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What Attributes do Educators Use to Assign Early Childhood Special Education Students to a Federal Classroom Setting (Inclusion vs. Non-inclusion

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What Attributes do Educators Use to Assign Early Childhood Special Education Students

to a Federal Classroom Setting (Inclusion vs. Non-inclusion

by

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Abstract

Inclusion and non-inclusion are two very common models used in the early childhood education profession. Given the two models, it is unclear currently how to decide what setting would best benefit a student. Is non-inclusion a better option for a student with social-emotional deficits? Or perhaps they would better benefit from typical peer models in an inclusive setting. The following research was designed to survey early childhood educators and ask what qualifications, strengths, and deficits would lead them to place a student in an inclusive early childhood classroom. With a small number of respondents, data showed that many educators seemed to have no preference as to what developmental area the strengths or deficits emerged. Further, educators seemed to be unclear as to what skill levels would determine a non-inclusive or inclusive preschool placement.

Acknowledgements

The following research is dedicated to my loving parents and brother, Owen, Kristine, and Andrew Kosloski. Without them, I would have never pursued and persisted with my dreams of not only becoming an early childhood special education teacher but also completing research that is critically important to a position that is so meaningful to me. My inspiration guiding me towards the field of Early Childhood Special Education derives from my loving relationship with my late aunt Tricia Olson who had Down Syndrome and the kindest heart. Thank you to all of you for never giving up on me, even when I most certainly gave up on myself- this is for you.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Purpose

Special education has changed drastically within the past 200 years. To gain a better perspective of the current and future ongoings of special education, one must have an understanding of the history involved.

According to Wright, in the year 1832, the Perkins Institution for the Blind opened in Boston Massachusetts. This boarding school was the first of its kind for students with visual disabilities and the first school to serve students with exceptionalities. The Law Mandating Compulsory Education was established in 1840. This law required the government to provide education to all American children. On February 24, 1922, the Council for Exceptional Children was established. The council was the first advocacy association for children with disabilities. In 1943, the classification of Autism was created by Dr. Leo Lanner at John Hopkins University. On May 17, 1954, Brown v. Board of Education overturned "Plessy v. Ferguson" stating "separate is not equal." This case encouraged the formation of numerous advocacy groups supporting special education. In 1975 the Education for All Handicapped Children Act was passed. This act ensured that all public schools provided education to all students with disabilities. Additionally, the act included providing free education and special education for students ages 3-21, due process, supplemental services, and the least restrictive environment. 1990 was a big year for special education law. On July 26, 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed and promised people with disabilities the same rights as everyone else in school and work environments. On October 30, 1990, IDEA was passed into law. IDEA includes six pillars: FAPE, LRE, IEP, evaluation, parent/student participation, and procedural safeguards for all participants (Wright & Wright, 2021).

Special education in the United States is as young as it is extensive and ever evolving. Educational environments for students with disabilities have not remained the same in the past 100 years. Children have been educated in institutions, boarding schools, self-contained classrooms, and inclusive classrooms. The American educational system traditionally falls on two models for early childhood special education: inclusion and non-inclusion (self-contained). In an inclusive classroom setting, the student with a disability is placed in a classroom with peers both with and without disabilities. In a non-inclusive classroom, a special education student is in a classroom with peers who only have disabilities. Exposure to "typically developing" peers occur outside their classroom experience. The difficulty I have encountered with the two models is determining which setting would best meet a specific student's needs (Wright & Wright, 2021)

Most of the recent literature praises inclusion, and rightly so. However, my experience as a non-inclusive preschool teacher found that non-inclusion benefits children as well- depending upon their classroom needs. The common misunderstanding, I encountered in my school district is that a non-inclusive classroom is a "behavior room" or a resource room. This is not always the case. My purpose of a non-inclusive classroom is to provide students with a smaller setting with more individual one-on-one time with teachers. Additionally, more interventions, adaptations, modifications, and supplements may be able to be implemented within a non-inclusive setting.

The topic of inclusion vs. non-inclusion is of importance to me and my colleagues as currently there is no clear guidance as to when to place students in non-inclusive or inclusive classrooms. Due to the complexity occurring when placing students, I chose to launch a pilot study and research what attitudes teachers had on inclusion vs. non-inclusion to establish better guidelines when determining what placement would best benefit a student.

The question guiding my research is: *"What attributes do educators use to assign early childhood special education students to a special education classroom setting (inclusion vs. non-inclusion)"*. I hope that a better understanding of educators' attitudes will help navigate student placement in the future and contribute to an eventual "roadmap" helping to guide teachers to the best placement for the individual student.

The literature I searched was extensive and covered several decades. While I sought to find more recent research on non-inclusion, most of the applicable information found was written before 2010. This could be due to the relatively recent creation of inclusive classrooms in the 1990s and therefore most of the recent research details inclusive practices as opposed to non-inclusive. EBSCO Host, ProQuest, ResearchGate, Academic Search Premier, and ERIC were the databases used to navigate the research. I searched for peer-reviewed articles between the dates of 1990 and 2020, often using search phrases including the words "early childhood" "special education" "inclusion" "non-inclusion" and "teacher perspectives." When opening the search up to years before 2010, I was able to find more literature that applied to my research question.

Definition of Terms

The ongoing theme of my research, proposal, thesis, and survey is *inclusion* versus *non-inclusion*. Inclusion can be defined as a preschool classroom in which "children with disabilities are enrolled with typically developing peers" (Holahan & Costenbader, 2000, pp. 224-235). Conversely, a non-inclusive or self-contained classroom can be defined as "special education classrooms in which only preschool children with disabilities are enrolled" (Holahan & Costenbader, 2000, p. 224-235). A common subject in the literature reviewed is the concept of *ableism.* "Ableism is a form of discrimination or prejudice against individuals with physical,

mental, or developmental disabilities characterized by the belief that these individuals need to be

fixed or cannot function as full members of society" (Maggin et al., 2011).

To combat ableism in the public school system, Congress passed PL 94-142 in 1975

which is now referred to as the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).*

> IDEA law mandates that the child should be in the LRE or least restrictive environment.
>
> Children with disabilities should be educated with children without disabilities 'to the
>
> maximum extent possible' which means that they should be in the classroom that they
>
> would be in if not needing support unless they cannot accomplish the goals in their IEP
>
> without a different placement (Lipkin & Okamoto, 2015, p. 5)

Another important component of IDEA is every student should have access and opportunity to

complete their education in the *least restrictive environment (LRE).* The LRE portion of IDEA

"ensures that children with disabilities should be educated with their typically developing peers

to the greatest extent possible" (Littleton, 2020, p. 1). Another important pillar of IDEA included

FAPE. *FAPE or Free Appropriate Public Education* was drafted into section 504 of the

Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It states,

> the Section 504 regulation requires a school district to provide a 'free appropriate public
>
> education' (FAPE) to each qualified person with a disability who is in the school
>
> district's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the person's disability. (U.S.
>
> Department of Education, 2010, p. 1)

Another important piece of special education is *Due Process* which has many definitions-

but for this research paper it is a set of legal guidelines for teachers to follow to ensure students

are getting the special education services promised to them. Due Process additionally provides a

set of safeguards for both students and educators in the event of a disagreement or need for conciliation. Two important components of Due Process are IEPs and *Evaluations.* An *IEP is an Individualized Education Plan*, created through collaboration between educators and families. The U.S. Department of Education defines an IEP as a document that,

> creates an opportunity for teachers, parents, school administrators, related services personnel, and students (when appropriate) to work together to improve educational results for children with disabilities. The IEP is the cornerstone of quality education for each child with a disability (U.S. Department of Education, 2010)

To create an IEP, one must have completed an evaluation.

> *Evaluation* is the process of determining whether a child has a disability and needs special education and related services. It is the first step in developing an educational program that will help the child learn. A full and individualized initial evaluation must be done before the initial provision of any special education or related services to a child with a disability, and students must be reevaluated at least once every three years. (Pacer Center, Inc., 2015, p. 1)

With an understanding of these definitions, we can better understand the literature surrounding inclusion versus non-inclusion in federal settings and the attitudes, outcomes, and perspectives of students, teachers, and families of students with and without disabilities.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Inclusion versus Non-inclusion: Commonalities, Differences, Student Outcomes,
   and Teacher and Parent Attitudes

A Closer Look at Inclusion

As previously mentioned, an inclusive classroom is one in which children with disabilities are enrolled with typically developing peers. One study by Odom et. al. (2001) found that inclusion benefits students both with and without disabilities. All students made similar developmental gains, actively engaged in classroom activities, developed friendships, and expanded their understanding of disabilities and attributes when attending an inclusive early childhood program.

The success of inclusive programs is dependent upon many items. The first of these items is a collaboration that takes place between the professionals in the classroom. Seven features of collaboration are identified as necessary for a successful inclusion program. These features include joint participation in planning, shared philosophies, shared responsibility of all children, communication, professional roles, stability of relationships, and administrative support (Odom et al., 2011). Inclusive programs vary in their presentation style and how services are provided. Regardless, the success of inclusive programs is reliant on positive attitudes, cooperation, and communication between the administration, the general education teacher, and the special education teacher (Brisendine et al., 2008). In the DEC/NAEYC (2009) statement on inclusive preschool programs, additionally stated that to be developmentally effective a program must 1) allow access to learning opportunities through the provision of materials that can be utilized by both children with and without disabilities; 2) students are active participants in learning

assisted by adults with individualized approaches; 3) adequate supports and resources given to adults (parents and teachers) to help students learn (Lawrence et al., 2016).

One great benefit of inclusive programs is the opportunity for social engagement and role models. Using peer-mediated strategies is an effective approach to promoting social, communication, and language skills with young children who have disabilities and can be embedded within inclusive classroom activities and routines. (Lawrence et al., 2016)

A Closer Look at Non-Inclusion

Revisiting the definition, non-inclusion is a classroom in which all of the students enrolled have disabilities. Before IDEA was enacted in 1975- the majority of special education programming followed this self-contained model. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) requires every student to receive their education in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This meant students with disabilities were to be placed in environments where they are educated to the greatest extent possible with their typically developing peers. This legislation paved the way for the expansion of inclusive classrooms. As a result, non-inclusive settings became less prominent within the American public school system.

While inclusion has shown to be beneficial for both students with and without disabilities, non-inclusion may also be beneficial for] some students. A non-inclusive classroom may provide a calmer setting for those students who can become overstimulated by larger spaces with more people (Hammel, 2012) A study by Holloway in 2001 discovered that inclusive programs can effectively meet the developmental needs of "only some" students with mild disabilities. Other students can find greater success academically when instruction is received through traditional special education programs (Brisendine et al., 2008).

Additionally, teachers surveyed were asked if students improved, did the same, or did worse as a result of being educated with a student who had disabilities. Thirty-four percent of the teachers stated they thought the presence of special education students negatively impacted their classroom (Brisendine et al., 2008). In another question, approximately one-third of educators surveyed essentially believed that keeping general education students separate from special education students provided the best outcomes for all students.

Student Perspectives and Outcomes of both Inclusion and Non-Inclusion

The number one consideration for a student's classroom placement should be where the student will find the greatest success. Inclusion has not only demonstrated a great benefit to students with disabilities but has also been shown to improve the attitudes and social skills of their typically developing peers. A sense of belonging, positive social relationships and friendships, and growth in all developmental domains are always included as goals in preschool inclusion programs (Noggle & Stites, 2018). Stanton-Chapman found that general education students who have built relationships with peers with disabilities demonstrate enhanced social initiations. (Noggle & Stites, 2018). Additionally, friendships developed at an early age for students with disabilities encourage students to demonstrate higher levels of prosocial behavior, progressive expressive and receptive language skills, and more competent conflict resolution skills than students placed in non-inclusive settings (Noggle & Stites, 2018).

A key developmental theory emphasizing the impact of a community setting on a child's development is Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory. "Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory suggests that various layers of the environment, along with interactions between the child and others, shape how a child matures" (Noggle & Stites, 2018). In 2012, Phillips and

Melov found that children both with and without disabilities attending a high-quality inclusive

preschool program made significant gains in early literacy but not in early mathematics

(Lawrence et al., 2016). Achievement gains were comparable across both groups (Lawrence et

al., 2016). When considering the effects of inclusion on children diagnosed with autism spectrum

disorder in 2014, Nahmias et al. discovered placement in inclusive settings as compared to non-

inclusive settings correlated with higher cognitive outcomes upon kindergarten entry. The benefit

is especially significant for children with lower social-emotional skills (Lawrence et al., 2016).

On another measure of teacher-child interaction. The Teacher-Child Interaction Scale created by

Farren and Collins in 1996, determined there were undoubtably more developmentally

appropriate and responsive educator attitudes in inclusive settings as compared to non-inclusive

settings (Lawrence et al., 2016). As of 2014, nearly one-fourth of children who participated in

preschool special education (23%) were educated in non-inclusive classrooms, while 38% were

educated in inclusive classroom settings for at least ten hours a week where they received most

of their special education and related services (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

Parent Perspectives of Inclusion and Non-Inclusion

Several studies have indicated parents of children with disabilities are generally

supportive of opportunities for integration favoring the increased social contact with typically

developing peers in unified settings provided. Inclusive settings provide students with disabilities

the opportunity to establish friendships with typically developing peers- benefiting both students.

In some cases, non-disabled peers have made great role models and teachers. Additionally,

children with disabilities teach non-disabled peers the importance of empathy, acceptance, and

friendship. Special Education Parents with students in inclusive settings are more likely than

Special Education parents of preschoolers in non-inclusive programs to access opportunities for their students to participate with their typically developing peers in activities outside of the preschool setting. These parents also reported their child had a friend who does not have a disability (Rafferty et al., 2001).

Researchers additionally have reported parents have worries about the possible impact of integration on their children. Some parental concerns include their child being socially secluded, rejected, or picked on by their typically developing peers (Rafferty et al., 2001). Conversely, parents of typically developing preschoolers have concerns their student might begin exhibiting undesirable behaviors learned from peers with disabilities (Rafferty et al., 2001). Regardless of these concerns, almost all parents noted participation in an inclusive classroom helped their typically developing children learn sensitivity to others, understand differences in people, and become more self-aware of their weaknesses and strengths (Rafferty et al., 2001).

The overall level of identified risks associated with inclusion for children both with and without disabilities was found to be somewhat low for both parent groups. However, a minority of parents identified potential risks. Risks identified for children with disabilities centered around the ability of the program to effectively address the student's individual needs, the ability of the program to supply appropriate special assistance or individualized instruction, the teacher's ability to address exceptional needs, and the ability of the program to supply appropriate related services the students may require (Rafferty et al., 2001). Given these concerns, parents are less likely to support inclusion for students with significant disabilities as opposed to those with mild or moderate disabilities (Rafferty et al., 2001).

Teacher Perspectives of both Inclusion and Non-Inclusion

Instructing both inclusive and non-inclusive classrooms gives teachers great insight as to what settings fit different needs and different students. Additionally, teachers have an idea of what supports need to be in place for each setting to be successful. Most often, teachers cite inadequate educational policies as well as insufficient financial resources as to why inclusion is not always the ideal model educational policies dictate. When surveyed about needed and available support for inclusion administered to teachers, most educators indicate that professional development is needed to help them provide effective inclusive practices (Lawrence et al., 2016). Understandably, the quality of teaching strategies in inclusive classrooms is dependent on the professional development that the educators receive. Researchers in the early childhood field have called for the expansion of both in-service and pre-service professional development that would help bridge the gap between practice and research and would contribute to exceedingly effective teachers in inclusive classroom settings (Chang, et al. 2005;)(cited in Lawrence et al., 2016).

In 2007, Bruns and Mogharreban surveyed Head Start and Prekindergarten teachers and discovered the majority (over 75%) of teachers have a positive attitude about inclusion and have additionally reported using several effective strategies within their inclusive classrooms to promote learning for their students with disabilities. Other studies have found associations between positive teacher attitudes about inclusion and effective inclusive practices (Lawrence et al., 2016). In addition to professional development and ongoing learning, modifications and adaptations are necessary for a successful inclusive program. Among the most requested

classroom modifications reported are a reduction in class size and more support services (Hammel, 2012).

Early childhood special education teachers also report greater modifications and adaptations are needed for children with autism, neurological disorders, challenging behaviors, or emotional problems. These educators also commented they are better equipped to serve students with mild disabilities such as speech and language delays, learning disabilities, and mild cognitive disabilities in an early childhood inclusive preschool setting rather than children with more significant disabilities such as autism, neurological disorders, or with sensory impairments. To be expected, educators with a background in special education report feeling a greater sense of competence than those without a special education background when it came to serving young children with disabilities (Rafferty et al., 2001).

Inclusion and Non-Inclusion–Which Model is Best for Which Student?

In a review of the literature comparing inclusion and non-inclusion, there is no clear answer as to what students typically benefit from a non-inclusive setting and conversely, what students will benefit from an inclusive setting. The overwhelming trend is students in an inclusive setting make it possible for students with disabilities to have more access to social and emotional learning and exposure and may be the default placement if there is a choice.

Several articles credit inclusive preschool classrooms for helping students with more significant disabilities meet their social, language, and academic goals- while other articles contradict these statements by stating students do not benefit more from inclusion and that their presence within an inclusive setting can limit the language development of the general education students as well as teach the general education students' maladaptive behaviors (Schoger, 2006).

Children with milder disabilities seem to do better in inclusive settings than those with more severe disabilities. These mild disabilities may include speech and language impairments, mild cognitive deficits, and learning disabilities. Associated more often with non-inclusive settings are children with Autism and Emotional Behavior Disorder. In early childhood, children are most commonly identified as having a developmental delay. In the state of Minnesota, students with ASD may also qualify, as well as DHH (Deaf Hard of Hearing), or OHD (Other Health Disorder). However Emotional Behavior Disorder (EBD) is seldom identified between the ages of 0-7. Much of the research comparing inclusion and non-inclusion centers around K-12 placements and in these placements, a non-inclusive K-12 classroom looks much different than an early childhood non-inclusive classroom. In K-12, students in non-inclusive settings tend to work on life skills and academics but do not always focus on social skills (Schoger, 2006). Non-inclusive settings in early childhood are like inclusive settings but have some differences. Early childhood non-inclusive settings are designed to teach children routines, transitions, and wait time. These skills and others are meant to make it possible for students to participate in a general education classroom.

Given there are no clear answers as to what student traits, abilities, and deficits belong in non-inclusion versus inclusion- more research needs to be done in this area. Particularly, research needs to be done in reaching out to educators to try and answer the question, *"What attributes do educators use to assign early childhood special education students to a federal classroom setting (inclusion vs. non-inclusion)?".*

Chapter 3: Method

Placing a special education student in the most suitable classroom is of utmost importance for their developmental and future academic success. Both inclusion and non-inclusion offer benefits and shortcomings which should be considered with the student's current abilities and disabilities. Inclusion tends to offer peer modeling, a more accurate representation of a classroom schedule and academics, and larger class size. They also may offer preparation for students to join a general K-12 classroom setting. However, an inclusive setting does not always offer enough one-on-one assistance, and modifications, supplements, and adaptations can be limited for students with disabilities because adult support is limited with a higher number of students and higher academic ambitions. A non-inclusive classroom offers students the opportunity to practice skills in a one-on-one environment with fewer peers and more opportunities for accommodations, modifications, and supplements to the curriculum. Nonetheless, a non-inclusive setting may be lacking in peer models and the opportunity to become accustomed to the mainstream classroom size/academics/and structure. The end goal is always inclusion. Whether the child can begin their classroom experience in inclusion or not is the question. This is a question largely guided by varying educator opinions and no collaborative agreements. In this project, I strive to find the answer to the question, *"What attributes do educators use to assign early childhood special education students to a federal classroom setting (inclusion vs. non-inclusion)?"*

Research Design

In my study, I expect to answer the question, *"What attributes do educators use to assign early childhood special education students to a federal classroom setting (inclusion vs. non-inclusion)?"*

The research used in the study was quantitative and based on a survey provided to early childhood educators with a variety of backgrounds. The survey included several questions based on common developmental characteristics in the six categories of Social/Emotional, Cognitive, Functional, Fine Motor, Gross Motor, and Language. Each question presented a basic skill pulled directly from the Bayley Scales of Infant and Child Development (3rd Edition) and asked surveyors to assume the skill is the student's highest skill in the developmental area. Based on the understanding, we asked the educator if the skill listed is the student's highest skill in that developmental area, would they place them into inclusion? After analyzing the data, no significant correlations were found between developmental areas and inclusive placements. Additionally, no correlations were found in the age/delay when placing a student into inclusion or non-inclusion.

The data collected will be shared with the early childhood administration for St. Cloud Area School district 742. Additionally, the completed analysis of data will be shared with the Child and Family Studies department at St. Cloud State University. The use of this data will help district administrators in making placement decisions for students in inclusion and non-inclusion. The data will benefit the Child and Family Studies department at St. Cloud State University as they educate and prepare future general education and Early Childhood Special Education teachers.

Subjects

The subjects in this research project are early childhood teachers of varying backgrounds, experience levels, and positions. To be eligible to participate in this study, teachers needed to be employed in a public preschool school within the past 5 years, work in the early childhood field, and have experience working with children with disabilities and exceptionalities. All participants' employment could include working for a range of communities–from rural to urban.

Data Collection Methods

Collection of data took place in May 2022; during this time, teachers are encouraged to participate in a developmental survey asking educators to determine a student's federal setting (inclusive or non-inclusive) based on the listed skill level. Teachers are given two weeks to complete the survey.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data were collected and analyzed using a survey. The survey included skills under six different developmental areas (cognitive, language, fine motor, gross motor, social and functional). Skills presented to those surveyed included a variety of skills ranging in age levels from birth to four years of age. Data were quantitative in nature as responses were counted and calculated and are represented through calculated percentages of how many educators would place a student into an inclusive classroom given different developmental domains as well as how many educators would place students into an inclusive classroom according to the student's current developmental age. Each developmental area was specific in asking educators, "Assuming the following individual skills are a 3-year-old's highest in the domain, would you place them in an inclusive preschool setting?" In the social domain, for example, there were 30

individual skills educators were asked to decide if the skill was the student's highest skill in the social domain, would the educator place the student into inclusion? With 35 respondents, each question could potentially have 35 educators selecting inclusion for the skill listed. Therefore, with 30 questions about different skills and 35 potential nods for inclusion, there could have been 1,050 responses for inclusion in the social domain alone. When adding up the responses of people who believed inclusion would be best based upon a social skill, only 519 people selected inclusion. To create the percentage, I then divided 519 positive responses by the 1,050 potential responses to land at a percentage of 49%. Forty-nine percent of educators determined a social skill would determine a student's placement into an inclusive preschool classroom.

The equation used is outlined below:

- 35 surveyed x 30 skills and potential responses for inclusion = 1,050
- Total number of educators selecting inclusion within the social domain = 519
- 519/1,050 = 49% of educators selected inclusion based upon a social skill.

The same formula was used to determine every developmental area as well as the age level of the deficit that determines inclusion or non-inclusion. In November 2021, I had a color-coded chart created that labeled the age group of each skill based on the Bayley Developmental Scales (3rd edition, 2005; see Appendix E).

Chapter 4: Results

In total, 35 participants took part in the survey. Invitations were sent out to a wide variety of licensed early childhood professionals, including physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech/language pathologists, and retired educators. Invitations to the survey were sent out through school district 742 email and invitations were posted to several private Facebook groups. In total, the survey was sent to 1,154 people.

Participants were from an array of professional backgrounds and experience levels. While participants included physical therapists, speech/language pathologists, and retired educators, the majority of those surveyed were Early Childhood Special Education teachers (64.7%) The educators that did contribute to the survey did come from a variety of age groups- some taught birth to three, some taught 3-year old's and some taught 4-year old's. In the state of Minnesota, educators can be employed in a public school setting through the tiered licensure system. Tier-one licenses are temporary and require the individual to have a bachelor's degree in any area. Tier 4 licenses are for those who have completed a bachelor's degree in education, completed all the necessary testing requirements, and have 3+ years of experience. The majority of those surveyed were currently licensed with a Tier 4 license (64.7%).

Figure 1

Current Educational Role of Teacher

What is your current educational role? Early Childhood Special Education Teacher or General Education Early Childhood Teacher?

34 responses

- Early Childhood Special Education Teacher
- General Education Early Childhood Teacher
- Speech/Language Pathologist
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- Retired Early Childhood Educator (within the past 5 years)
- School Psychologist

Figure 2

Current Licensure Tier of Teacher

What licensure tier are you currently employed/licensed under?

34 responses

- Tier 1
- Tier 2
- Tier 3
- Tier 4
- PT
- Speech Language Pathology through Department of Education
- Not a teacher but on the teacher contract
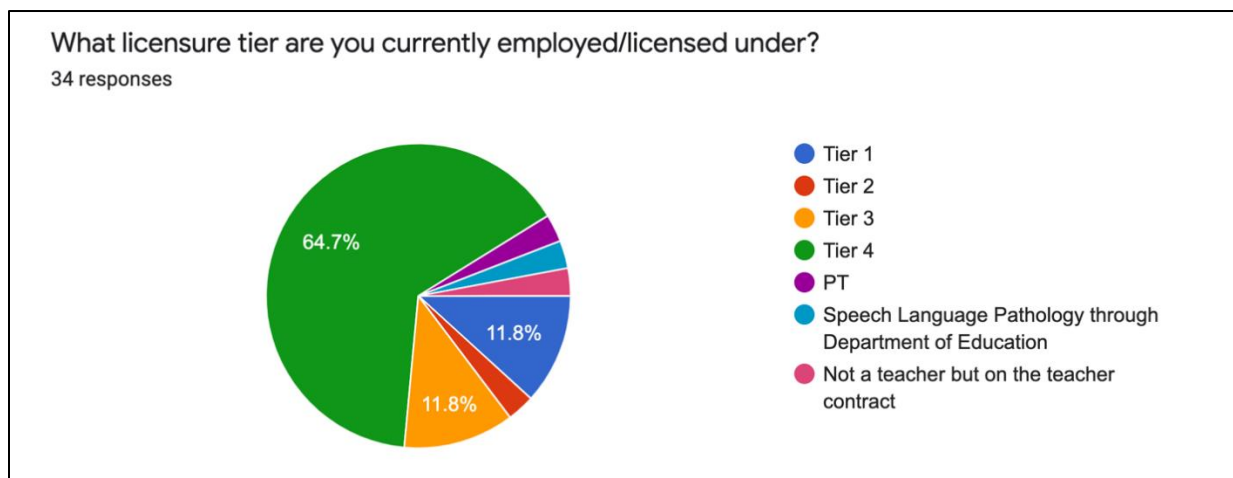
Participants additionally varied in their number of years of experience. While most educators had less than 15 years of experience (60%), 40% of those who responded had worked in education for more than 15 years. When asked if their district was urban, rural, or suburban,

43% stated they worked in a suburban district, 51% responded they worked in an urban district

and only 6% responded stating they were employed within a rural district.

Figure 3

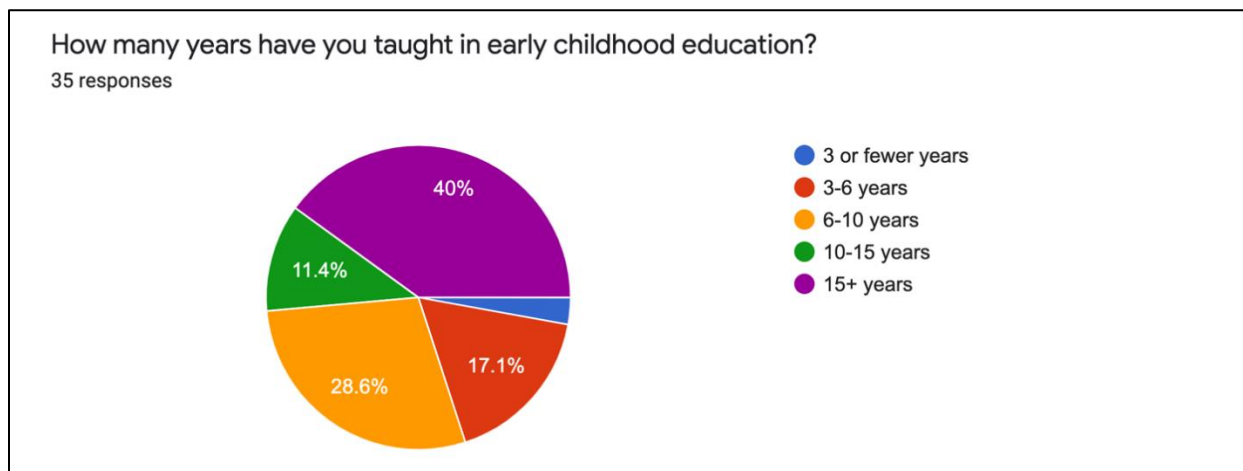*Years of Experience in Early Childhood Education*

Figure 4

School District Description
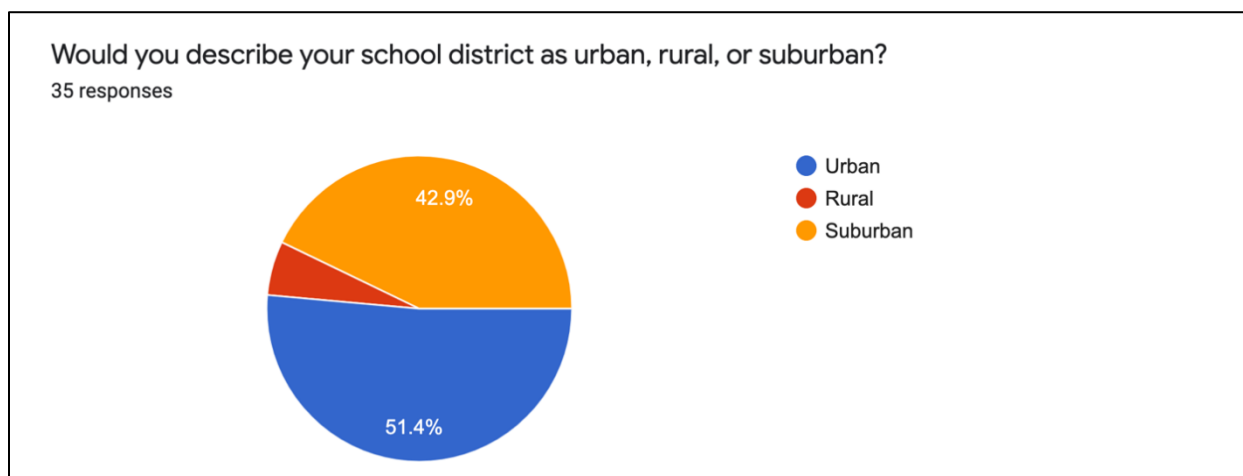
The final demographic questions included asking those surveyed whether their district

had a non-inclusive placement setting in early childhood for those on the Autism Spectrum and

those not identified with Autism. Eighty-nine percent of respondents stated they have non-inclusive placements for students with Autism and 91% of respondents stated they additionally had a non-inclusive early childhood placement for students not identified with autism spectrum disorders.

Figure 5

Does the School District have an Early Childhood Non-inclusive Placement?

Figure 6

Does your School District have a Placement for Students NOT Identified with Autism Spectrum Disorder?

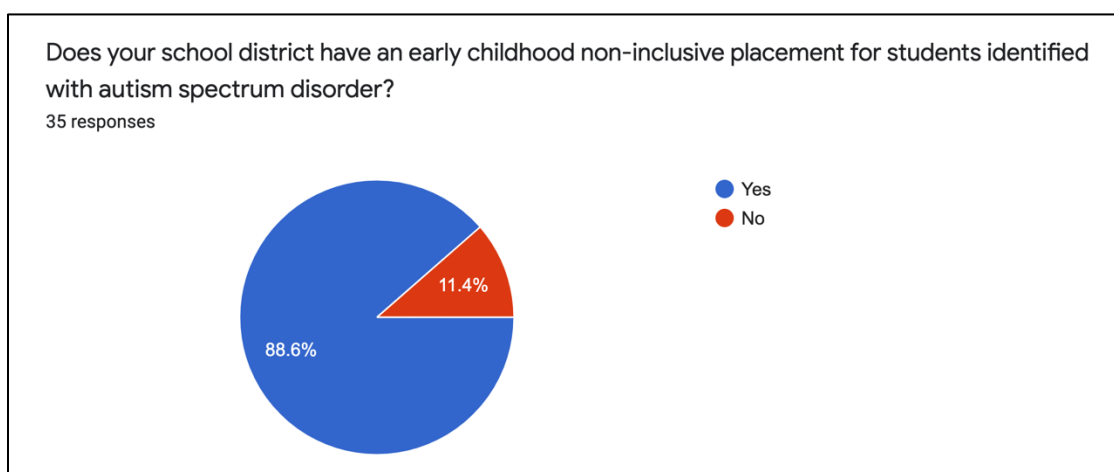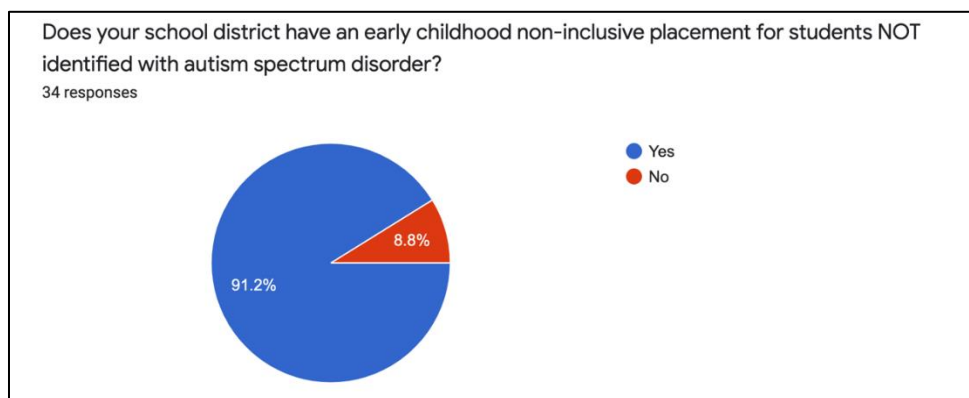The bulk of the questions asked to those surveyed included a variety of skills in each of the six developmental domains (social, cognition, adaptive, fine motor, gross motor, and language). Within each of these developmental areas, skills were pulled directly from the Bayley developmental scales to reflect typical skills that are present between the ages of birth and 5 years of age.

When surveyed about various social/emotional skills and whether an educator would place the student in an inclusive classroom based upon the skill listed being the student's highest skill in the area, 49% of respondents stated they would place a student with social-emotional deficits in an inclusive classroom. When the deficits were broken down by age, 36% responded if a student's highest social skill was typical of a child aged birth-12 months; they would place them into an inclusive classroom setting. When skills typical of a 1- to 2-year-old child were evaluated, 46% of educators would place a student with these skills in an inclusive 3-year-old classroom. If a child was demonstrating skills typical of a 2- to 3-year-old, 53% of those surveyed would place them in an inclusive classroom. And lastly, if a student was demonstrating skills typical of a 3- to 4-year-old child, 52% of educators would then place them in an inclusive classroom.

Figure 7

Social Skills to Determine Placement into Inclusive Classroom
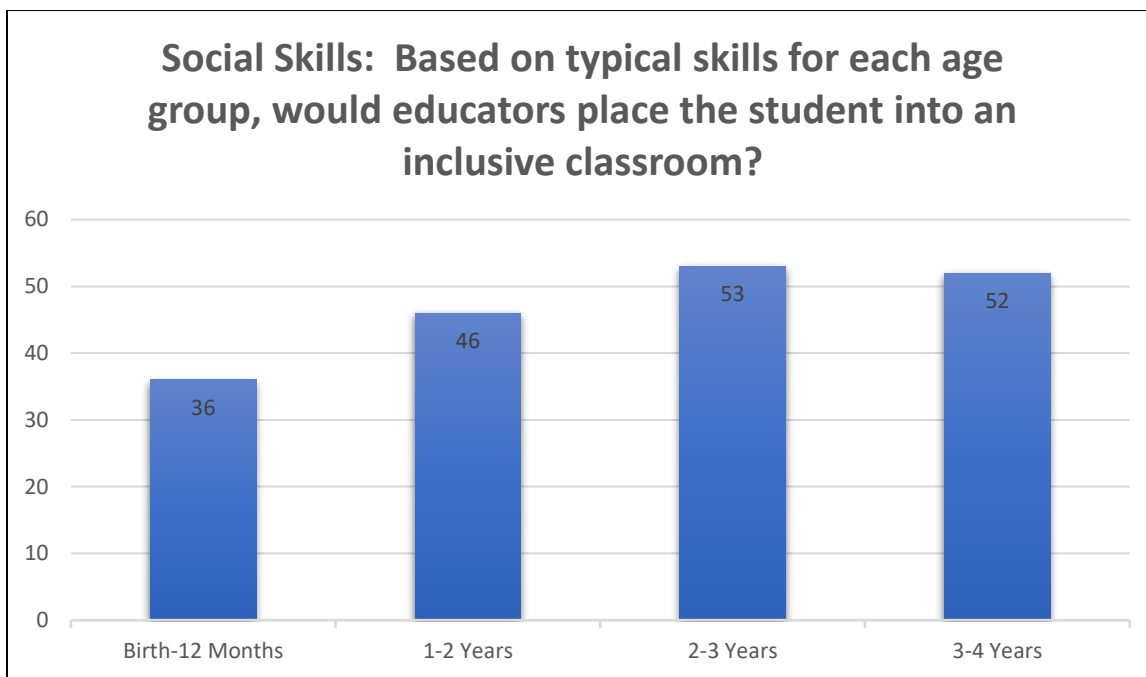
In the area of cognition, the overall numbers for placing a student in inclusion rose with 53% of educators stating inclusion would be the correct placement for a student with a cognitive deficit. When broken down into different ages of skills, the numbers were like those with a social delay. 40% of educators stated if a student's highest skill level was in the birth to12-month age range they would place them in inclusion. When asked about skills typical of a 1- to 2-year-old, 51% of educators stated they would place them in an inclusive classroom. Skills in the 2- to 3-year age range encouraged 56% of educators to place students in inclusion. Finally, skills in the 3- to 4-year age range convinced 57% of educators to place students in an inclusive classroom.

Figure 8

Cognitive Skills used to Determine Placement in an Inclusive Classroom

In the area of Fine Motor, 56% of those surveyed responded stating a deficit within this area would qualify them for an inclusive early childhood classroom. Once again, when surveyed about what age of delay would qualify a student for inclusion, 47% stated a student with typical skills of a child aged birth to 12 months would be placed in inclusion. Fifty-four percent of respondents stated a child with the typical skills of a 1- to 2-year-old within the fine motor domain would place a student in an inclusive classroom. Typical skills of 2- to 3-year-old children encouraged 59% of educators to place a student in an inclusive 3-year-old classroom and 54% of educators would place a student in an inclusive classroom if their highest fine motor skill was in the 3- to 4-year age range.

Figure 9

Fine Motor Skills used to Determine Placement in Inclusive Classroom
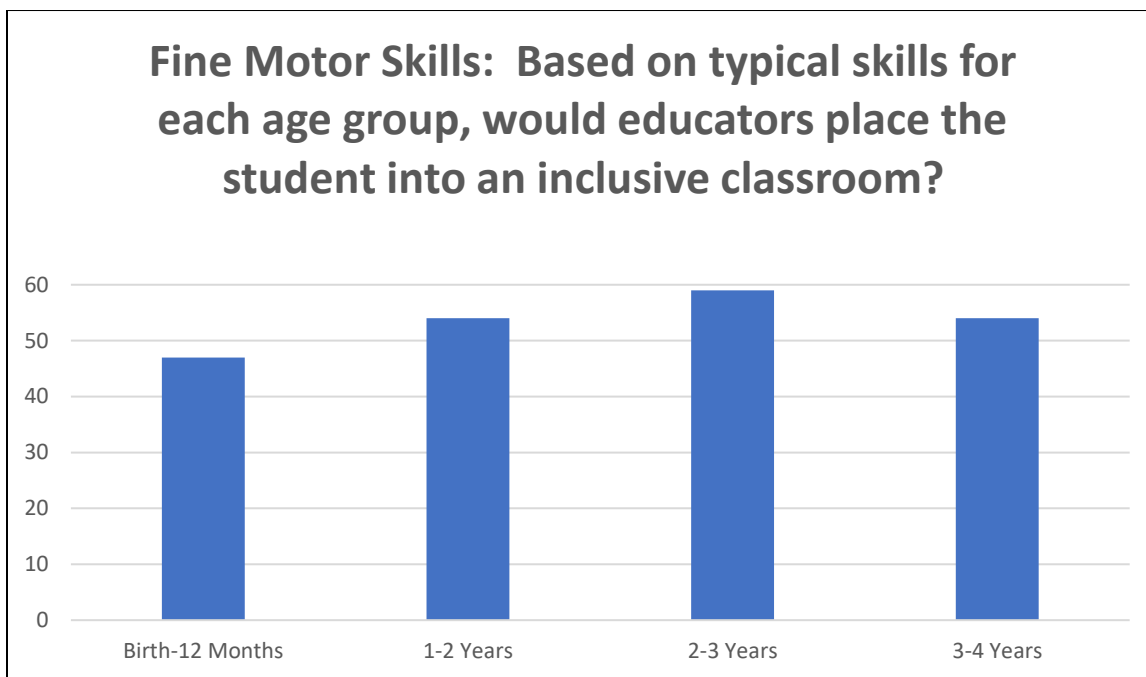
In the Gross Motor area, 51% of educators indicated placing a student into an inclusive early childhood classroom based on a gross motor deficit. If the child's highest gross motor skill was one of a typical birth to12-month-old child, 39% of educators would place the student in an inclusive setting. If the student's highest skill was of a typical 1- to 2-year-old child, 57% of educators chose to place the student into inclusion. Fifty-four percent of educators stated they would place a student with typical 2- to 3-year-old skills in an inclusive preschool classroom and 60% indicated they would place a student with skills in the 3- to 4-year old age range in an inclusive classroom setting.

Figure 10

Gross Motor Skills used to Determine Placement in an Inclusive Classroom

Gross Motor Skills: Based on typical skills for each age group, would educators place the student into an inclusive classroom?
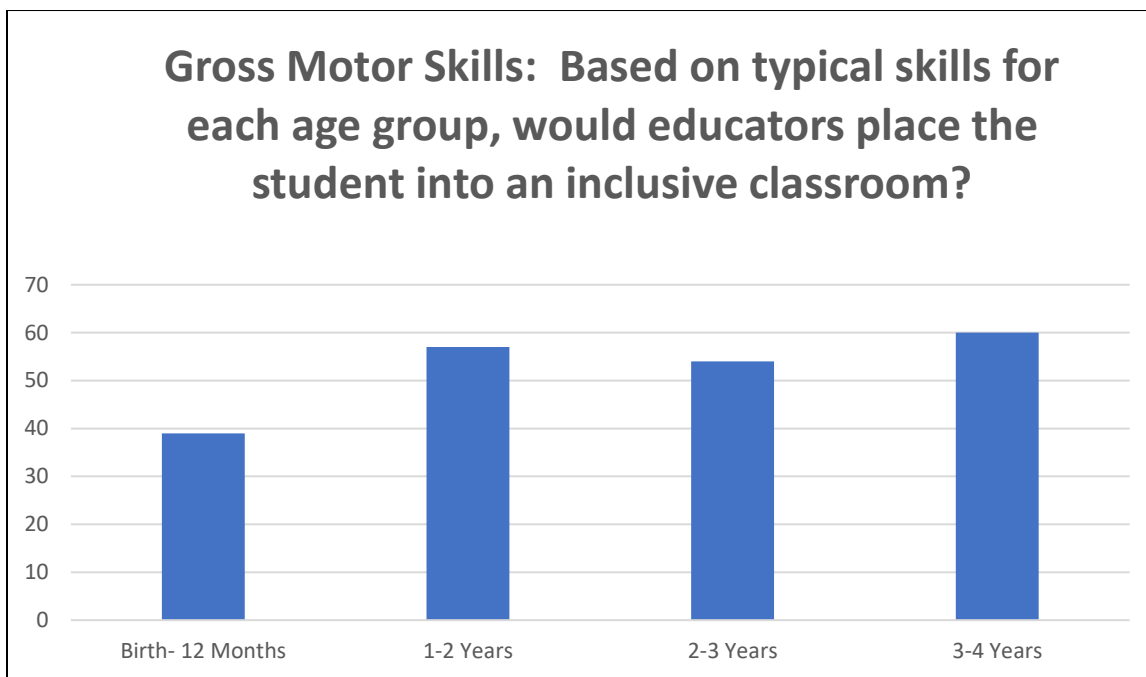
In the area of Language, 59% of educators stated they would place a student in an inclusive classroom with a language delay. When broken down into age groups, 46% responded stating they would place a student with typical language skills of a child aged birth to 12 months in an inclusive preschool classroom. When asked about students with language skills of a 1- to 2-year-old, 59% stated they would place those students in an inclusive classroom. Sixty-four percent of respondents stated a student with the typical language skills of a 2- to 3-year-old would be best served within an inclusive classroom and 68% of educators stated students with language skills of a 3- to 4-year-old should be placed in an inclusive classroom.

Figure 11

Language Skills used to Determine Placement in an Inclusive Classroom

Language Skills: Based on typical skills for each age group, would educators place the student into an inclusive classroom?
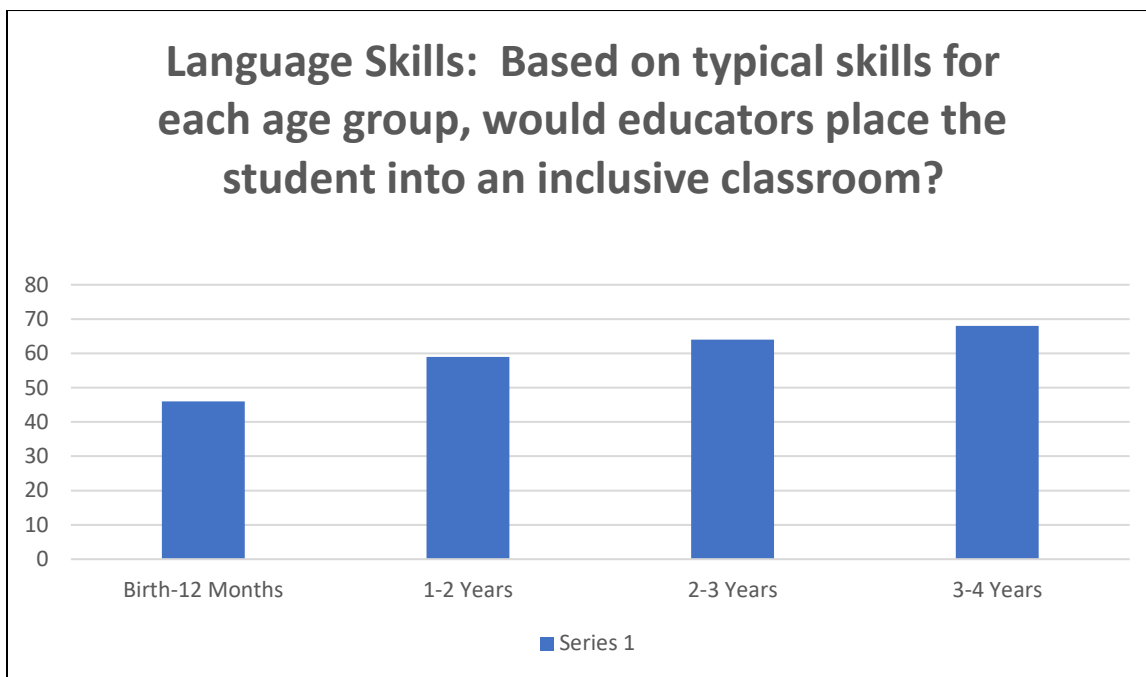
Finally, in functional skills, 58% of educators stated a deficit within this area would qualify a student for an inclusive classroom setting. Students whose highest skill level presented as those typical of a child aged birth to 12 months encouraged 39% of respondents to place the student in an inclusive classroom. Students presenting with the functional skills of a 1- to 2-year-old were determined to be eligible for an inclusive classroom by 70% of respondents. Sixty-four percent of respondents stated students with skills that are typical for a 2- to 3-year-old child could be placed in an inclusive classroom while 60% of those surveyed stated students with functional skills of a 3- to 4-year-old could be placed in an inclusive classroom setting.

Figure 12

Functional Skills used to Determine Placement in Inclusive Classroom

Functional Skills: Based on typical skills for each age group, would educators place the student into an inclusive classroom?
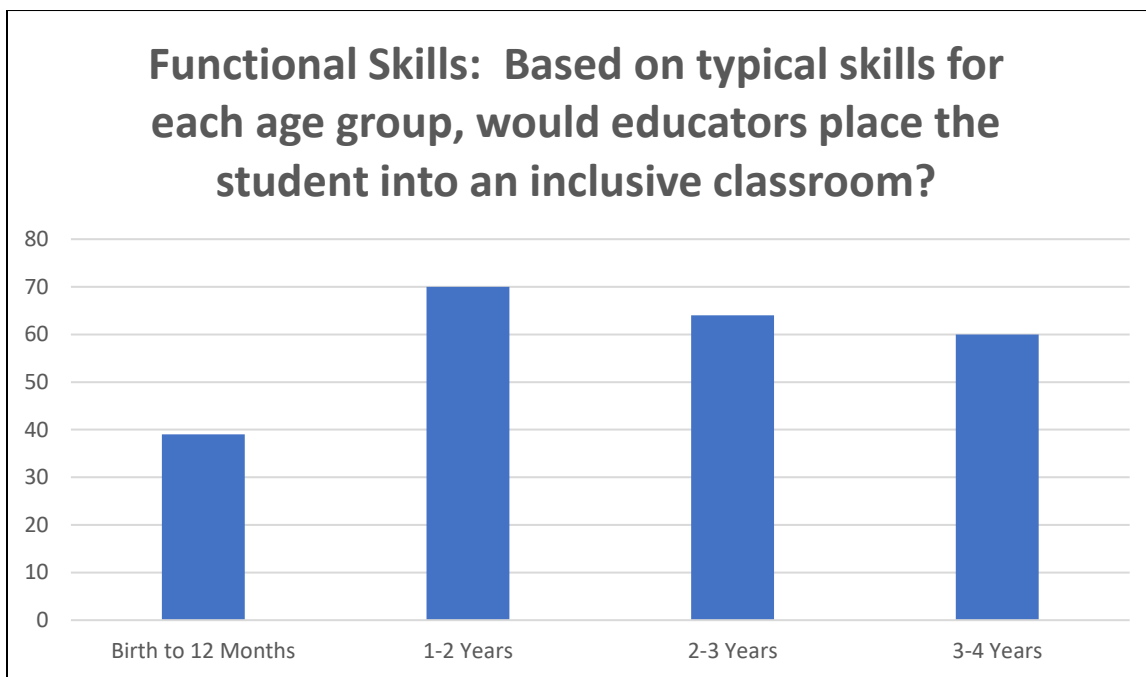
Chapter 5: Discussion

Importance of Findings

Results from this study were expected but mostly surprising. Given all six of the developmental domains, the number of those recommending inclusive services for a 3-year-old with special needs stayed consistent throughout the areas. The percentage of educators who would recommend inclusion never dipped below 30% and likewise, never went over 70%. The area rated the lowest with 49% of educators placing the student in inclusion was in the social domain, while the highest area was the language domain with 59% of educators placing students with language deficits in an inclusive classroom.

The age level of the delay was particularly interesting. Children demonstrating the skills of a 3- to 4-year-old would be deemed "typically developing" within an early childhood classroom serving three-year-old children. Yet the number of respondents recommending a student enters an inclusive classroom based on skills of a 3- to 4-year-old never rose above 68% with the average responses for this age range being 59%.

Figure 13

Percentage of Educators who Would Place a Student in an Inclusive 3-Year-Old Classroom

Based Upon Area of Disability and Age Level of Skill
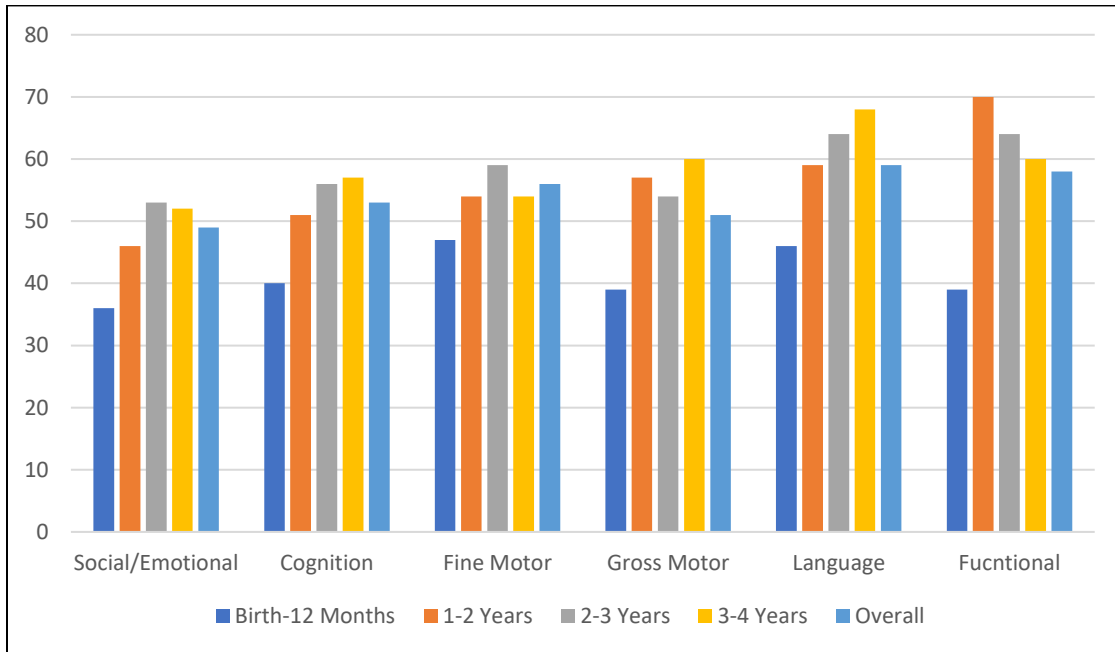
Figure 14

Average Percentage of Educators who would Place a Student into an Inclusive Classroom Based on the Age of Their Highest Skill
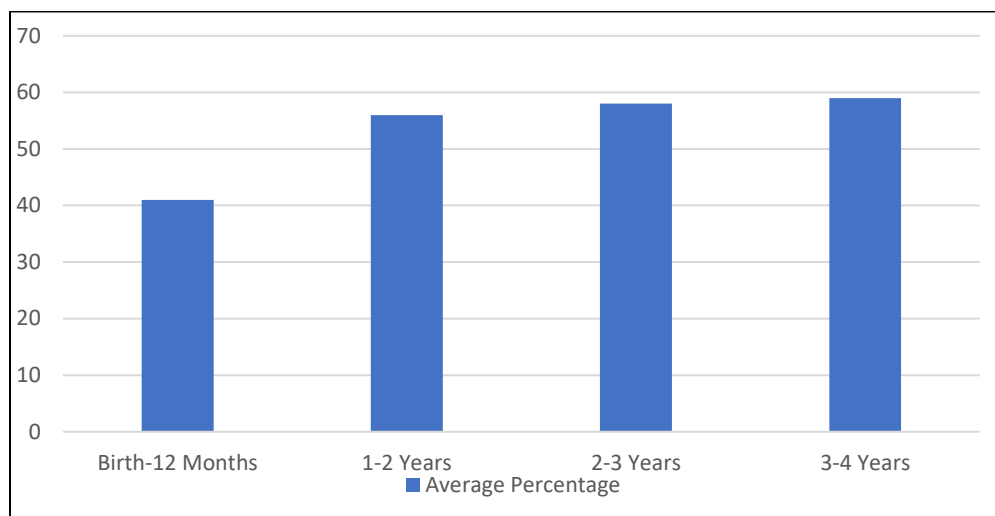
Responses seemed to agree that a decision is never made with one developmental area in mind (social vs gross motor). However, several responses indicated maladaptive/dangerous behaviors often guide a decision for non-inclusion. Some respondents additionally commented that students with more significant needs and vulnerabilities would be better served in a non-inclusive classroom as it is smaller and better equipped to address more needs and adaptations. An issue with this is that educators are qualifying students who are behavioral and vulnerable to be in the same non-inclusive classroom setting. With such high needs on both sides of the spectrum- neither student is going to have their needs appropriately addressed. As elementary schools have different classrooms based upon different student needs (learning disability, developmental cognitive disability, emotional behavior disability, and autism spectrum disorder),

perhaps early childhood also needs to create separate non-inclusive classrooms for students with vulnerabilities and maladaptive behaviors.

Comparison to Literature Review

The quantitative data appear to support the literature and previous studies. There was no concise answer as to what developmental needs are preferential to inclusion or non-inclusion. While there was a slight preference for social delays and motor delays to be placed into non-inclusion, the data did not vary enough to make any conclusions. This relates to much of the research read before the study. Also, the literature did not provide any concise answers as to what developmental area or degree of delay would determine non-inclusion for a student with exceptional needs. The literature indicated a slight preference for social delays placement in a non-inclusive classroom. However, this was mentioned in two articles out of 20.

Constraints of Study

With the data not being conclusive as to what age or skill area determines a child's classroom placement, I investigated the responses. At the end of the survey, educators were asked if there was anything they would like to add about what helps guide their decision in placing a student into an inclusive classroom setting. Twenty-five respondents elected to offer additional information for this open-ended question.

As the researcher, I was able to further dive into the individual survey responses. I was interested to find that those who were passionate about the topic ultimately skewed the data by not participating. Several of those surveyed did not select inclusion for any students- therefore, the data presented fewer educators recommending inclusion for students. Contrasting this skew in data was another issue. Some educators only selected inclusion for every developmental skill

listed, skewing the data in the direction of inclusion. After looking at how many respondents skewed data towards non-inclusion the number of responses was five. When looking at how many respondents skewed data towards inclusion the number of responses was also five. I decided to keep the data included in the study as it seemed to cancel itself out and I felt the demographics of those individuals met the criteria and were important to the study.

Final Thoughts

Educators always need to look at the whole child when determining a federal setting for a student with exceptionalities. A decision cannot be made based on a student's skills in one skill area as development is multifaceted and interconnected between the domains. Our special education students will often present with developmental delays in three or more areas, each area of delay affecting another area of delay. In the state of Minnesota, a student needs to qualify in two developmental areas on their special education evaluation to qualify for Early Childhood Special Education services. However, the survey responses can guide in the direction of what areas other educators find more important when considering inclusion or non-inclusion. As a non-inclusive teacher for an early childhood classroom with 3-year-olds, my concern is children with maladaptive behaviors (primary social delay) are placed in a classroom with vulnerable students who multiply impaired (all domains). This often creates safety issues and leads to students not getting the adaptations and modifications needed to be successful. While many of the responses to the survey remain close to 50%, a slight preference was shown for the non-inclusion of students with social deficits as well as students with gross motor deficits. This leads me to the thought that early childhood needs two separate non-inclusive settings for students

with such vastly different needs that both require smaller classroom sizes with more accommodations and modifications.

Additionally, the number of educators who do not recommend students for inclusion when their skill level is age appropriate is alarming. I believe educators need to be reminded of what skills are typical for a 3-year-old child and the curriculum need to be adjusted as necessary to meet our students where they are at. Academics (ABCs and 123's) are asked of our younger students when these skills should be taught and introduced to students who are 4 years old or in kindergarten. Our 3-year-old students need to learn how to be at school first, focusing on the social and cognition skills needed so that they can better access academics as they age.

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Appendix A: Invitation to Survey

Hello,

My name is Elise Kosloski and I am a proud early childhood special educator in a non-inclusive

classroom for St. Cloud Area School District 742. During my years teaching, a common question

that seems to not yet have an answer is, "what attributes qualify a student for their assigned

federal setting on an individualized education plan?" Through discussions with other districts,

both rural and urban- I have found that this question is not unique to me and my school. It is so

important to place a student in the correct setting in the beginning of their school career and I

thought a great starting point to begin determining who will succeed where was to ask the

educators!

I thank you for your input in this survey- your answers to the following questions will help me

determine if there is a certain developmental area that presents a delay that makes a student a

better candidate for non-inclusion verses inclusion. Additionally, I hope to find the extent of

delay that typically determines whether a student is in inclusion or non-inclusion. I hope with

some guidance on these questions, we can develop a tool that better helps educators accurately

place their special education students in an appropriate environment.

Many Thanks,

Elise Kosloski

**Appendix B: Implied Consent Invitation for St. Cloud Area School District 742
and Other Minnesota School Districts**

What Teacher Attitudes Exist When Determining Placements of Special Education Students in Inclusive

and Non-Inclusive Early Childhood Settings.

Consent to Participate

You are invited to participate in a research study about early childhood inclusive and non-inclusive

federal setting placements.

If you agree to be part of the research study, you will be asked to complete a one-time google forms

questionnaire that takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. Benefits of the research is to better

understand what developmental levels and areas determine placement in an early childhood inclusive or

non-inclusive federal setting. There are no foreseen risks or discomforts with completing the

questionnaire.

Data collected will remain anonymous. Your name or identifying characteristics will not be requested.

Your responses will be kept strictly anonymous. Participating in this study is completely voluntary. Your

decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with St. Cloud State

University, or the researcher. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without

penalty.

If you have questions about this research study, you may contact Elise Kosloski (Principal Investigator):

oq2732dz@go.minnstate.edu or JoAnn Johnson (Faculty Mentor): jojohnson@stcloudstate.edu.

Results of the study can be requested from the researcher. Your completion of the survey indicates that

you are at least 18 years of age and your consent to participation in the study.

Appendix C: Survey

Thank you for participating in my research project. My goal is to gain a better idea of what student characteristics teachers use to place students in either an inclusive setting or a non-inclusive setting. The following survey uses skills listed in the Bayley and with your responses, will help me to explore what developmental areas and ages are most commonly used to refer a student to non-inclusion or inclusion.

1. What licensure tier are you currently employed/licensed under?
   a. Tier 1
   b. Tier 2
   c. Tier 3
   d. Tier 4
   e. Other
2. How many years have you taught in early childhood education?
   a. 3 or fewer years
   b. 3-6 years
   c. 6-10 years
   d. 10-15 years
   e. 15+ years
3. What is your current educational role? Early Childhood Special Education Teacher or General Education Early Childhood Teacher?
   a. Early Childhood Special Education Teacher
   b. Early Childhood General Education Teacher
   c. Speech/Language Pathologist
   d. Occupational Therapist
   e. Physical Therapist
   f. Retired Early Childhood Educator (within the past 5 years)
4. Would you describe your school district as urban, rural, or suburban?
   a. Urban
   b. Rural
   c. Suburban
5. Does your school district have an early childhood non-inclusive placement for students identified with autism spectrum disorder?
   a. Yes
   b. No
6. Does your school district have an early childhood non-inclusive placement for students NOT identified with autism spectrum disorder?
   a. Yes
   b. No

Assuming the following individual skills are a three-year old's highest in the social domain, would you place them in an inclusive preschool setting? Select all of the skills that would qualify them for inclusion in your professional opinion. Example: If a student's highest social skill is "showing a desire for social attention", would you place them in inclusion? Please select all that may apply.

1. SOCIAL
    a. LOOKS AT AN ADULT'S FACE
    b. SHOWS AWARENESS OF OTHER PEOPLE
    c. SHOWS A DESIRE TO BE PICKED UP BY FAMILIAR PEOPLE
    d. SHOWS A DESIRE FOR SOCIAL ATTENTION
    e. EXPRESSES DISPLEASURE OVER ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS
    f. EXPRESSES ENJOYMENT OF ACTIVITIES, PEOPLE, OR TOYS
    g. DISCRIMINATES BETWEEN FAMILIAR AND UNFAMILIAR PEOPLE
    h. SHOWS APPROPRIATE SIGNS OF SEPARATION FROM CAREGIVER
    i. SHOWS APPROPRIATE AFFECTION TOWARDS PEOPLE, PETS, ETC
    j. RESPONDS APPROPRIATELY TO PRAISE AND REWARDS
    k. GREETS FAMILIAR ADULTS
    l. ENJOYS READING STORIES WITH AN ADULT
    m. ALLOWS OTHERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THEIR ACTIVITIES
    n. SHOWS AWARENESS OF OTHER CHILDREN
    o. INITIATES SOCIAL CONTACT WITH PEERS IN PLAY
    p. IMITATES THE PLAY OF OTHER CHILDREN
    q. EXPRESSES EMOTIONS
    r. SMILES OR VOCALIZES TO ADULT ATTENTION
    s. ENJOYS FROLIC PLAY
    t. SHOWS AWARENESS OF THEIR HANDS
    u. RESPONDS TO THEIR NAME
    v. DISPLAYS INDEPENDENT BEHAVIOR
    w. IDENTIFIES THEMSELVES IN A MIRROR
    x. EXPRESSES OWNERSHIP OR POSSESSION
    y. IMITATES OTHERS AND CHANGES PLAY AND RESPONSES BASED ON WHAT OTHERS ARE DOING.
    z. SHOWS PRIDE IN ACCOMPLISHMENTS
    aa. FOLLOWS DIRECTIVES IN A ROUTINE
    bb. STATES THEIR FIRST NAME
    cc. USES OBJECTS IN MAKE BELIEVE PLAY
    dd. KNOWS THEIR AGE

Assuming the following individual skills are a three-year old's highest in the cognitive domain, would you place them in an inclusive preschool setting? Select all of the skills that would qualify them for inclusion in your professional opinion. Example: If a student's highest cognitive skill is "matching three colors", would you place them in inclusion? Please select all that may apply.

2. ACADEMIC
    a. TURNS THEIR HEAD TOWARDS A LIGHT SOURCE
    b. VISUALLY ATTENDS TO AN OBJECT FOR 5 SECONDS
    c. FOLLOWS A VISUAL STIMULUS
    d. OCCUPIES THEMSELVES FOR 5 MINUTES
    e. UNCOVERS A HIDDEN TOY
    f. SEARCHES FOR A REMOVED TOY
    g. LOOKS AT, POINTS TO, OR TOUCHES PICTURES IN A BOOK
    h. ATTENDS TO A PREFERRED ACTIVITY FOR 3 MINUTES
    i. FINDS AN OBJECT HIDDEN UNDER 1 OF 2 CUPS
    j. REACHES AROUND A BARRIER TO REACH A TOY
    k. EXPERIMENTS WITH CAUSAL BEHAVIOR
    l. RECOGNIZES THEMSELVES AS THE CAUSE OF EVENTS OR HAPPENINGS
    m. MATCHES 3 COLORS
    n. PULLS A CLOTH TO OBTAIN AN OBJECT
    o. NESTS OBJECTS INSIDE ANOTHER
    p. SHOWS INTEREST IN AGE-APPROPRIATE BOOKS
    q. RESPONDS POSITIVELY TO PHYSICAL CONTACT A STIMULATION
    r. SHOWS AWARENESS OF NEW SITUATIONS
    s. PHYSICALLY EXPLORES THEIR SURROUNDINGS
    t. IMITATES SIMPLE FACIAL GESTURES
    u. PLACES A CIRCLE AND A SQUARE IN A FORM BOARD
    v. MATCHES A CIRCLE, SQUARE AND TRIANGLE
    w. IDENTIFIES SEVERAL OBJECTS WITH THEIR USE

Assuming the following individual skills are a three-year old's highest in the functional domain, would you place them in an inclusive preschool setting? Select all of the skills that would qualify them for inclusion in your professional opinion. Example: If a student's highest functional skill is "feeding themselves with a spoon or a fork", would you place them in inclusion? Please select all that may apply.

3. FUNCTIONAL
   a. TAKES FOOD FROM A SPOON AND EATS IT (ADULT FEEDS THE CHILD)
   b. HOLDS OR SUPPORTS A BOTTLE TO FEED THEMSELVES
   c. USES LIPS TO REMOVE FOOD FROM AN EATING UTENSIL HELP BY AN ADULT
   d. FEEDS THEMSELVES BITE SIZE PIECES OF FOOD USING THEIR FINGERS
   e. DRINKS FROM A CUP WITH ASSISTANCE
   f. HELPS TO DRESS THEMSELVES BY EXTENDING AND ARM OR A LEG
   g. REMOVES SHOES WITHOUT ASSISTANCE
   h. FEEDS THEMSELVES WITH A SPOON OR A FORK.
   i. IS ABLE TO MOVE AROUND THEIR ENVIRONMENT, REQUIRING ONLY OCCASIONAL SUPERVISION.
   j. UNDERSTANDS THAT HOT ITEMS ARE DANGEROUS
   k. PUTS TOYS AWAY WHEN REQUESTED
   l. DISTINGUISHES BETWEEN FOOD AND NON-FOOD ITEMS
   m. REMOVES CLOTHING UNASSISTED
   n. ACCURATELY RESPONDS TO YES/NO WHEN ASKED IF THEY NEED TO USE THE TOILET

Assuming the following individual skills are a three-year old's highest in the fine motor domain, would you place them in an inclusive preschool setting? Select all of the skills that would qualify them for inclusion in your professional opinion. Example: If a student's highest fine motor skill is "point with index finger", would you place them in inclusion? Please select all that may apply.

4. FINE MOTOR
    a. HOLD HANDS TOGETHER AT THE MIDLINE
    b. HOLDS AN OBJECT FOR 1 MINUTE
    c. RETRIEVES A SMALL OBJECT BY RAKING IT WITH THEIR FINGERS
    d. TRANSFERS OBJECTS FROM ONE HAND TO ANOTHER
    e. DROPS AN OBJECT INTENTIALLY WITH DEMONSTRATION
    f. INTENTIALLY THROWS AN OBJECT
    g. REMOVES FORMS FROM A FORM BOARD
    h. POINTS WITH INDEX FINGER
    i. SCIBBLES LINEAR OR CIRCULAR PATTERNS SPONTANEOUSLY
    j. REACHES FOR AN OBJECT PLACED IN FRONT OF THEM
    k. INTENTIALLY DROPS A CUBE INTO A CUP WITH DEMONSTRATION
    l. PLACES A RAISIN IN A BOTTLE
    m. STACKS TWO CUBES
    n. PLACES FOUR RINGS ON A RING STACKER IN ANY ORDER

Assuming the following individual skills are a three-year old's highest in the gross motor domain, would you place them in an inclusive preschool setting? Select all of the skills that would qualify them for inclusion in your professional opinion. Example: If a student's highest gross motor skill is "moves three or more feet by crawling", would you place them in inclusion? Please select all that may apply.

5. GROSS MOTOR
   a. HOLD THEIR HEAD ERECT WHEN HELD FOR UP TO ONE MINUTE
   b. BRINGS HANDS TOGETHER AT THE MIDLINE
   c. LIFTS AND TURNS HEAD SIDE TO SIDE WHILE IN THE PRONE POSITION
   d. MOVES AN OBJECT FROM HAND TO MOUTH
   e. SITS WITHOUT ASSISTANCE FOR 5 SECONDS
   f. MAKES STEPPING MOVEMENTS WHEN HELD IN AN UPRIGHT POSITION
   g. MOVES 3 OR MORE FEET BY CRAWLING
   h. WALKS 3 OR MORE STEPS WITH ASSISTANCE
   i. STANDS IN AN UPRIGHT POSITION WITHOUT SUPPORT FOR 30 SECONDS
   j. MOVES FROM SITTING TO STANDING WITHOUT SUPPORT
   k. WALKS WITHOUT SUPPORT FOR 10 FEET
   l. WALKS UP/DOWN FOUR STAIRS WITH SUPPORT
   m. RUNS TEN FEET WITHOUT FALLING
   n. WALKS UP AND DOWN STAIRS WITHOUT ASSISTANCE
   o. THROWS A BALL 5 FEET FORWARD WITH DIRECTION
   p. JUMPS FORWARD WITH BOTH FEET TOGETHER

Assuming the following individual skills are a three-year old's highest in the language domain, would you place them in an inclusive preschool setting? Select all of the skills that would qualify them for inclusion in your professional opinion. Example: If a student's highest language skill is "attends to a speaker for 10 seconds", would you place them in inclusion? Please select all that may apply.

6. LANGUAGE
   a. RESPONDS TO A SOUND OUTSIDE OF THEIR VISION
   b. IS SOOTHED BY A FAMILIAR ADULT'S VOICE
   c. TURNS THEIR HEAD IN THE DIRECTION OF A SOUND OR VOICE
   d. ATTENDS TO A SPEAKER FOR 10 SECONDS
   e. RESPONDS TO DIFFERENT TONES OF VOICE
   f. ASSOCIATES SPOKEN WORDS TO FAMILIAR OBJECTS
   g. IDENTIFIES FAMILIY MEMBERS OR PETS WHEN NAMED
   h. LOOKS AT OR POINTS TO AN OBJECT ACROSS THE ROOM WHEN IT IS NAMES
   i. FOLLOWS THREE OR MORE VERBAL COMMANDS
   j. PRODUCES ONE OR MORE VOWEL SOUNDS
   k. BABBLES
   l. WAVES BYE BYE
   m. IMITATES SPEECH SOUNDS
   n. USES GESTURES TO INDICATE WANTS OR NEEDS
   o. SPONTANEOUSLY INITIATES SOUNDS, WORDS OR GESTURES THAT ARE ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT
   p. USES 10 WORDS
   q. COMMUNICATES IN A TURN TAKING STYLE
   r. USES TWO WORD UTTERANCES
   s. USES WORDS TO GET THEIR NEEDS MET
   t. USES THE PRONOUNDS I, YOU, ME
   u. USES WORDS TO RELATE INFORMATION TO OTHERS

Appendix D: Age Defined Copy of Survey

1. SOCIAL
   a. LOOKS AT AN ADULT'S FACE
   b. SHOWS AWARENESS OF OTHER PEOPLE
   c. SHOWS A DESIRE TO BE PICKED UP BY FAMILIAR PEOPLE
   d. SHOWS A DESIRE FOR SOCIAL ATTENTION
   e. EXPRESSES DISPLEASURE OVER ACTIVITIES OR EVENTS
   f. EXPRESSES ENJOYMENT OF ACTIVITIES, PEOPLE, OR TOYS
   g. DISCRIMINATES BETWEEN FAMILIAR AND UNFAMILIAR PEOPLE
   h. SHOWS APPROPRIATE SIGNS OF SEPARATION FROM CAREGIVER
   i. SHOWS APPROPRIATE AFFECTION TOWARDS PEOPLE, PETS, ETC
   j. RESPONDS APPROPRIATELY TO PRAISE AND REWARDS
   k. GREETS FAMILIAR ADULTS
   l. ENJOYS READING STORIES WITH AN ADULT
   m. ALLOWS OTHERS TO PARTICIPATE IN THEIR ACTIVITIES
   n. SHOWS AWARENESS OF OTHER CHILDREN
   o. INITIATES SOCIAL CONTACT WITH PEERS IN PLAY
   p. IMITATES THE PLAY OF OTHER CHILDREN
   q. EXPRESSES EMOTIONS
   r. SMILES OR VOCALIZES TO ADULT ATTENTION
   s. ENJOYS FROLIC PLAY
   t. SHOWS AWARENESS OF THEIR HANDS
   u. RESPONDS TO THEIR NAME
   v. DISPLAYS INDEPENDENT BEHAVIOR
   w. IDENTIFIES THEMSELVES IN A MIRROR
   x. EXPRESSES OWNERSHIP OR POSSESSION
   y. IMITATES OTHERS AND CHANGES PLAY AND RESPONSES BASED ON WHAT OTHERS ARE DOING.
   z. SHOWS PRIDE IN ACCOMPLISHMENTS
   aa. FOLLOWS DIRECTIVES IN A ROUTINE
   bb. STATES THEIR FIRST NAME
   cc. USES OBJECTS IN MAKE BELIEVE PLAY
   dd. KNOWS THEIR AGE
2. ACADEMIC
   a. TURNS THEIR HEAD TOWARDS A LIGHT SOURCE
   b. VISUALLY ATTENDS TO AN OBJECT FOR 5 SECONDS
   c. FOLLOWS A VISUAL STIMULUS
   d. OCCUPIES THEMSELVES FOR 5 MINUTES
   e. UNCOVERS A HIDDEN TOY
   f. SEARCHES FOR A REMOVED TOY
   g. LOOKS AT, POINTS TO, OR TOUCHES PICTURES IN A BOOK
   h. ATTENDS TO A PREFERRED ACTIVITY FOR 3 MINUTES

    i.   FINDS AN OBJECT HIDDEN UNDER 1 OF 2 CUPS
    j.   REACHES AROUND A BARRIER TO REACH A TOY
    k.   EXPERIMENTS WITH CAUSAL BEHAVIOR
    l.   RECOGNIZES THEMSELVES AS THE CAUSE OF EVENTS OR HAPPENINGS
    m. MATCHES 3 COLORS
    n.   PULLS A CLOTH TO OBTAIN AN OBJECT
    o.   NESTS OBJECTS INSIDE ANOTHER
    p.   SHOWS INTEREST IN AGE-APPROPRIATE BOOKS
    q.   RESPONDS POSITIVELY TO PHYSICAL CONTACT A STIMULATION
    r.   SHOWS AWARENESS OF NEW SITUATIONS
    s.   PHYSICALLY EXPLORES THEIR SURROUNDINGS
    t.   IMITATES SIMPLE FACIAL GESTURES
    u.   PLACES A CIRCLE AND A SQUARE IN A FORM BOARD
    v.   MATCHES A CIRCLE, SQUARE AND TRIANGLE
    w. IDENTIFIES SEVERAL OBJECTS WITH THEIR USE

3. FUNCTIONAL
    a.   TAKES FOOD FROM A SPOON AND EATS IT (ADULT FEEDS THE CHILD)
    b.   HOLDS OR SUPPORTS A BOTTLE TO FEED THEMSELVES
    c.   USES LIPS TO REMOVE FOOD FROM AN EATING UTENSIL HELP BY AN ADULT
    d.   FEEDS THEMSELVES BITE SIZE PIECES OF FOOD USING THEIR FINGERS
    e.   DRINKS FROM A CUP WITH ASSISTANCE
    f.   HELPS TO DRESS THEMSELVES BY EXTENDING AND ARM OR A LEG
    g.   REMOVES SHOES WITHOUT ASSISTANCE
    h.   FEEDS THEMSELVES WITH A SPOON OR A FORK.
    i.   IS ABLE TO MOVE AROUND THEIR ENVIRONMENT, REQUIRING ONLY OCCASIONAL SUPERVISION.
    j.   UNDERSTANDS THAT HOT ITEMS ARE DANGEROUS
    k.   PUTS TOYS AWAY WHEN REQUESTED
    l.   DISTINGUISHES BETWEEN FOOD AND NON-FOOD ITEMS
    m. REMOVES CLOTHING UNASSISTED
    n.   ACCURATELY RESPONDS TO YES/NO WHEN ASKED IF THEY NEED TO USE THE TOILET

4. FINE MOTOR
    a.   HOLD HANDS TOGETHER AT THE MIDLINE
    b.   HOLDS AN OBJECT FOR 1 MINUTE
    c.   RETRIEVES A SMALL OBJECT BY RAKING IT WITH THEIR FINGERS
    d.   TRANSFERS OBJECTS FROM ONE HAND TO ANOTHER
    e.   DROPS AN OBJECT INTENTIALLY WITH DEMONSTRATION
    f.   INTENTIALLY THROWS AN OBJECT

    g. REMOVES FORMS FROM A FORM BOARD
    h. POINTS WITH INDEX FINGER
    i. SCIBBLES LINEAR OR CIRCULAR PATTERNS SPONTANEOUSLY
    j. REACHES FOR AN OBJECT PLACED IN FRONT OF THEM
    k. INTENTIALLY DROPS A CUBE INTO A CUP WITH DEMONSTRATION
    l. PLACES A RAISIN IN A BOTTLE
    m. STACKS TWO CUBES
    n. PLACES FOUR RINGS ON A RING STACKER IN ANY ORDER

5. GROSS MOTOR
    a. HOLD THEIR HEAD ERECT WHEN HELD FOR UP TO ONE MINUTE
    b. BRINGS HANDS TOGETHER AT THE MIDLINE
    c. LIFTS AND TURNS HEAD SIDE TO SIDE WHILE IN THE PRONE POSITION
    d. MOVES AN OBJECT FROM HAND TO MOUTH
    e. SITS WITHOUT ASSISTANCE FOR 5 SECONDS
    f. MAKES STEPPING MOVEMENTS WHEN HELD IN AN UPRIGHT POSITION
    g. MOVES 3 OR MORE FEET BY CRAWLING
    h. WALKS 3 OR MORE STEPS WITH ASSISTANCE
    i. STANDS IN AN UPRIGHT POSITION WITHOUT SUPPORT FOR 30 SECONDS
    j. MOVES FROM SITTING TO STANDING WITHOUT SUPPORT
    k. WALKS WITHOUT SUPPORT FOR 10 FEET
    l. WALKS UP/DOWN FOUR STAIRS WITH SUPPORT
    m. RUNS TEN FEET WITHOUT FALLING
    n. WALKS UP AND DOWN STAIRS WITHOUT ASSISTANCE
    o. THROWS A BALL 5 FEET FORWARD WITH DIRECTION
    p. JUMPS FORWARD WITH BOTH FEET TOGETHER

6. LANGUAGE
    a. RESPONDS TO A SOUND OUTSIDE OF THEIR VISION
    b. IS SOOTHED BY A FAMILIAR ADULT'S VOICE
    c. TURNS THEIR HEAD IN THE DIRECTION OF A SOUND OR VOICE
    d. ATTENDS TO A SPEAKER FOR 10 SECONDS
    e. RESPONDS TO DIFFERENT TONES OF VOICE
    f. ASSOCIATES SPOKEN WORDS TO FAMILIAR OBJECTS
    g. IDENTIFIES FAMILIY MEMBERS OR PETS WHEN NAMED
    h. LOOKS AT OR POINTS TO AN OBJECT ACROSS THE ROOM WHEN IT IS NAMES
    i. FOLLOWS THREE OR MORE VERBAL COMMANDS
    j. PRODUCES ONE OR MORE VOWEL SOUNDS
    k. BABBLES
    l. WAVES BYE BYE
    m. IMITATES SPEECH SOUNDS

n. USES GESTURES TO INDICATE WANTS OR NEEDS
o. SPONTANEOUSLY INITIATES SOUNDS, WORDS OR GESTURES THAT ARE ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT
p. USES 10 WORDS
q. COMMUNICATES IN A TURN TAKING STYLE
r. USES TWO WORD UTTERANCES
s. USES WORDS TO GET THEIR NEEDS MET
t. USES THE PRONOUNDS I, YOU, ME
u. USES WORDS TO RELATE INFORMATION TO OTHERS
v.

BIRTH- 12 MONTHS

1 YEAR-2 YEARS

2 YEARS- 3 YEARS

3 YEARS- 4 YEARS

Appendix E: IRB Approval Letter

Institutional Review Board
720 Fourth Avenue South, AS 101, St. Cloud, MN 56301-4498

April 18, 2022

To: Elise Kosloski
Email: elise.kosloski@go.stcloudstate.edu

Faculty Mentor: JoAnn Johnson
jojohnson@stcloudstate.edu

Project Title: What attributes do educators use to assign early childhood special education students to a federal classroom setting (inclusion vs. non-inclusion)

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed your protocol to conduct research involving human subjects.

Your project has been: Approved
Expiration Date: **N/A**
Approval Type: **Exempt**
SCSU IRB#:   **36308555**

Please read through the following important information concerning IRB projects:

ALL PROJECTS:

- The principal investigator assumes the responsibilities for the protection of participants in this project. Any
- adverse events must be reported to the IRB as soon as possible (ex. research related injuries, harmful outcomes,
   significant withdrawal of subject population, etc.).
- The principal investigator must seek approval for any changes to the study (ex. research design, consent process,
   survey/interview instruments, funding source, etc.). The IRB reserves the right to review the research at any time

EXEMPT PROJECTS:

- Exempt review only requires the submission of a Continuing Review/Final Report form in advance of the expiration date indicated in this letter if an extension of time is needed.

EXPEDITED AND FULL BOARD REVIEW PROJECTS:

- The principal investigator must submit a Continuing Review/Final Report form
   in advance of the expiration date indicated on this letter to report conclusion of the research or request an extension.
- Approved consent forms display the official IRB stamp which documents approval and expiration dates. If a renewal is requested and approved, new consent forms will be officially stamped and reflect the new approval and
   expiration dates.

If we can be of further assistance, feel free to contact the IRB at 320-308-4932 or email
ResearchNow@stcloudstate.edu and please reference the SCSU IRB number when corresponding.

Sincerely,
IRB Chair:
Dr. Mili Mathew
Chair and Graduate Director
Assistant Professor
Communication Sciences and Disorders

IRB Institutional Official:
Dr. Claudia Tomany
Associate Provost for Research
Dean of Graduate Studies