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Attitudes and perspectives toward the special education collaborative model

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Attitudes and perspectives toward the special education collaborative model

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ATTITUDES AND PERSPECTIVES TOWARD THE
SPECIAL EDUCATION
COLLABORATIVE MODEL

A   Thesis

Presented   to

The   Faculty   and   the   Division   of   Special   Education
and   Rehabilitative   Services
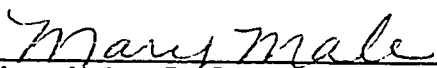San   Jose   State   University

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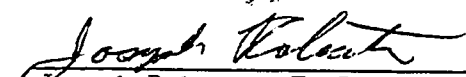
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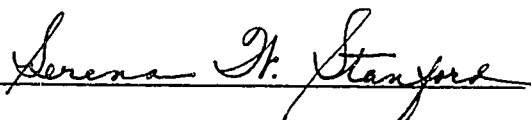
APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL
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ABSTRACT

ATTITUDES AND PERSPECTIVES TOWARD THE SPECIAL EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE MODEL

by Janet Ward

The purposes of this study were to investigate attitudes and perceptions toward the collaborative model to assist in the planning of the delivery of services to students with learning disabilities. A literature review was completed and a survey was designed to gather information about attitudes and perspectives within Soquel Elementary School District toward special education and the delivery of special education services. To gather data, a questionnaire was distributed to 57 certificated staff members at two schools in the district. The return rate of the survey was 49%. Results indicated that the schools involved in the survey had a favorable attitude toward special education services and collaboration. Additional studies are recommended in order to promote the implementation of collaboration.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

Over the past two decades, advocates for persons with disabilities have promoted system changes to encourage equal educational opportunities for students with special needs (Will, 1986). Recent developments in special education have led toward the Regular Education Initiative (REI). The REI movement would integrate students with mild and moderate disabilities into the general education classroom. While the REI has not been enacted into law, many districts support the REI philosophy. In some districts, this philosophy is translated as "in-class" support rather than "pull-out" programs. "In-class" support is usually provided to the general education classroom by the resource specialist or resource specialist's instructional aide. Services may be directly or indirectly received by students. "In-class" support for students with special needs is one of many models for special education services within what has become known as "the collaborative model." While the collaborative model is a broad concept with numerous possibilities of expanded services, the "in-class" support to regular education programs has been a common educational practice in response to the Regular Education Initiative.

The population of students identified as having learning disabilities is expanding as at-risk conditions for academic success are increasing (Reynolds, Wang & Walberg, 1987). Increasing risk factors, such as poverty and drug abuse, are contributing to increasing numbers of children with special needs. As we face an increase in the number of children with special needs, there is growing discussion whether the present system is able to serve them adequately. In the interest of addressing the educational needs of all students and working toward an "equal" system, educators are moving toward alternative delivery systems such as the collaborative model. Approaches to collaborative models vary in delivery as well as effectiveness. General and special educators must work together and investigate alternatives to separate educational systems. Separate systems may not only be a poor use of existing resources for meeting the needs of all students but may be denying students learning opportunities, access to the mainstream, and social acceptance (Stainback, Stainback & Forest, 1989).

Statement of the Problem

While special educators have made efforts to broaden services and create a more inclusive system through restructuring efforts such as the collaborative model, dialogue between regular and special education educators has been limited. Effective implementation of any collaborative approach requires that specialists and general educators work together. Collaboration implies that regular classroom teachers and special education

teachers share responsibility for students. Educators still need to agree on what shared responsibility means.

Within the collaborative model, a broad range of alternatives exist in which services can be delivered. Collaborative models include the specialist or instructional aide serving students who are identified as having special needs within the regular education setting to educators team-teaching and co-planning together. The delivery of services affects the degree in which professionals work together. The most effective collaboration involves a commitment from classroom teachers and support staff to provide adequate time for planning and working together (Feldman, 1992). If collaboration is to be effectively implemented at a school site, it must be a priority of staff and administration. Educational philosophies and values need to be aligned to create an atmosphere in which teachers are willing to share the responsibility for the success of each student in the classroom.

While some special educators are developing strategies to join with regular educators, little is being done to prepare regular educators for changes in special education service delivery models. Collaborative relationships take time, communication skills, flexibility and commitment. If system changes are moving in the direction of regular and special educators working in partnership, then all educators need to be included in the planning and receive appropriate training.

Purpose

Collaboration begins with a dialogue between educators. Presently, there is a great difference of opinion as to the effectiveness of collaboration between special educators, not to mention the absence of discussion among general educators. The purpose of this study was to survey both regular and special educators' attitudes regarding their perspectives on the collaborative model. General and special education teachers' responses to the questions on the survey provided baseline data to assist in planning. Results were shared with individuals involved in the survey, principals, resource specialists and the Director of Special Education Services.

Research Questions

This thesis utilized a questionnaire distributed to special and regular educators within Soquel Elementary School District to address the following questions:

1. What are the attitudes among general and special educators toward an increase in integration of students with learning disabilities and the development of professional collaborative relationships?

2. To what degree are general elementary and middle school teachers' attitudes similar regarding the collaborative model?

3. To what degree are special and general educators' attitudes similar regarding the collaborative model?

Definition of Terms

The following operational definitions should be considered in understanding the content of the literature review and context of the research.

"In-class": "In-class" support will be used in reference to students receiving special education services within the general education classroom.

Learning Disability: The regulations for Public Law 94-142 (The Education of the Handicapped Act) define a learning disability as a "disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, speak, think, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations."

"At-risk" Student: "At-risk" students are children who are likely to experience school failure and drop out. The primary indicators that place children at risk have been identified as the following: poverty, minority racial/ethnic group identity, non-English or limited-English proficiency.

Collaboration: Collaboration is a style for direct interaction between at least two co-equal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision-making as they work toward a common goal (Cook & Friend, 1991, p. 25).

Collaborative Model: The collaborative model is a special education service delivery model in which appropriate students receive

services within general education classrooms. The collaborative model expands existing services to better utilize resources and better serve students. The resource specialist and regular classroom teacher work together in cooperation to maximize existing resources. Teachers share in the responsibility of meeting the needs of students.

Push-in: A special educator serves students with learning disabilities within the regular classroom setting. Students may receive direct or indirect help within the regular classroom setting. Examples of "push-in" services include the following:

1. A specialist assists students in small groups within the regular classroom setting.

2. A specialist plans with the regular educator and provides supplemental lessons to all students.

3. A specialist plans with the regular educators utilizing teaching strategies such as special "hand-on" projects and cooperative groups, which include all students.

"Push-in" of special education services is not limited to the above examples, but to the degree by which educators work together.

Pull-out: Students with learning disabilities receive special education services outside of the regular classroom setting. In collaboration with the regular education teacher, services can provide students support to succeed in the core curriculum or can provide independent academic support such as remedial classes.

<u>Resource Specialist</u>: A resource specialist is a specialist who works with students with learning disabilities and acts as a consultant to teachers and provides materials and methods to help in the classroom.

<u>Service Delivery Model</u>: The service delivery model is a method or design for bringing educational programs and modifications to students with learning disabilities.

Limitations of the Study

Only two out of the four schools in Soquel Elementary School District participated in the survey. The rate of return for the two schools that participated was 49%. This study was limited by the rate of return and by the representative sample of teachers. The results generated from the questionnaire of this study cannot represent teachers' attitudes and perspectives throughout Soquel Elementary School District. The data from the survey is limited to the schools which participated in the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was to investigate attitudes and perspectives of special and general educators to provide baseline data to assist in future planning of the delivery of services to students with learning disabilities. Therefore, this chapter reviews pertinent research across topics related to collaboration including recent trends in educational reform, services for "at-risk" students and the proposed merger of general and special education.

While the population of students identified as being "at-risk" is increasing, educational resources are becoming limited. Current estimates place children who are likely to leave school prematurely or graduate without the social, academic and vocational skills needed to lead a productive life in our society to be about 30% of current enrollment (Sailor, 1991). The increase in students who are considered "at-risk" accounts for the growing enrollment in special education programs. Educators are investigating alternative models for special education services which would distribute existing resources more equally and would better meet the needs of all students. While the "pull-out" model for resource specialist services may be appropriate for some students, there is concern over the problems that exist within that model. Many school districts are in transition as they move toward partial or full collaboration between general and special education. To help understand the concept of

8

the collaboration model, it is useful to examine the movement toward the collaborative model and understand the rationale behind the change in service delivery models.

Educational Trends

Reforms in special education have not grown from a single, timely notion, but have emerged from a continuous development of laws protecting individual rights, educational theories, educational practice and response to the needs of a changing society (Stainback, Stainback & Forest, 1989). One such trend of a service delivery model for students with learning disabilities is the special education collaborative model. The collaborative model is a special education service delivery model in which appropriate students receive services within the general education classrooms. The resource specialist and the general education teacher work together in collaboration to better serve students.

There is presently little direct primary research that compares the achievement of students with learning disabilities who are receiving services through the collaborative model with those in a segregated setting. Despite the lack of direct research, there are very convincing arguments within the educational community surrounding the use of the collaborative model for serving students with learning handicaps. The collaboration movement implies a shared responsibility between general and special educators. As a result, much discussion both in favor and against the collaboration movement has occurred. Arguments for and against are based on

educational theory, related research, educational opinion, and practice.

Legal Inclusion

Advocacy efforts for educational change were drawn from the early civil rights movement. Changes that have occurred in special education can be greatly attributed to the efforts of parents of children with disabilities who, through the litigation process, fought for the individual rights of their children. Two key cases of litigation were *Pennsylvania Association of Retarded Citizens (PARC) v. Commonwealth* and *Mills v. Board of Education.* In PARC, a federal district court overruled a Pennsylvania law that had relieved schools of the responsibility of enrolling "uneducable" or "untrainable" children and determined that mentally retarded children could benefit from education. In *Mills v. Board of Education*, the federal district court ruled that students with handicaps could not be excluded from public school as a result of the district's financial pressing need. These cases set the groundwork for legislation to follow. Between 1966 and 1974, a series of federal laws concerning the services of children with disabilities were passed.

In 1975, Public Law 94-142, The Education for All Handicapped Children Act, was enacted. PL 94-142 eliminated the exclusion of children with disabilities from public education. Key principles incorporated into PL 94-142 are: (1) the right of access to public education programs, (2) the individualization of services, (3) the

principle of "least restrictive environment," (4) the scope of broadened services to be provided by the school and a set of procedures for determining them, (5) the general guidelines for identification of disability; and (6) the principles of primary state and local responsibilities (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987). While all key principles are worthy of discussion, for the purpose of exploring the collaborative service delivery model for students with learning handicaps, the principle of "least restrictive environment" and identification and referral process will be examined.

Least Restrictive Environment

Public Law 94-142 expressed the philosophy that, although each child's educational needs be determined on an individual basis, only when general education classrooms did not meet that child's needs should he/she be placed in separate classrooms. This notion was expressed in the law by the principle of "least restrictive environment" (LRE). The spirit of PL 94-142 was to protect individual rights to a free and appropriate education and establish legal inclusion in public education (Denti, 1991). This concept of LRE in the law was founded on educational philosophy of "normalization" and the legal protection of individual rights to access public institutions. While the intent of the law is one that protects students rights, a paradoxical relationship has arisen between the implementation of the law and the law's intent.

The implementation of PL 94-142 has continued to perpetuate two separate educational systems: special education and general

education. While the concept of LRE is evaluated in developing a student's Individual Education Program, the nature of a separate system segregates and can exclude students from educational opportunities as children's success becomes the sole responsibility of the specialists. Legislation has protected individual rights to a free and appropriate education in a least restrictive environment, but the process of delivering educational services has often resulted in negative labeling, alienation from age-level peers, limited opportunities, and denial of access to rich learning environments. An educational service delivery system which segregates students' can promote discrimination. It is discriminatory that some students, such as those labeled '"learning disabled," must earn the right to the educational mainstream (Stainback, & Stainback, 1990, p. 7).

The intent of the notion of LRE was to place students in special education classrooms only when general classrooms could not meet their educational needs. One qualifying factor for placement of students in special education self-contained classrooms is unsatisfactory progress in general education. Placement can be made without adequate intervention or analysis of students needs. One presumption with this approach is that students with learning disabilities cannot be taught in general classroom settings. Strong evidence to the contrary was argued over twenty years ago. Evidence was presented that, with earlier and more flexible school programs, students would make satisfactory progress in general

education classrooms (Dunn, 1968). Dunn's arguments and cited studies continue to be used currently to support movement toward change in special education delivery models. Placement of students in special education classrooms is based on the premise that if the student does not fit the "regular program" then special education is justifiable (Stainback, Stainback & Forest, 1989) rather than adjustment of the "regular program" to meet the needs of the individual. The dual system does not allow for unique individual learning characteristics which results in large numbers of nonlabled students only marginally adjusting to the demands of the regular program.

LRE gives consideration to the social and communicative development in children with disabilities (Sailor, 1991). Self-esteem and social membership directly influence students' academic achievement and citizenship in their community. The dual system that exists does not adequately prepare students to live in the real world. When students grow up and leave school, there is no "regular" and no "special" world. Students need the opportunity to be part of the group in which they will be working, interacting and problem-solving in postschool situations (Stainback, Stainback & Forest, 1989). Students are systematically segregated from peers based on a discrepancy in academic achievement. The rate of learning and academic progress within the general education classroom is evaluated in making student placement. Educators involved in the process sincerely feel that they are making decisions

in the best interest of students and that special education placement will result in greater academic progress. However, evidence indicates that placements are made to remove pressures on general education teachers and the rate of student progress may not differ after placement (Dunn, 1968). Efficacy studies on special day classes (Rubin, Senison & Betwee, 1966) concluded that children who were mildly handicapped did as well in regular grades as in special day classes.

The consequences of separation of students with learning disabilities into special settings to remedially learning programs, such as the "pull out" approach or special day class, have created social barriers to their successful education (Will, 1986). A movement toward alternative service delivery systems, such as the collaborative model, to meet the educational needs of students with learning disabilities has arisen from the intent of LRE and the negative outcomes of segregation.

Identification for Services

One of the most alarming statistics is the increase in numbers of students identified as learning disabled. The learning disability category has increased 142% between 1977 and 1987, while special education as a whole has only increased 20% during the same period (Sailor, 1991). According to the criteria set for identification of students to receive special education services, over 80% of the population could be identified as learning disabled and eligible to receive services (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987). Among students

identified as learning disabled are a disproportionate amount of minority children and males (Messick, 1984). Identification of students for special education varies widely across the nation in the learning disabled category, suggesting that it is often by chance (Ysseldyke, 1983).

Statistics suggest that "at-risk" children in some cases are identified on educational need not learning disability. According to Gartner and Lipsky (1987):

> At least half of the learning disabled population could be accurately described as slow learners, as children with second language backgrounds, as children who are naughty in class, as those who are absent more often or move from school to school, or as average learners in above average classrooms. (p. 373)

In some cases, students identified as learning disabled cannot be shown to differ from other low achievers on a wide variety of school-related characteristics (Sailor, 1991). As the population changes, demands for educational services are increasing. Indicators, such as the numbers and percentages of children living in poverty, an increase in number of children born to drug-dependent mothers and an increase in the school-age population, show that the number of children with "special needs" is increasing (Reynolds, Wang & Walberg, 1987). With an increase in the number of children identified as learning disabled, one must examine the

referral system and alternative ways to meet the educational needs of "at-risk" students (Messick, 1984).

The increase in the number of students identified as learning disabled has led toward alternative systems to provide for students' educational needs. The collaborative model provides direct support to the general education classroom without over-identification of the learning disabled. Collaboration between general and special educators accommodates all students within the general education classroom. Teaching strategies developed for students with learning disabilities would be beneficial for "at-risk" students in the general education setting.

Labeling

The negative outcomes produced from a separate education system for students with learning disabilities provide further support for use of the collaborative model. Labels separate children from their peers. Removing children from their general education class likely affects their self-image (Dunn, 1968). In an eight-year study in Riverside, California, the labeling process was analyzed. The study compared public schools with a number of other community agencies and concluded that public schools labeled more children than any other agency and shared those labels with the community. Children who were labeled special education in public schools were compared with similar children in private schools. The children in private schools were viewed by their teachers as experiencing some learning problems and treated

accordingly. The children in public education were referred for special education and separated out from the school. These studies also concluded that children from ethnic minorities and lower socio-economic levels would more likely be labeled as mentally retarded based on disproportionately lower scores on IQ tests (Mercer, 1973). Labels placed on children can affect educational outcomes. Labels segregate and place different expectations on these students for both achievement and social behavior. If the goals of educators are to prepare children for the future and provide socialization experiences which produce good citizens, then one must examine current systems for delivering educational services for "at risk" children.

The Regular Education Initiative

The movement to limit the use of special education placement is known as the Regular Educational Initiative (REI). The roots of this movement can be traced back to anti-labeling and deinstitutionalization movements, but the REI concept first received recognition in a 1981 paper by Reynolds and Wang (Hallahan, Kauffman, Lloyd & McKinney, 1988). At a 1985 conference, Secretary for the U.S. Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Madeline C. Will, stated that the "so called 'pull-out' approach to the educational difficulties of students with learning problems has failed in many instances to meet the educational needs of these students and has created, however unwittingly, barriers to their successful education" (Will, 1986, p.412).

This federal policy initiative called for partnership between general and special education. The policy suggested that the responsibility for educating "at risk" children be shared between general and special education (Sailor, 1991). At that same conference, Wang, Reynolds, and Walberg (1986) recommended the combining of special and general education "into a coordinated educational delivery system" and asked the federal government to institute trials of more integrated forms of education. The proposal or REI recommends that students with learning problems, as well as low achievers, can be better served in the general education classroom than the special education system.

The concept of REI has created controversy among special educators. While researchers such as Reynolds, Wang and Walberg, Will, Sailor and others continue to express strong support, other researchers are opposed. The concept of the REI threatens the fabric of special education as it exists today. Advocates for students with disabilities have fought hard for the quality of education which special education supports. Professional organizations and individuals have responded with rebuttal against claims of REI proponents. Lerner (1987) and Gallagher (1986) have responded to issues surrounding the REI. Opposition to REI concepts have argued against the rationale for change. Issues surrounding the over-identification of the learning disabled, labeling theory, and the delivery of special education services have been debated among special education professionals. Other important areas of

discussion have included the willingness and ability of general educators to accommodate a variety of learners and teaching strategies used in the general education classroom.

As the debate continues, both proponents and opponents are presenting arguments based on learning theory and educational application with little support from direct research. One such debate is the issue of the overrepresentation of students with learning disabilities. REI supporters such as Slavin (1990) and Wang (1988) argue that the REI is a response to a disproportionate number of students being identified as learning disabled. Proponents claim that the "success-for-all" approach that will occur under REI will result in greater academic success for all students and greatly reduce that number of students identified as learning disabled. Lerner (1987) argues that the increased number of students being identified is a response to the sharp drop in funding for remedial services for students experiencing learning difficulties. She argues that when special educators were asked to help these children, special education teachers began to provide instruction to a broader group of students resulting in an increase in the numbers of children as being learning disabled (Lerner, 1987). In valuing the needed services that special education offers for problem learners, administrators, teachers and parents wanted to obtain the desired learning disability services for these children. Lerner argues that, "the consequence of helping many children in need is the recommendation that all LD (learning disabled) children be denied

special education and receive instruction through the general education program" (Lerner, 1987, p. 4). The consequence to which Lerner refers is REI.

Proponents of REI argue that labeling children is harmful. Opponents of REI view labels as often helpful to students in understanding why they are experiencing difficulty at school. Gallagher (1986) questions if students are stigmatized by the label or by school failure itself. The embarrassment of failure children can experience on a daily basis in a general education classroom can be much more stigmatizing than a label used to qualify students for services (Lerner, 1987).

While the concept of least restrictive environment has always been a question of interpretation, position varies greatly among special educators in response to REI. Opponents of REI caution that the general education classroom can be more restrictive (Lerner, 1987). Students with learning disabilities can be overwhelmed in a general education classroom and may benefit from a self-contained class in which they can succeed. If children experience frustration and a phobia for school in the general education classroom environment, then the general education classroom environment becomes the more restrictive.

REI proposes full infusion and coordination of all available resources. The needs of "at-risk" children are many and resources typically in general education are few (Sailor, 1991). Resources needed for the educational improvement of all children are locked

up in federal categorical programs which are designed to benefit relatively few students (Sailor, 1991). REI proponents argue that separate "pull-out" programs are a relative failure and the coordination of special education resources within general education might benefit all students. Opponents to the REI concept share concern that REI will result in less services for the learning disabled. Special education is being asked to share the major financial responsibility of meeting the needs of all "at-risk" students as funds are diverted from special education allocations (Gallagher, 1986). Opponents of the REI are skeptical of restructuring movements which may result in less services for students who are learning disabled.

Accommodating   Students

The proposal under the REI is that all "at-risk" children can be taught effectively within the general education classroom using broad instructional systems along with the coordination of special education resources within the general education classroom (Sailor, 1991). General educators are the key to developing a collaborative system. The higher standards and performance of general education professionals have resulted in effective research-based teaching methods, such as cooperative learning and peer tutoring, to address a broader group of students (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987). Good teachers are able to respond to individual differences, adapt curriculum and make it possible for a student with special needs to work in the general education classroom. Teachers work toward

creating a safe environment that encourages responsibility and cooperation among students (O'Brien, Forest, Snow & Hasbury, 1989). The educational philosophy of "success for all" is challenging teachers to accept the responsibility of teaching students who traditionally may have been identified as learning disabled and received direct special education services in the past. The roles of both the general education teacher and the specialists are expanding in response to a changing population of students.

Supporting Research

The issue of whether to serve students with learning disabilities as part of the general education system or as part of the special education system continues to be debated in literature. While current research does not indicate one best way for serving all students with learning disabilities, it is attempting to answer some of the questions debated and provide support to change. Research is occurring in ways to facilitate the closer roles between general and special education. Questions surrounding the over-identification of students with learning disabilities and general educators' ability to accommodate students continue to surface in current research. Early interventions, general educators' attitudes toward collaboration and essential qualities for effective collaborative relationships are some areas of research. Current research reflects the trend toward the collaborative model between general and special education.

A study by Baker and Zigmond (1990) questioned if general education classes were equipped to accommodate children with learning disabilities. The purpose of this study was to identify student learning behaviors, parent attitudes, teachers' classroom organization and management, and teaching strategies used in the areas of reading, math and special subjects. The extent to which traditional teachers accommodate individual differences was examined to raise questions regarding what changes were necessary in instruction for the implementation of the REI. Data was collected at a 99.9% Black, K-5 elementary school with an enrollment of 266. Parents, teachers, and students responded to an attitude survey on the climate of the school. A total of 181 students completed attitude surveys designed for students. Teachers were interviewed, received a questionnaire and were systematically observed. The result indicated that, at this particular school, an average of 76% of the instruction was provided to the whole class across all grade levels. The use of worksheets and workbooks ranged from 31% to 70% of the time. Most instruction was sequential and varied little from textbooks. The survey suggested that even though the school's climate was seen as positive and teachers were seen as conscientious about their jobs, there was little action taken to accommodate individual differences. Data suggested that fundamental changes in the instruction was necessary for REI to work at this particular school.

While some teachers are in need of changes in their method of instruction and new strategies of management to accommodate the growing number of "at-risk" students, investigations are being made in ways to give support to teachers and students. One form of support is the concept of pre-referral intervention. In an effort to reduce the number of referrals to special education, one model researched has been pre-referral invention. Pre-referral intervention is a teacher's modification of instruction or classroom management to better accommodate students who are experiencing learning problems. The intent of pre-referral intervention is to eliminate inappropriate referrals and strengthen the teacher's ability to teach and deal with a greater diversity of students. One such pre-referral intervention is the use of different behavior consultation models for problem solving (Fuchs, Fuchs, Bahr, Fernstrom & Stecker, 1990). Behavior consultation is a network between teacher, student, and consultant. The consultant views the teacher and the student as the problem solvers. The consultant's role is to guide the teacher through four structured stages of problem solving: Problem identification, problem analysis, plan implementation, and problem evaluation. Under this model, the role of the specialist is one of consultant, not owner of the problem. The general educator is in charge of the instruction of all children in his/her classroom, including those who are not succeeding in the mainstream (Jenkins, Pious & Jewell, 1990).

Another study that examined the effectiveness of a pre-intervention known as "peer collaboration," was conducted by Johnson and Pugach (1991). An intervention group of 48 elementary and junior high school teachers who received training in peer collaboration were compared to 43 elementary school teachers who did not receive the training. Results indicated that teachers in the intervention group increased their range of tolerance for the range of children's cognitive abilities. Teachers in the intervention group successfully implemented interventions for 86% of the 70 problems they attempted to solve. General educators were able to problem solve and accommodate students with mild learning and behavior problems independent of a specialist using peer support. Special education is not necessarily the best resource to meet the growing needs of "at risk" students. Peer collaboration is an example of one way general educators can accommodate the great diversity of students in the general education classroom.

Professional Collaboration

While numerous points of debate continue over the restructuring of special education, consensus regarding the need for expanded service models exists between all educators.

The REI made an impact on alternative delivery models and brought attention to the collaborative model. The collaborative model supports some of the goals outlined under the REI. While REI is scrutinized, so is the collaborative model since it is a service delivery model which supports restructuring changes (Friend,

1988). The collaborative model emerged naturally in education as it followed the direction set by other professionals. For more than a decade, the school psychology literature has been promoting the concept of collaboration. Problems with implementation begin with acceptance of the concept. The intent of the service model is to develop collaboration across school professionals, yet so far it has been associated with special services. Dialogue between general and special education is the beginning to implementation.

However, despite the theoretical and practical reasons for instituting change and designing alternatives, the collaborative service model is not routinely being used. The collaborative model has also been seen as a step in viewing teachers as full partners in the development of alternatives for students who are experiencing difficulties at school. Cook and Friend (1990) use the following definition for discussing collaboration:

> Collaboration is a style for direct interaction between at least two co-equal parties voluntarily engaged in shared decision-making as they work toward a common goal. (p. 25)

The participants must have a mutual goal and be voluntarily participating in the activity. Collaboration is general and special education sharing the responsibility in educating "at risk" children (Will, 1986). Collaboration as a topic has been explored among special educators and other advocates for students with disabilities, but it has not been routinely discussed among general educators. If

general educators are the voluntary participants, it is necessary to include them in the discussion.

General educators have been absent in the discussion of the regular education initiative. The REI has promoted restructuring changes such as the collaborative model. The involvement of general educators' attitudes toward collaboration is essential for instituting any change in the current system.

Professional collaboration creates the challenge of effectively coordinating services. Agreement must be reached as roles of both general and special education teachers expand to serve a broader group of students. Essential to collaboration is the basic idea of professionals working together. A study was designed to validate essential collaborative competencies needed by both general and special educators (West & Cannon, 1988). Using a Delphi technique, a 100-member interdisciplinary, expert panel from 47 states identified 47 competencies in eight categories. Those competencies receiving highest rating included skills in interactive communication, collaborative problem solving, and personal characteristics such as the ability to establish rapport, caring and the willingness to learn from others Competencies receiving less support were systems analysis, consultation research, theory, and models. The development of training for general and special educators working in collaboration was valued but not essential.

The goal of true collaboration where general educators and special educators become true partners presents a great challenge.

Teachers are being asked to show greater flexibility and administrators are being asked to reexamine the use of existing resources, presenting a new set of problems. Systematic guidelines have been established as teachers move toward the challenge of professional collaboration.

In moving toward a change in service delivery model, the following steps were recommended (Johnson, Pugach & Devlin, 1990):

1. Collaborative efforts must be sanctioned at the administrative level. Teachers need support and freedom to engage in mutual problem solving. They must be encouraged to experiment with various teaching arrangements to gain the confidence needed to break away from traditional ways of dealing with student diversity.

2 Teachers should be given assistance with clerical work and other non-instructional tasks to leave more time to interact with each other. Teacher aides, parents, volunteers, or older students might be used for this purpose.

3. Teachers should be encouraged to organize meetings for the purpose of mutual problem solving. Prearranged after-school meetings or meetings scheduled during set breaks would provide a set interaction time for teachers to discuss problems and other issues they are facing.

4. Specialists and classroom teachers should be given the opportunity to co-teach. This could provide mutual understanding of the unique expertise each other has to offer.

5. The use of specialized terminology while interacting with other professionals should be avoided if collaboration is to be facilitated. Using jargon that another professional does not understand implies an "expert to novice" relationship. Such hierarchical relationships rarely are conducive to collaboration.

6. Faculty or training meetings could be reserved for collaborative problem solving. Teachers and other professionals could work in teams to develop strategies, capitalizing on talents and expertise found within their own school. (p.10)

Pre-training for implementation of the collaborative model has focused on roles clarification, communication skills, problem solving techniques and teaching strategies that work with "at risk" students in mainstream settings.

The success of collaboration depends on educators working in partnership. Positions seem divided on the issue of where students with learning problems are best served. Ultimately, any success in educational reform depends on teachers' and administrators' attitudes and opinions. Resistance to collaboration is understandable as teachers are faced with overcrowded and often unmanageable classrooms. Educational demands on the present

system are increasing along with the number of students being identified as learning disabled. The gap between general and special education will continue to widen unless educators begin to change their vision to include all children (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987). While collaboration may not be the answer to meeting the needs of all children, it is worth exploring as an extended service model which may provide additional resources to a diverse population and a beginning to better distribute existing resources.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

At the same time that resources for students are becoming limited, societal pressures are increasing the stress and demands on schools. Educators are asking themselves how schools will accommodate the increasing number of students identified as learning disabled and those students in need who fall through the cracks and eventually drop out (Johnson, Pugach & Devlin, 1990). Both general and special educators are expressing the need for a change of service delivery models for "at risk" students (Friend, 1988). Collaboration is emerging as a theme in school restructuring as a better use of already existing resources. It is in the interest of all children that general and special educators work together and investigate alternatives to separate systems such as the collaboration model.

Collaboration implies professionals working together toward a common goal, yet there has been limited dialogue between general and special education. The involvement of general educators is essential to the success of ideals which embody the Regular Education Initiative but most general educators are not familiar with the REI or components within it such as collaboration. The REI has been a special education movement with the absence of advocates from general education. The following study surveyed general and

special educators' attitudes and opinions towards the present delivery system of special education services and the concepts surrounding collaboration. This study provided a baseline of opinions and attitudes among educators within Soquel Elementary School District. From the data gathered, teachers' perspectives on collaboration were evaluated.

Procedures

A survey containing 28 scale scored items was adapted from a similar survey (Feldman, 1992) which was designed for the purpose of surveying special educators' attitudes toward change and collaboration. The difference between Feldman's survey and the survey designed for this study is the sample group for which it is intended. The questionnaire for this study was designed for a broad group of both general and special educators. While many of the questions and language are the same as Feldman's, some of the language and questions which were specific to special education were omitted. Omitted from the original survey were questions on the perceptions of student attitudes as seen by teachers on increased integration of special education students. The questionnaire used in this study focused on teacher attitudes and opinions on collaboration and teachers' satisfaction with the current system. The questionnaire embodied pertinent questions discussed in the literature review.

The 28 questions of the survey focused on six areas of concern. In addition to the questions on collaboration, respondents were asked their teaching experience in year, current grade level and speciality area.

1. Five questions represented present outcomes for students with learning disabilities, such as achievement in core curriculum, self-concept, social acceptance, and rates of progress.

2. Seven questions focused on teacher satisfaction with present administrative structure.

3. Four questions dealt with teacher satisfaction on programs for "at risk" students.

4. Two questions were on the knowledge and ability of teachers to deal with special education students.

5. Four questions reflected teacher attitude toward change of the present system.

6. Six questions asked for teacher opinion on services delivered under the resource model. Services range from most restrictive to least restrictive in environment and require no degree or some degree of collaboration between general and special education.

Population

This study was limited to the Soquel Elementary School District in Capitola and Soquel, California. Districts are unique and differ in experience with collaboration, training and attitude. Soquel Elementary School District is made up of three elementary schools and one middle school. Given the small size of the district, the

school sites selected were to represent teacher attitude toward collaboration within Soquel Elementary School District. Conclusions of this study were not generalizable to other districts.

The questionnaire was distributed to all certificated staff members at New Brighton Middle School and Soquel Elementary. New Brighton Middle School has 30 general education teachers, two resource specialists, one speech therapist and one counselor. Soquel Elementary School is the largest of the elementary schools in the district and has 17 general education teachers, three special day class teachers, one resource specialists, one speech and language specialist and a certificated librarian. A total of 57 certificated staff members between the two schools received the survey. The survey was introduced and collected at a staff meeting at the elementary site and distributed through on-site mail at the middle school site. The resource specialist at the middle school site facilitated in the collection of questionnaires.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed to provide information about Soquel School District's perspective on collaboration. Data were shared with the District's Special Education Administrator and with the two schools involved in the survey Responses to the questionnaire were tabulated and means calculated. A comparison of means were made between elementary, middle school and special education staff.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At the same time the numbers of "at risk" students are increasing and educational resources are becoming limited, it has become necessary to examine alternative system delivery models in order to meet the growing needs of students more effectively. One movement toward change has been the use of the collaborative model. Within Soquel Elementary School District, this has come to mean "in-class" support rather than "pull-out" in resource specialist programs for students with learning disabilities. The perspectives and opinions of educators on collaboration provide a frame of reference to approach changes in system delivery models for special education services. The purpose of this study was to collect data from a questionnaire which surveyed general and special education teachers' attitudes and perspectives toward the collaborative model in Soquel Elementary School District.

Results

Of the 57 certificated staff members who received the survey, 28 responded, making the return rate of the survey 49 percent. Of the 49 percent who returned the survey, 13 were New Brighton Middle School teachers and 15 were Soquel Elementary School teachers. The group of teachers were comprised of 21 general education teachers and seven special education teachers. Of the

35

teachers who filled out the survey, 17 of the teachers were experienced teachers who had been teaching over ten years, three teachers had taught for less than three years and eight teachers had taught between four and eight years. Questions on the survey solicited responses on the one-to-five rating scale. Tables 1 through 6 present a tally of the responses of all educators surveyed and the mean response for each question. The survey responses provided baseline data to determine the climate toward change for expanding collaborative strategies in serving "at-risk" students within Soquel Elementary School District.

Survey Question 1

Survey Question 1 was concerned with teacher satisfaction of student outcomes with regard to their rates of progress, self-concepts and social skills, relationships with peers and participation and success in the core curriculum. The results indicated in Table 1 show that most teachers surveyed were somewhat satisfied with the outcomes for their students with learning disabilities.

Table 1

Question 1

<u>Collaboration Survey Results N=28</u>

Five is the most positive on the one-through-five rating scale.

		5	4	3	2	1	
		<u>Very</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Not Very</u>			<u>MEAN</u>
1.	Teacher satisfaction with their special education students:						
	a. rates of progress	2	7	1 5	2	2	3.18
	b. self-concept and social skill	2	9	8	9	0	3.14
	c. interaction/relationships	5	7	1 2	4	0	3.46
	d. core curriculum participation	3	8	1 3	3	1	3.32
	e. core curriculum success	2	5	1 4	5	2	3.00

Survey Question 2

Survey Question 2 was concerned with teacher satisfaction with present special education programs. The results from the survey presented in Table 2 indicate that teachers were more satisfied with the overall effectiveness of special education and related service providers in the District and less satisfied with the current rules, laws and regulations.

Table 2

Question 2

Collaboration Survey Results N=28

	5	4	3	2	1	
	Very	Somewhat		Not Very		MEAN
2. Teacher satisfaction with:						
a. flexibility/responsiveness	4	5	1 1	7	1	3.14
b. rules, laws and regulations	1	4	6	1 1	6	2.39
c. program congruence	2	5	1 2	8	1	2.96
d. child study team	5	1 0	7	4	2	3.43
e. present level of inclusion	6	8	1 3	1	0	3.68
f. District's special education delivery system	3	2	2 0	3	0	3.18
g. effectiveness of District's special education service providers	9	1 0	7	2	0	3.93

Survey Question 3

Survey Question 3 dealt with teacher satisfaction with programs and rate of progress for "at-risk" students.   The data collected from the survey and presented in Table 3 indicated that teachers were less satisfied with programs and student outcomes for "at-risk" students.

Table 3

Question 3

Collaboration Survey Results N=28

		5	4	3	2	1	
		Very	Somewhat		Not Very		MEAN
3.	Teacher satisfaction with "at risk" students':						
	a. core curriculum progress	1	2	13	12	0	2.71
	b. access to diverse instruction strategies and materials	2	5	12	7	2	2.93
	c. access to early intervention programs	2	3	8	14	2	2.71
	d. overall program	1	6	12	8	2	2.96

Survey Question 4

Survey Question 4 was concerned with teachers' personal and professional satisfaction with their knowledge of learning disabilities and skill levels in dealing with students with specific learning disabilities. Most teachers felt they were satisfied with their knowledge about learning disabilities and had the skill level to deal with students with learning disabilities. Table 4 presents the results of survey Question 4.

Table 4

Question 4

<u>Collaboration Survey Results N=28</u>

	5	4	3	2	1	
	<u>Very</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Not Very</u>			<u>MEAN</u>
4. Teacher personal and professional satisfaction with their:						
a. specific learning knowledge	3	12	4	9	0	3.32
b. level of skills to deal with special education students	1	13	9	4	2	3.36

<u>Survey Question 5</u>

Question 5 surveyed educators' attitudes toward a closer partnership between general and special education. The data collected from the survey and presented in Table 5 indicated that teachers have a positive attitude toward the following: greater integration of students with learning disabilities, general and special education working closer together and the restructuring of the regular and special education balance. While the results indicated a very positive attitude toward general and special educators working in closer partnership, teachers also had a positive attitude toward an increase in "pull-out" programs.

Table 5

Question 5

<u>Collaboration Survey Results N=28</u>

		5	4	3	2	1	
		<u>Very</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Not Very</u>			<u>MEAN</u>
5.	**Teacher attitude toward:**						
a.	greater integration of students with disabilities	12	8	5	3	1	4.07
b.	working more closely with special education staff	13	9	6	0	0	4.25
c.	increasing time in "pull-out" programs	3	9	11	5	1	3.39
d.	restructuring special/ general education balance	9	10	8	0	1	3.93

Survey Question 6

Survey Question 6 asked teachers' opinions on specific types of services that can be provided by resource specialists. Most teachers had a positive opinion on all services outlined in the question. Teachers favored "pull-out" as well as opportunities for general and special education to work more closely together. The highest agreement among educators surveyed was the opinion that resource specialists modify and adapt material as needed for students. Results of survey Question 6 are presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Question 6

<u>Collaboration Survey Results N=28</u>

	5 <u>Very</u>	4 <u>Somewhat</u>	3	2 <u>Not Very</u>	1	<u>MEAN</u>
6. Teacher opinion of:						
a. pull out of special education students with instruction aligned to general education curriculum	1 1	6	7	2	2	3.79
b. specialist provides individual instruction in problem areas within the general education classroom for special education students	1 4	6	5	1	2	4.04
c. specialist provides small group instruction for all "at risk" students within the general education classroom	7	8	5	6	2	3.43
d. specialist supports all all students' learning with supplemental lessons to the curriculum up to once a week	8	4	9	4	3	3.36
e. general and special educators plan and teach together to maximize strategies which include all students such as special hands-on projects related to curriculum 1 to 3 hours per week	1 2	9	3	3	1	4.00
f. specialists modify and adapt material	1 9	9	0	0	0	4.68

Teacher Comments

Many general education teachers provided comments expressing a variety of concerns regarding implementation of the collaborative model. Most comments centered around the issue of time for planning and the feeling that another burden was being placed on the classroom teacher during a time of cutbacks. Some teachers commented that suggestions and adaptations from resource specialists were often unrealistic for the general education classroom. Teachers were concerned that students' needs could not be adequately met in the classroom, given general education teachers' understanding of collaboration.

Comparison Between the Means of the Groups

While the the means of the groups did not much vary, there were some differences worthy of comparison. Table 7 presents the data illustrating the similarities of means between groups surveyed.

The means between general elementary education teachers and general middle school teachers showed little difference when compared, as shown in Table 7. The greatest differences in the mean between the two regular education groups was in Survey Question 1. The general middle school group was more satisfied with their special education students' self-concept and social skill development than was the general elementary group. The general middle school group also had a more favorable perception of the interaction and relationship between their special education students and non-handicapped peers than the general elementary

group. The general elementary group was more in favor of additional "pull-out" time than that of the general middle school group.

When comparing the general education groups with the special education group surveyed, most responses to questions between the groups were in alignment. The greatest differences between the groups were in attitude toward favoring the restructuring of general and special education. Although all groups had a positive attitude toward restructuring, it was greatest among special education group. The special education group also indicated a more negative attitude toward increased use of "pull-out" when compared to the regular education group. The group of special education, when compared to general education, in general, had a more favorable attitude toward collaboration and change.

Table 7
Comparison of Means

Comparison of Means Between Groups

Five is the most positive	Elementary N=11	Middle School N=10	Special N=7
1. Teacher satisfaction with their special education students':			
a. rates of progress	3.54	3.00	3.00
b. self-concept & social skill development	3.72	2.86	2.84
c. peer interaction/relationships	4.09	3.07	3.22
d. participation in core curriculum	3.06	3.07	3.83
e. success in core curriculum	3.00	3.00	3.00
2. Teacher satisfaction with:			
a. present system flexibility/responsiveness	3.27	3.40	2.75
b. he currents rules, laws and regulations	2.09	2.90	2.14
c. congruence of special and general education	3.24	3.16	2.48
d. effectiveness of child-study teams	3.64	3.20	3.43
e. District's inclusion level of special education	3.77	3.94	3.33
f. District's special ed. delivery system	3.21	3.43	2.89
g. overall effectiveness of special educators and related service providers in this district	3.95	4.24	3.60
3. Teacher satisfaction with "at risk" students':			
a. core curriculum progress rates	2.56	2.81	2.76
b. access to diverse instructional strategies and materials	2.94	3.25	2.60
c. access to early intervention programs	2.87	3.16	2.10
d. overall program	2.91	3.00	3.00
4. Teacher personal and professional satisfaction with their:			
a. knowledge of specific learning disabilities	3.15	3.27	3.54
b. skill level with special education students	3.24	3.18	3.56

Table 7 continued

Comparison of Means Between Groups

Five is the most positive	Elementary	Middle School	Special
5. Teacher attitude toward:			
a. greater integration of students w/ disabilities	3.96	3.86	4.39
b. closer work with special education staff	4.16	4.18	4.41
c. increasing time in "pull-out"	3.58	3.80	2.79
d. restructuring the special/general education balance	3.85	3.52	4.42
6. Teacher opinion of:			
a. "pull out" of special education.students with instruction aligned to core curriculum	4.32	3.44	3.61
b. specialist provides individual instruction in problems areas within general education	4.15	3.57	4.40
c. specialist provides small group instruction for all "at risk", within the general education classroom 1-3 hours per week	3.57	3.42	3.30
d. special education teacher supports all students learning by teaching supplemental lessons	3.31	3.25	3.52
e. general and special educator plan and teach together	4.05	3.56	4.39
f. specialists modify and adapt materials	4.35	4.83	4.86

Discussion:

Results in the survey tended to reflect trends found in the literature review. While most teachers in all groups had a positive attitude toward special education services provided in Soquel Elementary School District, they were not as satisfied with services available to students "at-risk." The increasing numbers of "at-risk" students are challenging educators to examine better use of existing resources (Messick, 1984). The special education techniques

brought into the classroom through collaboration can benefit larger numbers of groups of students. Restructuring existing resources is worthy of consideration in addressing the problem of limited progress and resources for "at risk" students.

Gartner and Lipsky stated that the higher standards and performance of general educators have resulted in effective research-based teaching methods (1987). Most general education teachers felt they had adequate skills to teach students with specific learning disabilities and respond to individual needs. Teaching methods such as cooperative learning and peer tutoring address a broader group of students (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987). The study on peer collaboration supports that most teachers have the ability and knowledge to accommodate problem learners, given a structure for problem analysis. Although most general educators were satisfied with their ability to deal with students with learning disabilities, teachers continued to favor the "pull-out" for some students. While most teachers favored some collaborative strategies, neither general nor special education favored one service delivery model over another. Results from the survey indicated that educators valued a full range of services for students with learning disabilities but welcomed the challenge to expand the existing model.

Although teachers were less satisfied with the laws and regulations of the current system and alignment and coordination of special and general education, teachers overall were satisfied with the special education services within the District. Teachers tended

to have a positive attitude toward increased integration of students with disabilities and general and special education working more closely together.

While most teachers were positive about working in partnership with special education, there were some teachers who opposed changes in the current system delivery model or had a neutral opinion. The success of collaboration depends upon educators working together toward a common goal. It makes common sense for special education to reach out to those teachers who welcome change.

Differences of opinion in attitude between general and special education teachers may have been a result of teachers' different knowledge base. Change can be promoted by providing educators with information which addresses their concerns and develops a common philosophy. The positive interaction of professionals is critical to the outcome of collaboration and to the development of a school-wide philosophy in which the education of students "at risk" and learning disabled are the shared responsibility of all staff at the school.

Recommendations

Generally, the attitude and perceptions of the teachers in Soquel Elementary School District are positive toward collaboration between general and special education. Many teachers feel they have the skills and teaching strategies to accommodate "at-risk" students including those with learning disabilities. The problem of lack of

support and growing numbers of "at-risk" students is hindering classroom success. The development of a closer partnership between general and special education is necessary to better serve "at-risk" students (Friend, 1988). The following recommendations are based upon the results of this study to facilitate further progress toward increased collaboration between general and special education.

1. Plans for increased collaboration should be developed by individual schools with administrative support (Johnson, Pugach & Devlin, 1990).

2. Specific service options at the school site should be developed and outlined.

3. A plan should be developed to match the service delivery option with the academic needs of the student with learning disabilities (Feldman, 1993).

4. Further research is necessary to survey teachers' needs and match with specific service options and student's needs.

Differences in attitudes between the elementary and middle school teachers surveyed reflected school climate, students' needs, teaching style and administrative structure. It is recommended that any changes in service delivery options be pursued and based on site need rather than district policy. Teacher comments emphasized the need for administrative support to provide planning time needed for the collaboration between professionals (Johnson, Pugach & Devlin, 1990).

While the survey addressed attitudes toward collaboration, it did not assess teacher's program needs. The collaborative service options outlined in the survey were not necessarily services which would be effective at a particular school. Expanded service delivery options which would be effective at particular school site need to be determined. When available service options are determined, a match between student's need, teacher's program and delivery service option can be made.

While this study did provide some baseline data on teacher attitude at Soquel Elementary and New Brighton Middle School on the climate toward change, further research is needed to develop a plan for implementation.

Limitations of the Study

While this study attempted to survey teacher perceptions and attitudes toward the collaborative model within Soquel Elementary School District, there were limitations with the reliability and validity of the data it provided. The number in the sample used was too narrow to measure the teacher perspectives and attitudes towards collaboration district-wide. It did survey attitudes and perspectives at New Brighton Middle School and Soquel Elementary School. The study would have been improved if all District schools had participated in the survey providing a more representative sample.

The method of distribution of surveys accounts for the return rate from the elementary school being greater than that of the middle school. The elementary school surveys were distributed at a

faculty meeting while middle school surveys were distributed by inter-office mail accompanied by a letter of explanation. The month of the distribution may have also influenced the rate of return. The surveys were distributed in June, which is a particularly busy time for teachers. Better distribution of questionnaires would have been at staff meetings earlier in the year.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purposes of this study were to investigate attitudes and perceptions toward the collaborative model to assist in planning the delivery of services to students with learning disabilities. A literature review was completed and a survey was designed to gather information about attitudes and perspectives within Soquel Elementary School District toward special education and the delivery of special education services. The survey was designed to address the following issues:

1. The teacher perception of present outcomes for students with learning disabilities.

2. Teacher satisfaction with present administrative structure.

3. Teacher satisfaction on programs for "at risk" students.

4. The knowledge and ability of teachers to deal with students with special needs.

5. Teacher attitude toward change of present system.

6. Teacher opinion on a range of services delivered under the resource model.

The 28-question survey on attitudes and perspectives toward collaboration was completed by 21 general education teachers and seven special education staff. Fifty-eight staff members received the survey, making the return rate 49%. The general classroom

teachers had a positive attitude about working more closely with special education. Both general and special education teachers valued the need for "pull-out" for some students. While nearly all teachers were in favor of increased integration, teachers commented that the existing constraints of the system does not support more inclusion of special education students. Overall, regular classroom teachers were more satisfied with the present system than special education teachers.

While neither general or special education teachers are willing to replace the current system, teachers realize the need to serve the growing population of "at risk" students. Teachers want a continuation of "pull-out" instruction for students with special needs but also realize the value in working more closely with special education and expanding services to include "at risk" students. General education teachers within Soquel Elementary School District are willing to develop a closer partnership with special education, given adequate support for planning and the continuation of direct support to students with learning disabilities.

Collaboration has been topic of debate among special educators. There has been little in terms of direct research surrounding the collaborative model. Educators' opinions on collaboration has been based on learning theory and experience. Regardless of current debate, the collaborative model as an expanded service model is being implemented in some districts to better use existing resources and serve students.

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APPENDIX

SURVEY PROTOCOL

Collaboration Survey

Please circle the response that bests fits.
GENDER: M   F

TEACHING EXPERIENCE: 0-3 years   4-10 years   over 10

GRADE LEVEL: middle school   elementary school

TEACHING SPECIALITY: regular education   special day class   RSP   support staff

<u>Very</u>   <u>Somewhat</u>   <u>Not Very</u>

1. In terms of your special ed. students, how **SATISFIED** are you with their:

	Very	Somewhat		Not Very	
a. rates of progress	5	4	3	2	1
b. self concepts & social skill development	5	4	3	2	1
c. interaction & relationships with peers	5	4	3	2	1
d. participation in the core curriculum	5	4	3	2	1
e. success in the core curriculum	5	4	3	2	1

comments?

2. In terms of the present administrative structure of general and special education, how **SATISFIED** are you with:

	Very	Somewhat		Not Very	
a. flexibility/responsiveness of the present system	5	4	3	2	1
b. rules, laws and regulations	5	4	3	2	1
c. the present congruence of special & general education programming	5	4	3	2	1
d. effectiveness of child study teams	5	4	3	2	1
e. present level of inclusion of special ed. students in this districts school activities and programs.	5	4	3	2	1
f. this districts special education delivery system.	5	4	3	2	1
g. the overall effectiveness of special educators and related service providers in this district.	5	4	3	2	1

comments?

3. In terms of "at risk" students at your school how **SATISFIED** are you with with their:

	Very	Somewhat		Not Very	
a. rates of progress through the core curriculum	5	4	3	2	1
b. access to diverse instructional strategies & materials	5	4	3	2	1
c. access to early intervention programs	5	4	3	2	1
d. overall program comments?	5	4	3	2	1

Collaboration Survey Continued:

Strongly Favor   Neutral   Strongly Oppose

4. In both a personal and professional sense how **SATISFIED** are you currently with:

   a. your knowledge of specific learning disabilities   5   4   3   2   1

   b. your level of skills dealing in with special ed. students.   5   4   3   2   1
      comments?

5. Please rate your **ATTITUDE** toward the following :

	Strongly Favor		Neutral		Strongly Oppose
a. greater integration of students with disabilities	5	4	3	2	1
b. working more closely with special education staff	5	4	3	2	1
c. increasing time in pull-out or segregated programs	5	4	3	2	1
d. restructuring the special ed./regular ed. balance	5	4	3	2	1

     comments?

6. Please rate your **OPINION** of each of the following ideas:

   a. pull out of special education students for special instruction aligned to the general curriculum   5   4   3   2   1

   b. specialist provides individual instruction in problem areas within the general education classroom   5   4   3   2   1

   c. specialist provides small group instruction for all "at risk", within the general education classroom 1 to 3 hours per week   5   4   3   2   1

   d. specialists supports all students learning by teaching supplemental lessons to the curriculum. such as study and organization skills up to once a week.   5   4   3   2   1

   e. general and special educator plan and teach together to maximize strategies which include all students such as special hands-on projects related to curriculum 1 to 3 hour per week   5   4   3   2   1

   f. specialists modify and adapt materials to assist students who are experiencing learning problems   5   4   3   2   1
     comments?