to make generalizations

about the population. In this survey research there will be an attempt to make generalizations of the demographics, training and experience in Section 504 and how that relates to their perceptions toward school social workers as Section 504 Coordinator.

Chapter IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to investigate Minnesota Public School Social Worker's training and involvement in Section 504 and are school social workers capable and qualified to be a Section 504 Coordinator.

This chapter includes the results from the overwhelming return rate of 67.9% (n=114) questionnaires and statistical analysis for the data obtained from the returned surveys. The data and statistical analysis were used to answer four research questions. The computation of the statistical analysis for this research was conducted by the researcher using SPSS computer program located at Augsburg College in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Questions number three and four asked the respondent to briefly explain their answer. The answers were categorized into common themes which will be explained.

There are two main parts to this chapter which include: 1) results of the four research questions, and 2) summarized personal data from the qualitative questions in the survey.

Personal Data Section One

In the first section of the survey each respondent was asked to provide descriptive personal information in the following seven

areas: a) gender, b) years as a school social worker, c) social work role, d) degree, V) school setting, e) district enrollment, f) school enrollment. Descriptive data analysis was used to answer this question.

Table 1 shows the gender of the respondents. The gender of the respondents was predominately female at 78.9% (n=90). A smaller percentage of respondents, 21.1% (n=24), were males.

Table 1 shows the respondent's number of years as a school social worker. It was divided into four groups: a) 1-2 years, b) 3-5 years, c) 6-9 years, and d) 10+ years. Fifty-six out of 114 (49.1%), school social workers reported 10+ years as a school social worker. The categories of 3-5 years and 6-9 years as a school social worker were very close being 20.2% (n=23) and 21.1% (n=24), respectively. The number of respondents with 1-2 years experience as a school social worker was 11 which is 9.6%.

Table 1 shows the role of the social worker within the school setting. It was divided into four groups: a) special education, b) regular education, c) other, and d) combined special education and regular education. Seventy-five out of 114 (65.8%), school social workers have a dual role with special education and regular education caseloads. Twenty-five out of 114 (21.9%), were strictly special education while 11 out of 114 (9.6%), were regular education social workers. Two out of 114 (1.8%), answered "other" but did not

describe their role and only one respondent did not answer the question, 9%.

Table 1 shows the highest degree held by the respondents which was divided into four categories: a) bachelor, b) masters, c) doctorate, and d) other. A majority of the respondents had a master's degree, 70.2% (n=80). Bachelors degree was the highest degree obtained by 28.9% (n=33) and 9% held a doctorate degree. There were zero respondents for the "other" category.

Table 1 shows the school level in which the respondents work in. This was divided into six categories: a) elementary, b) middle, c) secondary, d) ALC (Alternative Learning Center), e) Day Treatment, and f) combination of school levels. Elementary school social workers ranked the most at 40.4% (n=46) while a combination of school levels was ranked second at 28.1% (n=32). Secondary school social workers accounted for 16.7% (n=19). Middle school social workers were at 13.2% (n=15) and 1.8% (n=2) answered as working in an ALC. Day Treatment social workers were not represented in this data.

Table 1 shows the district enrollment size and this was divided into four categories: a) under 1000, b) 1001-2000, c) 2001-3000, d) 3001+. A small percentage of respondents, 6.1% (n=7), worked in districts with enrollment under 1000 while a large percentage, 57.9% (n=66), worked in districts with enrollment of over 3000. Twenty

point two percent (n=23) work in districts with enrollment of 1001-2000 and the enrollment category of 2001 -3000 was at 12.3% (n=14). Four respondents, 3.5%, did not answer this question.

Table 1 shows the building enrollments of the school social workers. This is divided into four categories: a) under 400, b) 401-800, c) 801-1000 and d) 1000+. The majority of respondents, 49.1% (n=56), were social workers in buildings that had enrollments of 401-800 students. Respondents with enrollments of 1000+ accounted for 21.9% (n=25) of the total responses, while respondents who worked in buildings with enrollments of under 400 were at 15.8% (n=18). School social workers working in buildings with enrollments of 801-1000 were at 10.5% (n=12) and in addition there were three missing responses 2.6%.

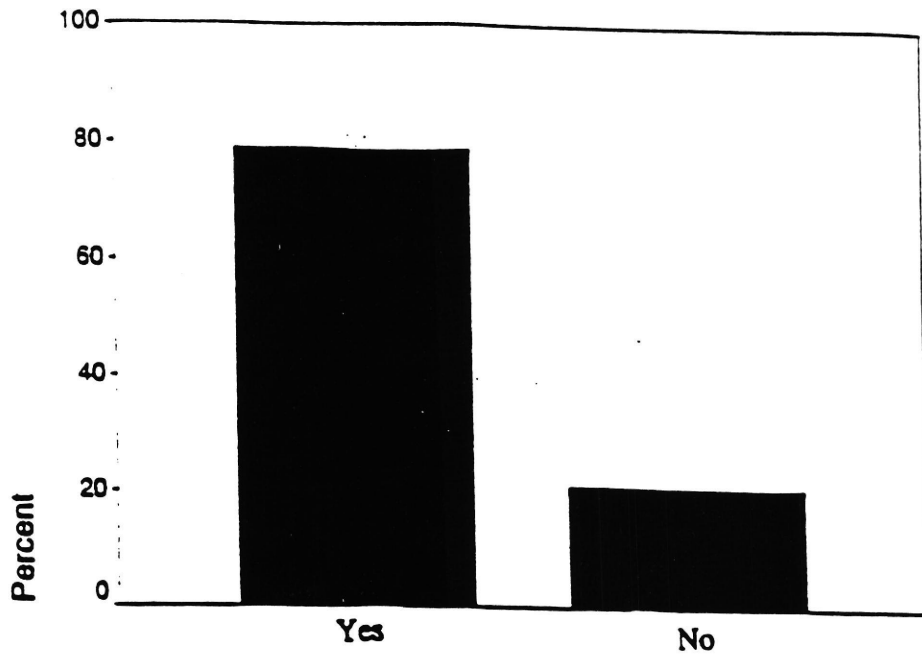
Table 1
Descriptive Analysis of Minnesota Public School Social Worker's Personal Data

<u>Personal Data</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
<u>Gender:</u>			
Male	1	24	21.1
Female	2	90	78.9
<u>Years as School</u>			
<u>Social Worker:</u>			
1-2	1	11	9.6
3-5	2	23	20.2
6-9	3	23	20.2
10+	4	56	49.1
<u>Social Work Role:</u>			
Special Education	1	25	21.9
General Education	2	11	9.6
Other	3	2	1.8
Dual Role	4	75	65.8
<u>Highest Degree:</u>			
Bachelor	1	33	28.9
Masters	2	80	70.2
Doctorate	3	1	.9
<u>School Level:</u>			
Elementary	1	46	40.4
Middle	2	15	13.2
Secondary	3	19	16.7
ALC	4	2	1.8
Day Treatment	5	0	0.0
Combination	6	32	28.1
<u>District Enrollment:</u>			
Under 1000	1	7	6.1
1001-2000	2	23	20.2
2001-3000	3	14	12.3
3000+	4	66	57.9
Missing Data	0	4	3.5
<u>Building Enrollment:</u>			
Under 400	1	18	15.8
401-800	2	56	49.1
801-1000	3	12	10.5
1000+	4	25	21.9
Missing Data	0	3	2.6

Research Question Number One Section Two

Research question number one in section two was used to determine how many school social workers have received training in Section 504 and how school social workers are receiving their training on Section 504. Descriptive data analysis was used to answer this question. Part one of question one illustrates, on Chart 1, that 90 out of 114, 78.9%, answered "yes" to having received training on Section 504. Respondents could then check all that apply for the type of training they have received and the choices were the following: a) school in-services, b) under graduate courses, c) colleagues, d) MN Dept. of Education, e) workshops, f) graduate courses, g) professional journals, h) other. There were a total of 177 checked categories for the 90 respondents that answered "yes" to the first part of the question. School in-service was the most widely used form of training at 40.1% (n=71). The second most widely used form of training was workshops, 24.8% (n=44). Twenty-six out of 177, 14.7%, reported they have used colleagues for training purposes while 7.9% (n=14) have received training from the MN Department of Education. Professional journals and the "other" category both were ranked at 4% (n=7). Graduate courses were used 3.4% (n=6) and under graduate classes were the least used form of training at 1.1% (n=2). Examples of the "other" category were independent study and written materials.

Chart 1
Descriptive Analysis of Public School Social Workers
Receiving Training on Section 504



Research Question Number Two Section Two

Research question number two was used to determine the school social worker's current involvement with Section 504. This question looks at the process of Section 504 and where social workers are most involved. Descriptive data analysis was used to answer this question and is illustrated on Table 2. The respondent was asked to rate their involvement for each portion of Section 504. The ratings area as follows: a) 1=never, b) 2=not very often, c) 3=often, and d) 4=very often. The portions of Section 504 to be rated were: a) identifying students for Section 504 consideration, b) pre-referral interventions, c) evaluating students for Section 504

consideration, d) participating in Section 504 meetings, e) creating Section 504 accommodations/modifications, f) conducting Section 504 meetings, g) writing Section 504 plans, h) monitoring Section 504 plans, i) educating parents on Section 504, j) educating school personnel on Section 504, and k) other.

Twenty-one, 18.4%, of the respondents reported that "very often" they were involved in identifying student for Section 504 consideration while 39.5% (n=45) rated their involvement in this portion as "not very often". The "never" rating was at 10.5% (n=12) and the "often" rating was 30.7% (n=35). Only .9% (n=1) did not respond to category "a".

The "often" and "very often" ratings for the category of pre-referral interventions both were at 26.3% (n=30). "Not very often" was ranked the highest with 33, 28.9% while four, 3.5% did not respond to this category.

The next category for the respondents to rate their involvement was evaluating students for Section 504 evaluation. Forty-five, 39.5%, of the respondents rated their involvement as "not very often". Twenty-seven, 23.7%, rated their involvement as "often" and 24, 21.1%, rated their involvement as "never". Fifteen, 13.2%, were involved "often" while three, 2.6% respondents did not answer this category.

Forty-one school social workers participated in Section 504

meetings "not very often" while 24, 21.1%, participated "often" and "very often" in Section 504 meetings. Twenty-three, 20.2%, did not participate in Section 504 meetings ever and there were two, 1.8%, that did not respond.

Creating Section 504 accommodations/modifications had 38.6% (n=44) school social workers rating their involvement as "not very often". Twenty-five, 21.9%, "never" were involved in creating accommodations/modifications while 19.3% (n=22) were involved "often" and 17.5% (n=20) were involved "very often". Three, 2.6%, did not respond to this category.

Only 8.8% (n=10) of the respondents conducted Section 504 meetings "often" while 37.7% "never" conducted Section 504 meetings. Thirty-eight, 33.3%, of the respondents rated their involvement as "not very often" and 16.7% (n=19) were involved "very often" in conducting Section 504 meetings. Four, 3.5%, of respondents did not rate this category.

An overwhelming number of respondents rated their involvement in writing Section 504 plans as "never" and "not very often", 37.7% (n=43) and 34.2% (n=39), respectively. Thirteen, 11.4%, were involved in writing Section 504 plans as "often" and 13.2% (n=15) write Section 504 plans "very often". Four, 3.5%, of the respondents did not rate this category.

Monitoring Section 504 plans also had a large percentage of the

school social workers rating this category as 36.8% (n=42) "never" and 32.5% (n=37) as "not very often". Seventeen, 14.9%, of respondents were involved in monitoring "often" and the number of school social workers that monitor Section 504 plans "very often" were 13, 11.4%. Five, 4.4%, respondents did not rate this category.

Forty-eight, 42.1%, educate parents on Section 504 "not very often" and 31, 27.2%, "never" educate parents on Section 504. Eighteen, 15.8%, educate parents "often" while 13, 11.4%, educate parents "very often". Four, 3.5%, did not rate this category.

Most of the respondents, 43.9% (n=50) rated their involvement in educating school personnel on section 504 as "not very often". Twenty-seven, 23.7%, "never" educate school personnel while 23, 20.2%, educate school personnel "often" and 11, 9.6%, educate school personnel "very often". Three, 2.6%, did not rate this category.

The "other" category had 98.2% (n=112) not rating this category while .9% (n=1) rated this category as "never" and "often" but did not list what it was that they were rating.

Table 2
Descriptive Analysis of Involvement of Minnesota Public School Social Workers with Section 504

<u>Category</u>	<u>1</u> <u>Never</u>		<u>2</u> <u>Not Very</u> <u>Often</u>		<u>3</u> <u>Often</u>		<u>4</u> <u>Very</u> <u>Often</u>		<u>0</u> <u>Missing</u> <u>Data</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Identifying Students	12	10.5	45	39.5	35	30.7	21	18.4	1	.9
Pre-Referral Interventions	17	14.9	33	28.9	30	26.3	30	26.3	4	3.5
Evaluating Students	24	21.1	45	39.5	27	23.7	15	13.2	3	2.6
Participating in Meetings	23	20.2	41	36.0	24	21.1	24	21.1	2	1.8
Creating Accommodation/Modification	25	21.9	44	38.6	22	19.3	20	17.5	3	2.6
Conducting Meetings	43	37.7	38	33.3	10	8.8	19	16.7	4	3.5
Writing Section 504 Plans	43	37.7	39	34.2	13	11.4	15	13.2	4	3.5
Monitoring Section 504 Plans	42	36.8	37	32.5	17	14.9	13	11.4	5	4.4
Educating Parents	31	27.2	48	42.1	18	15.8	13	11.4	4	3.5
Educating School Personnel	27	23.7	50	43.9	23	20.2	11	9.6	3	2.6
Other	1	.9	0	0	1	.9	0	0	112	98.2

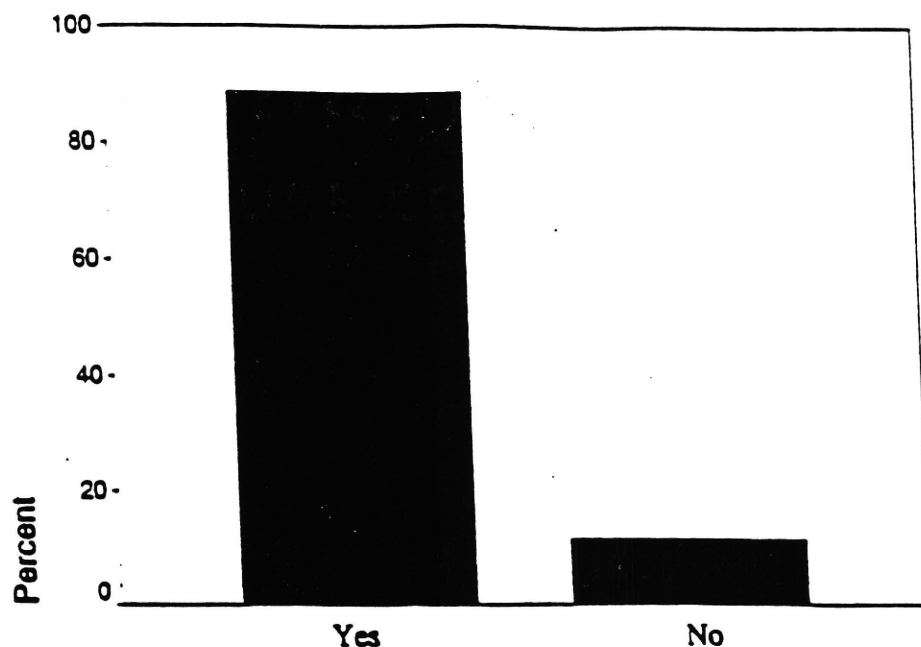
Research Question Number Three Section Two

Research question number three was used to determine the perceptions of school social workers toward becoming Section 504 Coordinators. Descriptive data analysis was used to answer the first part of this question which is illustrated on Chart 2.

An overwhelming number of school social workers, 88.6% (n=101) think that school social workers are capable and qualified as Section 504 Coordinator. The second part of question number three asked the respondent to briefly explain their answer. The responses were categorized into six common themes. Forty-six school social workers (46.5%) stated that they were qualified and capable because, "... their systems perspective and goal oriented service provision gives us good training for such a task". Eighteen school social workers (18.1%) marked, "yes" but gave no particular reason why they would be qualified and capable candidates as Section 504 Coordinator. Fourteen school social workers (14.1%) responded that they were qualified and capable due to their background with special education procedures. "Section 504 plans are very similar to IEP (IDEA) goals and objectives". Ten school social workers (10.1%) stated they were qualified and capable due to their connection between school, family and community resources which is important in the development of Section 504 plans, and example would be, "They work closely with parents and students and have a good

understanding of the needs of students". Another 10 school social workers (10.1%) felt they could be qualified and capable with proper training. One school social worker (1.1%) stated, "As it is in our school district, basically nobody coordinates 504. This is why we don't have many 504 plans in place. The follow through is not there. I think most school social workers would make sure plans were in place and followed upon".

Chart 2
Descriptive Analysis of Public School Social Worker's Perception on Capability and Qualification for Section 504 Coordination

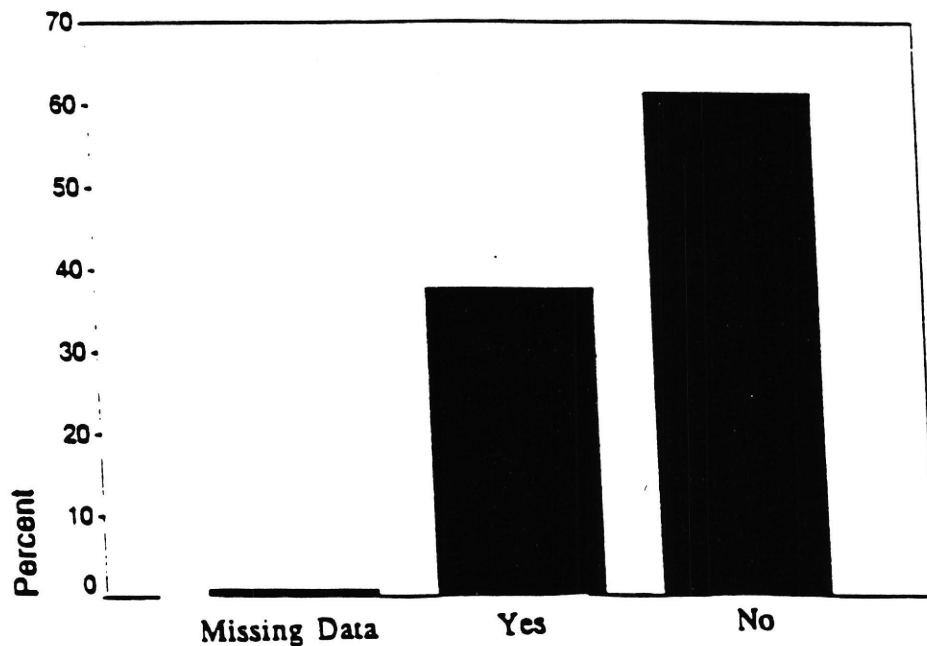


Research Question Number Four Section Two

Research question number four was used to determine whether school social workers were interested in further training in Section

504. A majority of school social workers, 61.4% (n=70) were not interested in receiving further training regarding Section 504 while 37.7% (n=43) would like more training regarding Section 504. One respondent out of 114, 9%, did not respond. Respondents were then asked to briefly describe what type of training they would prefer if they answered, "yes". The responses were categorized into six common themes. The majority of school social workers, 48.8% (n=21) would like to receive formal training on Section 504 such as workshops, written manuals or periodic professional meetings. Four out of 43, 9%, school social workers wanted specific training on how to write the 504 plan. Learning how to educate parents, specific interventions and monitoring of 504 plans were all at 4.7%. Twelve out of 43, 27.9%, school social workers answered "yes" but did not give a preference to the type of training they desired.

Chart 3
Descriptive Analysis of Public School Social Workers
Preference for Further Training in Section 504



Chapter V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter includes a summary of the research data, conclusions about the significant results, and implications for future research.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate Minnesota Public School Social Worker's training and involvement in Section 504 and are school social workers capable and qualified to be Section 504 Coordinator.

Section 504 was enacted to eliminate discrimination against individuals with disabilities. The guidelines of Section 504 apply to any agency that accepts federal funds; the agency must adhere to the procedural guidelines to ensure continued federal funding. The scope of its coverage is larger than that of IDEA (Guernsey & Klare, 1993; Shrybman, 1982). Moreover, every individual who is covered by IDEA is covered by Section 504. Over the last several years, the Section 504 guidelines have been more frequently applied to the educational system (CASE, 1991; Champagne, 1994). Administrators of schools have responded to the increase in Section 504 by trying to educate and provide training for their teachers but are still needing to become better informed of the Section 504 guidelines (Powell & Wedl, 1994; Cline, 1990). School social workers provide services in

the school for children with disabilities whether it be through services with IDEA or Section 504. School social workers are already aware of the issues and accommodations which would be appropriate for children that qualify under Section 504.

The first section of the survey requested the following demographic information: a) gender, b) years as a school social worker, c) social work role, d) degree, e) school level, f) district enrollment, g) building enrollment. The survey was predominantly completed by females, 78.9%, compared to only 21.1% males. A majority of the respondents, 49.1%, have 10+ years experience as a school social worker. The survey found that most public school social workers, 65.8%, perform a dual role of special education and general education services. A masters degree, 70.2%, was the highest degree held by the respondents. A majority of respondents to this survey, 40.4%, were elementary school social workers, however, 28.1% of the respondents maintained social work services in a combination of school levels in their school district. Over half, 57.9%, of the school social workers worked in districts with enrollments of 3000 or more and most building enrollments, 49.1% were in the category of 401-800 students.

Research question number one in section two provided data on the number of school social workers that have received training on Section 504 and if so what kind. It was found that most school social

workers in the survey sample have received training, 78.9% and a majority, 40.1%, have received their training through school inservices while 24.8% reported workshops as their training source.

Research question number two looked at the involvement level of school social worker with various section 504 responsibilities. School social workers are most involved in the Section 504 process in the beginning such as identifying students for 504 consideration. In fact, 56% of all respondents rated their involvement at this stage as being either "often" or "very often". Sixty percent of the respondents rated their involvement at "often" or "very often" for implementing pre-referral interventions. As the responsibilities became more involved in the Section 504 process, the involvement of the school social workers continued to decrease. Given the lack of involvement of school social workers in the Section 504 process it could be assumed that school social workers would not be capable and qualified as Section 504 Coordinator. However a substantial number of school social workers, 88.6%, believe that school social workers are indeed capable and qualified as Section 504 Coordinators. Forty-six percent of the respondents that answered "yes" see school social workers as a better fit for coordinating because of their training in Systems Theory. It is noted also that school social workers, 14.1%, believe they are qualified based on their knowledge and work with IDEA which has similar components to that of Section 504.

Research question number four investigated whether school social workers were interested in receiving more training in Section 504. It was found that 61.4% of school social workers were not interested in further training. It could be assumed then that school social workers feel capable and knowledgeable regarding Section 504 guidelines. For those that answered "yes", 48.8% were interested mainly in receiving formal training through workshops, written manuals or periodic professional meetings.

Conclusions

Responses to the first section of the survey illustrate that a majority of school social workers are working in districts and buildings with enrollment sizes which obligate them to have Section 504 Coordinators and grievance procedures. The high number of school social workers with a master's degree provides quality and capabilities to the profession and the years of experience reported by a majority of the respondents also provides the capabilities and knowledge of the school social worker.

Question number one of section two provides important data for the research as it shows that 78.9% of the respondents have received training in Section 504 making the argument in favor of school social workers as coordinators even stronger based on their capabilities and qualifications.

School social workers are involved in the early stages of Section

504 planning as reported on research question number two "a" and "b". School social workers need to continue expanding their role and providing their expertise in the development of 504 plans as well as educating parents and school personnel on the importance of accommodating and modifying for the students with disabilities.

Question number three is the most significant piece of information by asking the school social workers their perceptions of being capable and qualified. Eighty-eight point six percent do feel they are not only capable but qualified which correlates to their experience working with children and disabilities as well as their systems perspective as a professional social worker. This question supported the researchers earlier remarks regarding social workers being viable candidates due to their perspectives of the discipline of social work mainly the Systems Perspective.

Question number four could be interpreted as school social workers feel they have had adequate training but some are interested enough in Section 504 to pursue more training.

Implications

Although this study was conducted on Minnesota Public School Social Workers, the researcher believes that the recommendations may be applicable to other schools. The following recommendations are based on the review of the literature and conclusions of the study.

1. A majority of school social workers answered "yes" to having received training in Section 504 which supports the theory of school social workers being capable as Section 504 Coordinator. School administrators need to become more aware of their human resources within their buildings to best meet the needs of the children which qualify for Section 504 plans.

2. A majority of school social workers are involved in the pre-referral stages of Section 504 and need to involve themselves further in the Section 504 evaluation, creation, and monitoring which could improve the Section 504 compliance issues.

3. An overwhelming number of school social workers believe that they are capable and qualified as Coordinators of Section 504 which should be utilized in the public school system. The new role could bring about empowerment for school social workers for advocating for their clients.

4. School social workers are already providing services for special education students as well as general education students. Section 504 children which do not qualify for IDEA can also be provided services by social workers through general education.

5. More workshops should be developed, possibly by the Department of Education. A majority of school social workers would be interested in more training in the form of workshops. The literature review also found that there are compliance issues with

principals and Section 504. Continued training could be an avenue to decrease the number of non-compliance issues.

6. Increasing the number of school social workers as Section 504 Coordinator, because of experience, knowledge and advocacy role could decrease the number of school non-compliance issues.

This study was implemented to determine the training, involvement, capabilities, and qualifications of school social workers in regards to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This research is the first of its kind and another study should be done to verify results. Further research could include the following: how many school social workers are currently Section 504 Coordinators, school administrators views on school social workers as Section 504 Coordinator, compliance issues of school districts that currently have school social workers as Section 504 Coordinator compared to districts that have school administrators as the coordinator.

APPENDIX A

Section 504 Accommodation Plan

Student Name: _____ ID #: _____ Date: _____
School: Parker Elementary School Grade: _____ D.O.B.: _____
Teacher: _____ Age: _____

Describe the nature of the concern:

_____ is diagnosed with Central Auditory Processing Disorder which has effected her academic success.

Describe the basis for the determination of handicap:

_____ has been evaluated by Children and Family Psychological Services in WI 1998, University of Minnesota 1998, Review Medical Clinic 1999, Parker Elementary Special Education Team 1999.

Describe how the handicap affects a major life activity:

_____ major life activities that are affected by _____ disability are the following: organization, comprehension, directions, note taking, and test taking.

Child Study Team has reviewed the files of the above named student and concludes that he/she meets the definition as a qualified handicapped individual under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In accordance with the Section 504 guidelines, the school has agreed to make reasonable accommodations and address the student's individual needs by:

PHYSICAL ARRANGEMENT OF ROOM:

- _____ sitting student near the teacher
- _____ sitting student near a positive role model
- _____ sitting near the student when giving directions or presenting lessons
- _____ avoiding distracting stimuli (air conditioner, high traffic area, etc.)
- _____ increasing the distance between the desks
- _____ additional accommodations:

_____ should face the teacher when ever possible.

INSTRUCTIONAL PRESENTATION:

- _____ allowing students to check work
- _____ highlighting key points on the board
- _____ providing peer tutoring
- _____ providing visual aides
- _____ providing peer note-taker
- _____ making sure directions are understood
- _____ including a variety of activities during each lesson
- _____ breaking longer presentations into shorter segments
- providing written outline
- allowing student to tape record lessons
- having child review key points orally
- teaching through multi-sensory modes
- using computer-assisted instruction
- Additional accommodations:

Comprehension assignments should be broken down into smaller segments.

TEST TAKING:

- _____ allowing open book exams
- _____ allowing exam orally
- _____ using more objective items (fewer essay)
- _____ allowing student to give test answers on tape recorder
- _____ using frequent short quizzes, not long exams
- _____ allowing extra time for exam
- reading test item/s to student
- giving take home tests
- Additional accommodations:

_____ will be provided an alternate area for test taking when feeling distracted. _____ needs assistance

with complex language; rephrase into simpler language

[REDACTED]

ORGANIZATION:

- providing peer assistance with organizational skills
- assigning volunteer homework buddy
- allowing student to have an extra set of books at home
- providing daily/weekly progress reports home
- develop a reward system for in-school work/homework completion
- providing student with a homework assignment notebook
- Additional accommodations:

[REDACTED] needs help with planning for long term assignments.

BEHAVIORS:

- assigning specific behaviors
- teaching self-monitoring strategies
- providing extra privileges and rewards
- simplifying classroom rules simple and clear
- teaching "prudent use" of negative consequences
- allowing for short breaks between assignments
- teaching student to stay on task (nonverbal signs)
- praising student's correct answers, not his/her mistakes
- implementing a classroom behavior management system
- allowing student time out of seat to run errands, etc.
- enforcing inappropriate behaviors minimally out of limits
- enforcing inappropriate behaviors, consequences after escalation
- allowing legitimate movement
- interacting with the student
- increasing the immediacy of rewards
- implementing time-out procedures
- Additional accommodations:

Teacher needs to check for understanding frequently-feedback.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Contact Name/Phone: Nira Scherz-Busch, M.S. (608) 288-1882
 Medical Diagnosis: Yes No Central Auditory Processing Disorder
 Other Diagnoses: none
 Registered By: NA
 Health Concerns: none

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:

- suggesting parenting program/s
 - alerting bus driver
 - monitoring student closely on field trip
 - suggesting agency involvement
 - involving teacher/s on child's handicap
 - providing group/individual counseling
 - providing social skills through group experiences
 - developed intervention strategies for transitional periods
- will be provided support and training in organization and test taking skills.

PARTICIPANTS: (Name and Title)

Manager's Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX B

Public Law 93-112

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

"No otherwise qualified individual with handicaps in the United States shall, solely by reason of her or his handicap, as defined in section 706(8) of this title, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance or under any program or activity conducted by any Executive agency or by the United States Postal Service." (29 U.S.C. Sec.794)

DEFINITIONS

individual with handicaps	... " any individual who (i) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities, (ii) has a record of such impairment, or (iii) is regarded as having such an impairment." (29 U.S.C. Sec.706(8))
physical or mental impairment	... "(A) any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological; musculoskeletal; special sense organs; respiratory; including speech organs; cardiovascular; reproductive; digestive; genito-urinary; hermic and lymphatic; skin; and endocrine; or (B) any mental or psychological disorder, such as mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities." (34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 104.3)
major life activities	"... functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning and working." (34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 104.3)
has a record of such an impairment	"... has a history of, or has been classified as having, a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities." (34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 104.3)
is regarded as having an impairment	"... (A) has a physical or mental impairment that does not substantially limit major life activities but is treated by a recipient as constituting such a limitation; (B) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits major life activities only as a result of the attitudes of others toward such impairment; or (C) has none of the impairments defined but is treated by a recipient as having such an impairment." (34 Code of Federal Regulations Part 104.3)

Appendix C

Cover Letter

Melissa Murphy
500 School Street
Elk River, MN 55330
(612) 241-3400 ext. 5227

Dear Colleague,

I am Melissa Murphy, a graduate student in social worker at Augsburg College and am conducting a statewide survey as part of my thesis. The survey is looking at school social worker's current role and awareness with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 504 guarantees a student with a disability a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The research will also look at school social worker's views as Section 504 Coordinators. Due to the increased accountability of Public School Districts and the resurgence of Section 504 plans, the research is important to the development of school social workers.

Your name appeared on a scientifically selected, random sampling of Minnesota School Social Workers. The survey is voluntary and will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your participation is very important to the research, however, whether you choose to participate or not will not affect your relationship with Augsburg College. For your convenience, the return address and postage are on the enclosed envelope. Simply complete the survey and return it in the provided envelope. Please do not include your name to assure your anonymity. By completing the survey you have given your consent to participate in the research study. All answers are confidential and will be used in summary form so no individual answers can be identified. The last two questions are narrative but quotes will not be used in the thesis.

If you would like to receive a summary of this research either write your name and address at the end of the survey (this choice will not protect your anonymity) or send a separate letter after sending back the survey.

Please complete and return the survey at your earliest convenience. The return deadline is March 20, 2000. Thank you for your time and cooperation in this research.

Sincerely,


Melissa Murphy

S. I have included a serving of tea as a token of my appreciation. Enjoy it while you complete the survey.

3 Approval # 2000-11-2

Appendix D

Survey

**Minnesota School Social Worker's Training, Involvement and Caddacy for
Section 504 Coordinator**

Gender: Female Male

Years as a school social worker: 1-2 3-5 6-9 10+

Social work role: Special Education General Education Other: _____

Degree: Bachelors Masters Doctorate Other: _____

School Level: Elementary Middle Secondary ALC Day Treatment

District Enrollment: Under 1000 1001-2000 2001-3000 3001+

School Enrollment: Under 400 401-800 801-1000 1000+

Have you recieved training for Section 504? Yes No
If yes, please check all that apply:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School in-services | <input type="checkbox"/> Workshops |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under graduate cocurses | <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate Courses |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colleagues | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Journals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MN Dept. of Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Please indicate your level of involvement in the following areas of Section 504:
Never 2=not very often 3=Often 4=Very often

Identifying students for Section 504 consideration	1	2	3	4
Pre-referral interventions	1	2	3	4
Evaluating students for Section 504 consideration	1	2	3	4
Participating in Section 504 meetings	1	2	3	4
Creating Section 504 accommodations/modifications	1	2	3	4
Conducting Section 504 meetings	1	2	3	4
Writing Section 504 plans	1	2	3	4
Monitoring Section 504 plans	1	2	3	4
Educating parents on Section 504	1	2	3	4
Educating school personnel on Section 504k.	1	2	3	4
her: _____	1	2	3	4

Do you think school social workers could be capable and qualified candidates as Section 504 coordinator? Yes, please briefly explain: _____

Would you like further training in Section 504? Yes No
If yes, describe your preference: _____

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