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The Role of Transformational Leadership in the Collaborative Development of a Full Inclusion Program: An Action Research Study

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THE ROLE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE COLLABORATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF A FULL INCLUSION PROGRAM: AN ACTION RESEARCH STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a critical action research study on full inclusion for students with learning disabilities. The study describes how full inclusion for 16 students with learning disabilities in three regular classes was implemented in an Illinois elementary school over a one year period. The purpose of this study is to describe how transformational leadership, collaborative decision-making and action research helped in the development of full inclusion.

Action research was the method used to 1) observe and collect data about the project, 2) to analyze what was happening, and 3) help guide the inclusion teaching team in taking actions to improve the program for the students. Both qualitative and quantitative data was used in the study.

Collaborative decision-making by the teaching team resulted in the design and implementation of the full inclusion project. We were able to integrate the students in regular classes through team teaching, instructional grouping and cooperative learning. The project showed that planning time and additional personnel were needed to educate this many students adequately.

Teacher perceptions of inclusion were that socialization of the students with learning disabilities with their typical peers improved as a result of being in the same classes, while individual academic growth was less than expected.

The study concluded that transformational leadership and collaborative decision-making by teachers were essential to the development of full inclusion. Full Inclusion of learning disabilities students in regular education classes was possible because of the philosophical commitment of the principal and teachers and their thoughtful dedication to the task.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author wishes to acknowledge all the people who contributed to this dissertation. This study reflects the dedication and hard work of the staff and students of the school and affirms that high quality educational reform and proactive teaching are taking place in the public schools today.

The support of family and friends was a constant source of motivation and spiritual energy that helped see me through the completion of this dissertation. My wife, Delores and daughter, Heather Ann deserve my special thanks for the love and patience they expressed throughout my educational and professional experience. Finally, I thank God for the gift of prayer that helps to support and sustain human effort.

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally . . . "

Saint James 1: 5

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CHAPTER 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Many public schools have come to realize the need for educating children with disabilities in home school regular education classes. This approach is known as inclusion. In recent years, the trend to include students with disabilities with typical classmates is being practiced with more frequency. However, traditional special education programs which segregate students into separate classes continue to represent the majority, while inclusion programs remain the exception. The purpose of this study is to describe how transformational leadership, collaborative decision-making and action research can enable the development of full inclusion in a school.

What Is Inclusion?

One way to understand full inclusion is to define it in context with other current special education trends--mainstreaming and regular education initiative (REI).All three are special education methods that are often considered similar, but are actually quite different.

Mainstreaming is placing a student with disabilities who is in a separate, self-contained special education class into a regular education class for instruction in a subject or subjects for which he is capable. It is a method of integrating a special education student into the regular class. Mainstreaming starts out with limited exposure to the regular class, and increases as the student's ability to cope with challenges of the regular education class increases.

Regular Education Initiative (REI) is the practice of placing children with disabilities in their regular class for special education instruction. Typically, these students are able to function in a regular class except for specific learning problems such as speech and language impairments and learning disabilities. Before REI, the student with disabilities was removed from the class for special

instruction which interrupted the student's continuity in the class. Regular education initiative takes the services to the student in the regular classroom. The special education teacher goes to the regular classroom, works with the classroom teacher on adapting and modifying lesson plans and assessment methods, and assists the student with the regular assignment.

Defining Inclusion

Full inclusion has several meanings. It takes into consideration the concepts of least restrictive environment, home school, and education with peers as important aspects of special education. For instance, it can mean that all students regardless of disability are fully included in the regular program, or it can mean that some students, depending on the disability, are fully included in the regular classroom. These subtle distinctions can lead to confusion. Therefore, for purposes of this study, *full inclusion* is the practice of educating the special education student in his home school in the least restrictive environment of a regular class of his peers rather than placing him in a separate, self-contained special education class. Special educators, specialists and regular education teachers work cooperatively to develop and teach lessons to the students with disabilities in a regular class with typical students (children without disabilities). Lessons are planned to meet the individual needs of the student.

The key element in inclusion and the other methods described is least restrictive environment. A resource class that pulls students out of class for a period or two is considered less restrictive than a full time separate special education class. Mainstreaming and regular education initiative can be considered less restrictive than resource and self-contained programs because the students spend most of their time in a typical classroom. Inclusion is the least restrictive form of special education because it educates the student in a regular class with typical students. The environment is the same for the child with disabilities and for typical classmates.

Origins of Full Inclusion

The full inclusion concept is not new. It has its roots in The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142) which was subsequently renamed the Individual with Disabilities

Education Act in 1990. This Act restated the concepts of "least restrictive environment," and "peers" to describe how and with whom education should be provided for special education students. This law (I.D.E.A., 1990) stated that:

> all children with disabilities have available to them. . . . a free appropriate public education and related services designed to meet their needs." "Least Restrictive Environment means to the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children are educated with non-handicapped children. Special classes, separate schooling or other removal of handicapped children from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the handicap requires that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily (23 Illinois Administrative Code, 1994).

The practices of educating students separately did not begin to change immediately after passage of the law. It has taken time for inclusive educational practices to begin to be practiced.

Inclusion programs are relatively scarce compared to standard special education programs. Furthermore, each one of these programs is uniquely different. Factors such as, different types of disabilities, the size of the regular class and the philosophy of the teaching staff towards full inclusion, affect how inclusion is implemented in individual schools.

Table 1.1

Type of Classes and Number of Schools Trying Inclusion in Peace County, Illinois, as of December 1, 1994

Disability Type	Number of Schools Trying Inclusion
Learning Disabled	3
Behavioral Disordered	0
Downs Syndrome	4
Educable Mentally Delayed	1

Physically Disabled	3
Hearing Impaired	1

Note. This information was obtained from Peace County Special Education Cooperative, Illinois.

Eight public school districts out of a total of forty-five in Peace County, Illinois, have full inclusion programs during the 1994-1995 school year. This represents only 17 percent of all the public school districts in that county. Full inclusion is not widely practiced in the county. Further, Peace County is not unlike many counties across Illinois and the nation where traditional special education programs still predominate.

Traditional Special Education Model

Most school districts have traditional special education programs in place and have not tried inclusive education. The traditional approach includes case study testing, identifying disabilities that qualify a child for special education and then placing the student in a separate program designed to meet his/her needs. This is the oldest and most dominant model. The traditional model embodies the notion that separate, segregated special education classes taught by specially trained teachers provide the best education for children with disabilities.

Perceived Problems with Full Inclusion

The concept of full inclusion has caused great controversy in the field of education. Advocacy groups for full inclusion such as teachers, administrators, parents and researchers argue that full inclusion supports the students' right to be educated with their peers in regular education classes. Opponents to full inclusion come from other groups of teachers, administrators, parents and researchers who share just the opposite view of inclusion. Some of their arguments state that full inclusion carries unreasonably high costs, that it is impractical to include children with severe disabilities into regular classes, that there is a negative impact on typical students when the children with disabilities are included in their class, that it is a disruptive process, that teachers are not trained in special education, and that it is so time consuming for teachers and administrators that full

inclusion programs are not practical (Schnaiberg, 1994; Shanker, 1994). Fuchs (1994) describes inclusion as not acceptable for all children with disabilities, and that the extent of their disability determines what should be the least restrictive environment. For some children, the separate special education class, according to Fuchs, is the least restrictive environment for that particular student and inclusion would be detrimental to the student and the classmates.

Are these arguments justified or are they false fears? To the degree that they exist in the thoughts of many practitioners, they cannot be dismissed as unreal. These arguments have major impact on whether educators are willing to try full inclusion. This study confronts them, in depth, in a real school setting.

Why Change to Full Inclusion?

Inclusion cases are being forced upon school districts unprepared for the task by special education hearings and court actions (Oberti, 1992; Board of Education v. Holland 1992). There is a natural resistance by school districts to change to inclusion voluntarily out of fear that it will be too expensive, jeopardize the education of regular education students, be more than teachers can handle and have limited positive effects on children with disabilities. School districts that ignore or resist inclusion may suddenly be faced with being forced to include students with disabilities in regular classes. This change places reform pressure on education. School systems ignoring it for the present will find it difficult, if not impossible, to do so in the future. Should they wait and most likely be forced into inclusionary practices, or join in the process of shaping their future by adapting full inclusion into their classrooms?

Full inclusion is not a bad idea being forced on education by the Congress. Many educators have questioned how effective traditional special education practices have been. Teachers and parents have concerns about children in special education classes having lesser expectations placed on them. Does it provide a dis-incentive and degrade motivation? Pull-out programs, while providing necessary services, also detach the student from what is taking place in the regular class while they

are gone. If they are already working under the limitation of a disability, it can exacerbate the problem by disrupting their environment.

Gartner and Lipsky (1989) concluded that segregated special education classes do not offer significant benefits for students and they noted that there is a growing body of evidence that it is detrimental to their educational and social development. Wang and Birch (1984) report that children with mild disabilities have higher rates of cognitive, social and general competence in inclusion classes than similar students in resource room programs. In a study of achievement of mildly mentally retarded comparing their performance in resource room placements and regular class placements, Smith and Kennedy (1967) found resource rooms were no more effective than regular classes. Another study by Vandercook (1991) showed that typical students do not suffer academically by attending inclusion classes with students that have moderate to severe disabilities. The evidence from research suggests that in the worst case, children with moderate to severe learning disabilities are not adversely affected by being in an inclusion class, and the preponderance of research shows that the students grow cognitively, socially and are more motivated to learn when included in classes with their peers. Longitudinal studies have shown that students from inclusion classes are more successful in the work place as adults (Wagner, 1991).

The current trend in the literature supports the idea that inclusion works when it is thoughtfully developed. Typical students and those with disabilities gain academically and socially in inclusion classes where extra help is provided to the teacher and lessons and assessments are modified to the needs of the students. Additionally, both types of students build friendships and understandings that last as adults. Self-esteem and social skills improve among special education students included in classes with their typical peers (Calhoun and Elliot, 1977).

School innovations, such as inclusion, do not occur on their own. Leadership is needed to help develop the project and assist in overcoming challenges. Leadership provides the vision and resources necessary to help teachers accomplish change. Leadership provides encouragement and energy to help make the innovation successful.

Leadership and Collaborative Decision-making

Several terms are used in this study that refer to a specific type of leadership and decision-making process. They are key components in this project and need to be defined to understand the dynamics between leader and followers.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is a specific type of leadership that can be understood by thinking of a continuum. On one end, there are leaders that hold the reigns of power and make all decisions themselves. Subordinates are expected to carry out these decisions. On the other end of the continuum is the transformational leader. This type of leader in a school setting works with teachers as colleagues, sharing insights and discussing issues, sets a moral and ethical tone for the school and works collaboratively when making decisions.

Transformational leaders assist teachers in becoming the designers and implementors of school programs. These leaders build consensus and take the extra time needed to be sure their teachers are truly participants in what is being done. Their leadership style includes a sensitivity for and an ability to see the world through the eyes of other persons, understanding their perspective and their sense of right and wrong.

The transformational leader strives to do more than satisfy the needs of their followers in exchange for support. The relationship they want with their followers, ". . . raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, and thus . . . has a transforming effect on both" (Burns, 1979, p. 382). The transformational leader provides moral direction which gives meaning and significance to what the school is doing. The leader arouses awareness, heightens interest and draws followers together to carry out ethical, moral purposes. The successful transformational leader may not be highly visible in the organization. Because of their participation and sharing of power, followers often display leadership formerly reserved for the leader.

In addition to providing direction, the transformational leader helps teachers do their job, protects the school environment from interference and shares decision-making with their followers.

Collaborative Decision-making

Various authors use the terms "participatory" and "collaborative" decision-making. They are considered synonymous for this dissertation. Collaborative decision-making involves numbers of people, including small and large groups. Collaborative decision-making interacts with transformational leadership. It starts with the problematic issues the leader and/or teachers recognize in the learning setting, and works upward through the school. Teachers become the decision-makers and implementors. It is based on the idea that teachers are closest to the problems, can become critical thinkers and should make decisions to solve the problems. In collaborative decision-making, a transformational leader helps focus the energy of the group and facilitate their decisions.

Focus of This Research

This study focused on the leadership role of a principal in the development of an inclusion program involving three classes in his school where sixteen children with severe learning disabilities are fully included. The reader may ask what is so special about such a study? First, many principals are not willing or prepared to make the move towards inclusion. It involves extra work and its experimental nature involves risk of failure.

According to research (Barth, 1990), the principal, as instructional leader, is the key to the success or failure of educational reform. The principal has to develop a leadership style that meets the demands of educational change in his/her school. For this full inclusion project, the principal had the key role of transformational leader. One can have all the right people, but without leadership that facilitates the process, the effort will fail. This study looked at how the leadership of the principal contributes to the implementation of full inclusion.Second, the students involved were seriously learning disabled. They were not mild cases that would ordinarily be found in regular classes. These were students who qualified for and formerly were enrolled in traditional, separate, full-time, self-contained special education classes for their entire school career. For most of these children, 1994-95 was their first time in regular classes with their peers. A more complete description of the children in

the project can be found in Chapter IV. The positive motivation of the students, parents and teachers encouraged us to try this project.

Action Research

To accomplish this kind of inquiry, I selected action research as the methodology. As a critical action researcher, I want to raise the level of understanding about full inclusion. As a transformational leader, I worked with the other members of the team who were equally committed to an honest effort to try inclusion. I used action research to gather data from sources within the project, analyzes the information and assists the team in formulating interventions based on the data.

Participatory Nature of the Project

I am deeply involved in the project as the principal. My bias is that inclusion is a desirable educational practice for our students with learning disabilities. The project was developed through a collaborative decision-making process that included teachers, administrators, special educators, parents and the children. Two regular education teachers and one teacher dually certified in special and regular education were the instructors of the full inclusion classes. Before starting the project, the participating teachers conferred with each special education parent in April, 1994 and gained their support for having their child in a regular classroom. The teachers, principal and aides worked daily with the instruction and project problems that arise. The group functioned as a team, yet each member knew they could make decisions on the spot that the other members would generally support.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to 1) tell how the change from traditional special education classes to full inclusion took place in one school where the principal and staff shared a commitment to the idea, and 2) describe the transformational leadership role of the principal, and 3) explain how action research assisted in the project.

The school district was involved in two additional inclusion cases in the past which have taught us lessons and raised questions that needed answers. This study was designed to shed light on the following questions.

Research Questions

1. How does collaborative decision-making by the principal and teachers enable inclusion of children with learning disabilities in one school?
2. How does action research assist in the development of the study?
3. What insights can be gained from the transformational leadership of the principal in meeting the needs associated with full inclusion?
    A. Increased cost
    B. Training personnel
    C. Personnel selection
    D. Demanding regulations
4. How are the perceived constraints about inclusion dealt with in this project?
    A. Resources
    B. Impracticality
    C. Negative impact
    D. Disruption of typical classmates
    E. Time demands
5. What lessons can be learned from this project that could help other inclusion programs?

Limitations of The Study

The study was meant to describe how one school planned and implemented inclusion. Since every school has its own culture and student needs, no attempt will be made at developing sweeping generalizations. This study was not intended to be an inclusion methods manual. It was designed to share insights and lessons learned about our inclusion project these may be transferable to other settings.

Full inclusion is theoretically applicable to all types of students with disabilities. However, this study did not examine all types. It examined the full inclusion program for learning disabled students in one school. It may or may not apply to full inclusion of other students with different types of disabilities.

This study was also limited to focusing on collaborative decision-making and on the leadership role the principal plays in implementing full inclusion in his school. There were many other important aspects of the inclusion project that could be researched, but they were too broad in scope for this study. The inclusion project occurred in a school that has been developing collaborative decision-making since 1990. This kind of decision-making process was emerging as a organizationally horizontal culture in this school. It took years to develop. The methods discussed in this study would probably not work well in a school designed with top-down autocratic leadership and decision making.

Just as there has been a preliminary history in this school with its teachers and principal leading up to doing this full inclusion study, there will be a continuation of the project after this study is complete, therefore this study will not be able to tell the reader the whole story about full inclusion in the school. Rather, it is telling an important part about the events and decisions involved in the project during the first full year.

This project was also limited by the fact that it does not have unlimited resources and personnel from the school district. Additional personnel cannot be automatically added without approval by the school board. Our goal was to do full inclusion with the existing staff and find creative ways to utilize current resources. Requests for additional personnel and resources have to be based on demonstrated need. Our story may not apply to districts with different economic conditions.

Importance of The Study

I have come to believe there is a knowledge gap about what full inclusion is and an even greater lack of practical experience on how to serve the needs of a full inclusion student in a regular classroom. There is a need for research that examines how inclusion works. Every full inclusion case

is different, but there are lessons that can be learned from each case that may ultimately be of assistance to another. I hope that this study will shed light on how it can be done. I believe there is a need for exploration of actual inclusion cases, that would extract some truths and meaning about how to make it work and unmask the myths and fears that would prevent it from becoming a commonly accepted practice.

Full inclusion is more than a small issue. It is so revolutionary that it has the potential to dismantle existing special education delivery systems if it is successful. Even more fundamental and penetrating than changing instruction, full inclusion gives new insight into how society and educators need to think about and treat people with disabilities. Full inclusion has social importance in that when regular and special needs students are educated together, share the same space, the same fears and the same joys, bonds of human understanding and interdependence develop that can help bring people with disabilities into society in productive, meaningful ways as adults. Full inclusion may be a key element in overcoming the disassociation and isolation that happens to people because of their differences in our modern society.

This was a highly important time to study our project at the school because it was in its first year of operation and many decisions were being made then that would affect its success or failure in future years. Every member of the educational team that contributed to this project was invaluable. Each person had a unique role to play. Such is the nature of transformational leadership. The teachers and the instructional aide carried out the daily activities with the students. They were the professionals working with the children, making judgments and adjusting to daily demands. They were the eyes and ears gathering information that contribute to the team's ability to make decisions. The principal's function was to interact with teachers as peers, provide vision, resources, and moral and ethical leadership to assist them in doing their job.

This project and the action research designed for it served an important need to document and validate transformational leadership and collaborative decision-making in an actual school setting. Transformational leadership is a skill that can be developed and applied to all types of

instruction in regular or special education. It brings out the best qualities in people by setting high standards of educational service for students, finds creative solutions to problems since it involves more people involved in the solutions and positively motivates participants because they take ownership for the project.

Summary

The purpose of this dissertation was to describe the change from traditional special education classes to full inclusion and how the transformational leadership of the principal helps implement this. Critical action research was used to assist in the development of full inclusion.

Traditional special education classes for students with disabilities are separate and segregated from the typical students. Full inclusion is an approach to educating students with disabilities that considers the regular classroom the least restrictive environment. It is an achievable educational concept that can take place when the principal, who is a transformational leader in consort with the community and faculty uses collaborative decision-making to develop a full inclusion program. A transformational leader provides moral direction which gives meaning and significance to the goals of the school. This kind of leader raises awareness, heightens interest and draws followers together and provides support for the group to carry out the full inclusion project.

Collaborative decision-making is based on the idea that teachers understand the needs for instructional improvement and can make decisions to solve the problems. Teachers can become collaborative decision-makers and implementors if the school leadership values this concept.

This study is designed to raise the level of awareness about how full inclusion for students with learning disabilities can work. It is important because full inclusion has powerful implications for the way schools provide regular and special education. It has implications for how society in general treats individuals with disabilities. Full inclusion is a relatively new phenomena in public education, and therefore, very little research exists on the subject. This study describes how one school developed full inclusion for students with learning disabilities.

This study also describes transformational leadership and collaborative decision-making both of which have gained in popularity as a means for improving instruction and schools. A transformational leader guides and supports the efforts of the collaborative team. He/she provides direction and resources for the collaborative team. The development of my personal transformational leadership style is addressed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER II

PERSONAL INSIGHTS AND THEIR CONTEXT TO THE STUDY

The reader may have built a mental construct about me as a principal from what has been written thus far. Individuals are who they are as a result of the experiences they have had and the belief system they entertain. I am no different. I taught art for six years and have been a school principal for twenty one years. My professional teaching and administrative background, my personality and my beliefs have made me what I am. Insight about me will help you to understand my role in this project, my leadership style working with the people involved and the context for this dissertation study.

Teaching and Leadership Experiences

An important choice I had to make in higher education was between music and art. While I loved both, I pursued art because it wanted to follow in my father's career and I had won a scholarship in fine arts (painting and drawing). Through on the job experience as an apprentice advertising artist and industrial photographer, I discovered the work was not satisfying to me. I wanted to become a teacher and work with children. I gave up my jobs, transferred from the academy to a university and got my undergraduate degree in art education. Teaching was, as I anticipated, what I wanted to do. It was challenging and rewarding and I enjoyed the exchange of ideas between teachers of different disciplines. I had a growing interest in teaching and curriculum.

An Unlikely Leader

Many people have questioned me about my change from art to administration. There seems to be little the two have in common. I don't share their belief that this is strange. I think it is quite natural, in my case. Subject matter is irrelevant. My interests went beyond art. I wanted to learn more about curriculum and administration. I had worked for good and bad principals as a teacher. I had definite ideas about quality teaching and administration, and I decided to do something about it. I earned a Master's degree in general administration and curriculum supervision which led to my first job experience as principal.

I learned a lot about people and what motivates them in my first administrative assignment. I learned something about myself--that I was not the typical "company man" principal who kept watch to see that everything was the way it was expected to be. I was a well liked, teacher-centered principal in a school system that was somewhat perplexed by principals that were popular with their teachers. After several years of experience as a new principal, I developed a lasting loyalty from my staff that was very satisfying.

I strayed from my natural, personal convictions about leadership only once. The school board had just gone through an exceedingly hard round of negotiations, and their collective belief was to be hard-line in dealing with teachers. The school was new and the staff had been assigned from other schools against their will. They resented being there. The change I made was to become the "company man" to meet what I perceived were the expectations of the school board, and it brought me frustration and failure. The teachers were uncooperative, the educational program suffered, personal relationships deteriorated and the school got the reputation of being poorly run. Seeing this, the superintendent told the school board to let me be myself. When I returned to my normal style, the situation rapidly improved. You have to be true to your own convictions and be yourself or you simply will not be effective as a leader.

To further broaden my understanding of how schools operate and to develop central administrative skills, I went back to graduate school and earned certifications as a chief school business official and superintendent. Though I have not yet been employed in either capacity, the

knowledge I learned and the experiences I have had as a principal make me feel confident I could succeed in either position if I so wanted.

A Personal Call To Action

As an elementary school principal and district special education coordinator, I have learned many things over the last twenty-one years. Experience is a wonderful teacher. I have no formal training in special education, and have learned all that I know on the job. I suppose this responsibility was given to me because of my availability of time, perceived ability, patience with difficult problems, and the understandings I have learned on the job. My work as coordinator includes the operational aspects of providing education for students with disabilities, students both in our district and through the Peace County Special Education Cooperative (PCSEC). I supervise the district operated learning disability program, social work and psychological services. I act as the district liaison and spokesperson for special education with the private schools within our district.

My major responsibility is as an elementary school principal. I have had three assignments as a principal; a small (125 pupil) K-5 school, a larger (350 pupil) K-5 school, and currently an intermediate elementary school with 450 fourth and fifth graders. Many people believe that the special education coordinator and principal should be separate jobs. I would agree. It is very demanding to do both, however, it is not uncommon for administrators to do multiple tasks when the staff is small. Besides special education, I have shared responsibility for district staff development, curriculum adoptions, developed Chapter I grants, conceptualized and collaboratively developed an early developmental education program for 3 to 5 year olds, helped reorganize the three K-5 schools into grade level centers, act as technology coordinator, prepared proposals for district hardware and software purchases, and served on negotiation committees. These have all been opportunities for me to learn, but have made it hard for me to focus on my primary role as principal.

I am able to do multiple jobs by eliminating or delegating that which is going to be too time consuming for me. For example, I keep special education paperwork to the minimum expected (which seems to me to be insanely excessive anyway). I do not create more for myself or staff. In

addition, I sort through the many issues that are sent to us by the state special education office and select those of higher importance, and set aside issues that distract us from our basic assignment of providing instruction for students with learning disabilities. Full inclusion initially seemed to be such a problem and therefore I ignored until we were forced to deal with it.

Public and Private Characteristics of a Principal

Principals have a public persona which is usually visible to all, and an inner, private self that works behind the scenes, hidden from public view and subject to doubt, consideration and revision. Fenigstein, Scheier and Buss (1975) did a study that identified and described public and private self-consciousness as factors in how one believes and acts. Their concept describes motivation and leadership style. The public self is concerned with appearance, making a good impression and other people's perceptions, while the private self is more reflective about feelings and motives and values that influence and guide. Leaders have concerns about how they are perceived by others because leadership involves the influence one has over other people.

Moral right is an important issue to me. Doing the morally correct thing may not always be the most popular choice. The private self may know an idea is good and valid, while the public character rejects it as too difficult, unpopular, time consuming, or ridiculous to try. The public person makes practical judgments and rationalizes behavior all day long while the private self is evaluating issues and comparing right and wrong. If a leader lets his/her public self lead while the private self is in disagreement, their followers will likely perceive this conflict and judge the leader as untrue to his/her moral convictions.

While my public role as principal was rejecting full inclusion, the private belief system I have was telling me that children with disabilities can exceed their limitations given the opportunity to do so. I felt I needed to help make available opportunities for children with disabilities. I did not necessarily believe that special separate classes were more effective than inclusion for children with disabilities. Professional special educators seemed divided on the issue of whether separate classes or inclusionary education was better, but I had no predisposition, other than the feeling that "least

restrictive environment" did not automatically mean all children, without exception, should be included in a regular class. I deeply empathize with the many parents I have known over the years that expressed their desire for their special education student to be back at his home school with his old classmates. This is a wish we rarely considered when separate special classes were the only option for services. The opportunity for inclusionary education was right before my eyes years ago, but the separate and special education "paradigm" hid its possibilities from view.

I believe in keeping bureaucracy and regulations secondary to humanity, yet I found myself relying on the separate and special model as the standard when questioned about fully including our first child with multiple disabilities. I see now that this was a bureaucratic (public) response, fearful of what I may have been starting if I accepted inclusion. Humanity cries out for more than a sterile educational model that looks more like a medical "diagnose and treat" design, than it does a plan that is intended to nurture a child who needs help.

I also believe that traditional special education programs were not nearly as effective as they should be. When I found some of my teachers shared my beliefs, and I was able to hire others who thought similarly, we began an educational evolution in the direction of full inclusion.

Leadership Style

As a principal, I want to get feedback from my teachers before deciding on a course of action. Years ago, teachers wanted principals to make the decisions, while now teachers are conditioned to want to participate in decision-making. I was fortunate to start my principalship in a small school with a very collaborative faculty. Right from the start, we discussed problems and decided what to do. If I made a decision alone, the teachers would support it, but I also knew they would speak up if they disagreed with a decision. We were a team. Each of us had a valuable perspective to contribute. There was great respect towards each other.

My second school was a large, new school with a very different staff. They were used to decisions being made somewhere up the chain of command. They were not interested in making decisions together, but they did enjoy criticizing decisions that were made by administrators. This posed a difficult culture change for me. I wanted to use collaborative decision-making, but it was viewed by some key teachers and my fellow principals as weak and ineffective leadership. I worked on getting key critics involved in leadership roles that were opportunities for them to influence decisions, look good among their peers and feel good about contributing to decision-making. I learned that there are natural leaders among teachers, and you can either tap their potential and include them or continue to have them criticize the hierarchical system. At the time, the other principals were not interested in collaborative decision-making as I saw it. The other principals thought I was inviting trouble, giving too much power to teachers, not making the right decisions and drawing attention to myself when we experienced failures. Over the years, I think those principals learned that my system worked for me. In fact, there were teachers in the other schools that wanted to transfer to my school. Once teachers get in my school, I expect them to adapt and improve, and I attempt to nurture their growth efforts.

I am a risk taker by nature. If I think something is good, I will assess the risks, look at the benefits and find a way to do it. Collaborative decision-making has caused me some disapproval as well as admiration from my superintendents. I have been held accountable for my failures and

praised for my successes. A superintendent once told me that he would have the "ideal" principal if he/she had a blend of my abilities and an aggressive, managerial personality like one of the other principals. That sounds like a conflict to me, but that superintendent believed it would work.

An open dialog with both my special education staff and regular education teachers has always been rewarding and enjoyable. I have shared my personal beliefs with them. We have talked about alternative education delivery services and solved problems. I found them willing to try mainstreaming and full inclusion. Motivated people overcome barriers. We find time to try new ideas and make things happen.

Personal Role in the Research

The evolution of my thinking from a traditional segregated and separate special education philosophy to full inclusion occurred over time. Beliefs do change, hopefully for the better. There are no absolute truths in education. Exposure to new ideas and our own receptivity level determines how much change we can make. With the passage of time and experience, I have come to believe inclusion is a sound educational practice. I am an advocate for doing inclusion with students with learning disabilities, and I believe it is possible to do inclusion with other disabilities as well. I believe inclusion should be given an honest opportunity to succeed before it is rejected. I chose critical action research as a way to promote this belief.

Early Teaching Experience with Mainstreaming

I have always kept abreast of new developments in education. As a teacher more than twenty years ago, I had students with disabilities mainstreamed into my regular education class. The students were physically and behaviorally disabled. It was a pilot project in mainstreaming. We didn't know much about mainstreaming other than it sounded like a good idea for children to be in classes with typical students. We fumbled through some awkward situations. We put too many students with disabilities in a class at one time. Embarrassing circumstances with the students with physical disabilities occurred, such as soiling or falling on the floor. As classroom teachers, we were

not trained in how to deal with this. In addition, there were confrontational behaviors in front of the class by children with behavior disorders. Again, we were unprepared to deal with these situations.

We received no special in-service training for dealing with this problem. As a teacher, my fears of doing something wrong with the children subsided slowly over time as I invented ways for dealing with the problems. I found that students with behavior disorders did not cause the standards of the typical students to deteriorate. In fact, the typical students were able to thoughtfully reflect on what they witnessed and thereby learn something about adapting to people who have differences intellectually and physically. I noticed that my typical students adjusted to having children with physical disabilities in the room. They were considerate and helpful. Bonds of friendship occurred. Sometimes I had to remind them not to do things for their disabled friends that they could do for themselves.

Personal philosophy about children with disabilities. My own growth in understanding about human development taught me that we all can rise above limiting visions about ourselves. Limitations are challenges to be met. The invisible and visible barriers confronting people with disabilities, especially children, limit potential and life fulfillment. It seems to me that education should lead the way towards expanding these rights.

Administrative Roles

My involvement in special education grew out of the administrative responsibilities that were assigned to me by my superintendent. I wanted to be a principal of a "regular school." I found out there is no such place!

I became a principal in 1974 of a small rural suburban school with central office responsibilities in the areas of special education, testing, curriculum and grant writing. My role in special education developed into being the school district's special education coordinator, without the advantage (or perhaps the disadvantage) of being formally trained in special education, though I did develop a working knowledge of special education regulations. I had to do a lot of learning about special education on my own. Psychology, social work, testing, occupational therapy, physical

therapy, early childhood, whole child development--all these things were areas thrust at me as an administrator for input and decisions. I learned about these services by networking with other educators. Additional help came from many fine special educators at Peace County Special Education Cooperative.

I feel sure that my public principal role was very reserved about special education and that my private opinions were unknown to others. A quick poll of some of my special education colleagues would most likely yield opinions of me that were less-than-favorable regarding special education. That partly ensued from the fact that I had to officially represent the philosophy of my school district which was traditionally very conservative and concerned about rising costs and limited results. Working with kids, parents and teachers led to shifts in my thinking and opened up opportunities to help change our special education practices in the district. I found myself empathizing with children with disabilities and parental aspirations of normalcy for their child. I thought educators could do more to help attain these hopes and aspirations.

Whenever I found a way to improve what we were doing, I tried it. For seventeen years, I have had classes for students with behavior disorders in my school. The behavior disorder teachers have told me that they have had less than positive receptions at other schools where they have worked. They usually get relegated to the most undesirable room in the school, their children are social outcasts and they as teachers feel disenfranchised from the other teaching staff. I give behavioral disorder teachers the same positive treatment I give the other staff. They get local money to buy supplies, I personally support them in conferences, and I see to it that they play a participatory role on the staff.

Going the Distance--An Example of Collaboration

On the last day before Christmas vacation about ten years ago, a single unemployed parent of one of the out-of-district behavioral disorder students told the teacher that her son had a fast growing brain tumor and she had no way to take care of it properly. The teacher told me of the situation. I called my nurse, the teacher and the parent into my office for a discussion of the problem. We

brainstormed to find resources to help this child. The nurse and my secretary made calls to various hospitals while the teacher and I convinced the parent that she could get this needed help if she would put forth a little effort and not be so defeated in her attitude. Before we went home that night, a children's hospital agreed to provide the surgery and all related expenses for the mother and child. He was back to school in three weeks, and eventually made a full recovery.

Home School for Children with Learning Disabilities

In 1980, I assumed the principalship of our new K-5 school. Our district special education needs had grown. We had district children bused all over the county attending separate, segregated classes in many different special education classifications. Students enrolled in learning disabilities had increased disproportionately to the rest of the population. What we expected to be 5 percent of the population was more like 12 percent in my district. I questioned whether relying on the county cooperative to make the decisions was leading to over identification of students. We had the classrooms available, so I proposed bringing our learning disabilities students back to their home school by creating our own self-contained learning disabilities classes. I believed we could have greater control of identification and placement if we took over the classes. I hired the special education teachers and we started our own learning disabilities program, much to the approval of the families.

My superintendent supported the idea and was pleased with the benefits to the district and students to be able to go to their home school. Cost of services and transportation are always a concern in my school district. It is not wealthy. Out of forty-one school districts in our county, our school district is sixth from the bottom in assessed wealth per pupil. The tax rate is high, and expenditure per pupil is low compared to other school districts. The district K-5 self-contained learning disabilities program included a staff of three teachers and an aide serving up to forty-five children each year. In addition, we have a part time psychologist and one resource learning disabilities teacher at each of the schools to work with children on a pull-out basis from the regular classroom.

The resource teachers taught students in a pull-out program for up to 50 percent of the student's day. If they required more service than that, a transition from resource to a self contained learning disabilities class was arranged. We had control on the identification process for learning disabilities because our own staff of teachers and psychologist did all our case studies. Our goal was to assist the students until they could work at grade level without assistance and then drop them from the learning disabilities program. Sometimes, we would monitor the student in the regular program for a year before dropping them from the program. I was relatively satisfied that this was a good program.

Then a neighboring school district did something in the mid 1980's that began to stimulate my thinking about inclusionary education. I heard that school district had made all their self-contained learning disabled students attend regular classes. This was shocking to my staff and me. How could they do such a thing to children? We questioned how they could serve the children's' needs. Besides, it did not sound legal.

Many people (including myself) were critical of their plan. We believed the self-contained and pull-out approaches were the best way. We criticized the other plan as driven by lack of space or an effort to save money. The real issue of desegregating students with disabilities and teaching them in a regular environment had not occurred to us at that time.

I watched what happened in that other school district for the next two or three years. My convictions about their program were not very strong. I was curious about how they were doing. I talked to their special education coordinator, and found their approach to be reasoned and beneficial to children. Some of their students with learning disabilities transferred to my school. I began to see that the academic and social level of these children as good as our students in the self-contained classes, but they had the additional experience of having been in regular classes.

Hiring key people with inclusive beliefs and innovative minds. I hired a resource teacher who was very active in the Council for Exceptional Children. This was a source of new ideas. She began returning some of our milder disabled students to regular classrooms on monitor, a term which

means the student does not receive special education services, but is watched closely for any regression in the classroom. She tried to help regular teachers adapt to these mild cases in their classroom. Her assistance was resisted because the teachers saw her as more aggressive than the rest of the staff. I learned that personality and rapport are two basic human ingredients for success in inclusion. Though she tended to move too fast for some of the staff, she laid the ground work of getting students back into regular classes as soon as they could handle them for the next resource teacher.

In 1990, I hired two new resource and self-contained teachers. I selected people that had good interpersonal skills as they were going to be important factors in the evolution of our special education program. They both impressed me as people who understood other people, were patient, listened well, and were willing to try new ideas.

These teachers became important members of my team. We interacted well with each other. My philosophy as a principal is to help facilitate teachers in doing their job of teaching. I believe in trying new ideas, and am not afraid of making mistakes because that is how we learn. My teachers know this about me. I encourage them to try something if it sounds good and reasonable. If it fails, we find out why and keep trying. I have found that people work well in an atmosphere of freedom and support.

My philosophy about special education began to change even more when I became aware of full inclusion in 1990. The comments by other administrators about inclusion were ominous. Their stories were worst case scenarios. I initially thought of inclusion as another botched plan that would wind up on the junk pile of educational research, but I remained curious about its possibilities. How can special needs children be included in regular programs without disrupting everything? There must be a way to do it. I thought inclusion would require a delicate balance of teacher, parent and student efforts in order for it to work.

Our First Attempt at Full Inclusion

Inclusion became a reality in my district during the 1993-94 school year. The first of two cases was forced by order of an Illinois State Board of Education Level I Due Process Hearing. The school district resisted full inclusion for a student who had cerebral palsy, seizure disorder, no language or communication channel, unmeasurable intellectual ability and health impairment. The hearing proceedings were adversarial and very difficult.

As district special education coordinator, I had been called to an annual review meeting with the parent at the facility that the child attended. He needed many special services. I felt the facility had the best provisions for his needs. However, the parents wanted him to be exposed to a regular kindergarten before or after the special class. The education team that worked with the child said that would be unproductive because he was not interactive with his environment. The parents pursued the issue with the help of a special education advocate and within six weeks we were involved in a Level I special education hearing to decide on the child's placement.

I had to help in the preparation of the case. I spent many hours corresponding with our legal advisors. The hearing lasted five full days. Approximately thirty people testified. Defensive barriers were built by both sides. The position of the district was that the child was too disabled to attend a regular education class. The parents were suspicious of district administrators and felt that we were prejudiced against their child because of his condition. The results were legalistic exchanges orchestrated by the lawyers. The atmosphere was stifled by these power struggles, all of which were supposed to be in the best interests of the child.

The hearing officer's decision was to place the student in a regular kindergarten for the 1993-94 school year. The district decided to give it an honest try rather than go to court to prevent the placement. Extra staff was hired to meet his needs. School and parents disagreed on most issues. As soon as the decision was announced, I began putting the controversy behind me, and started focusing on helping the supervising principal set up the educational program. I wanted the actual

working relationships of staff and parents to be more trusting and collaborative. The principal had a special education background and did a wonderful job of putting all the services in place for the child.

Unfortunately, multidisciplinary committee meetings were major events with attorneys, parents, educators, outside experts, teachers and administrators sitting around a large table. The typical meeting involved twenty-six people and took at least eight hours to conclude. The adversarial atmosphere never improved. It seemed to me to be a desperately bad way of working out an educational plan for a child in need. The only positive outcome was that trust did develop between the parents and a few educational staff members that worked closest with the child. I think these positive rays of light would have increased if the program had not been cut short.

The case ended when the student passed away. Some people left the experience embittered towards inclusion. I concluded that inclusion was inevitable and that there must be a better way to deal with it when it happens.

It did not take long for our next case to occur. The very same summer we discovered we had a learning disabled student who also had a major health impairment. I, my teachers, and central office administrators began working collaboratively with the parent to provide an inclusive education. The student was an eleven year old learning disabled child. He was also in the advanced stages of AIDS. He had acquired the HIV virus at birth from his mother.

I was informed of the situation by my resource teacher. The father had confided in her. He told her the entire truth about the student which he had carefully hidden from school personnel for a full year. The father met with me. He said his first concern was with protecting his son, and chose not to tell anyone until he knew he could trust them. Legally, he was under no obligation to divulge the illness to school authorities. Morally, it was the correct thing to do, even if it was a year late.

I began thinking inclusion right from the start for this child. He had been in a regular class the year before, and received pull-out services from the resource learning disabilities teacher. Even though he had major academic problems and frequent absences, it seemed to me that keeping his life

as normal as possible was important. His father said the son's life had always been normal, with little outward attention paid to his illness.

My resource teacher and I picked someone who would be a good regular education teacher for the child. Soon, we had a team of teachers including classroom, speech, science, physical education, special education, nurse and instructional aide all willing to educate the child. It was a wonderful feeling for me to see this positive action taking place.

Central office administration drafted a public disclosure plan about AIDS that would protect the student's identity, but which would assure that safe universal health precautions were going to be observed by everyone, including students, teachers and workers, in every school. A doctor and the county health department acted as consultants for this public relations effort. The community was very supportive. Fears about AIDS were allayed through informational meetings held at each school in the district.

The child's identity was not known to the general public, but the staff that worked with him was informed and trained to deal with the situation. His outward appearance did not reveal his disabilities. He was socially accepted, outgoing and eager to learn. The first semester started off very positive and very successful. His death mid-year saddened us all. It ended the inclusion program once again. The loss of these two children was hard on the parents, teachers and staff. Life is so precious, and never more dearly missed than when the loss is a child.

The second inclusion case was a rewarding learning experience for all. Parents and school worked together as a team to devise the program. We made it work with the existing staff by pulling together to meet his needs. We became "experts" in areas where we thought we had no expertise. The daily health precautions became secondary, and once that issue was effectively dealt with emotionally and practically, the education program for his learning disability went forward.

Summary

Professional administrative training does not give you all you need to know about running a school. It is the minimum requirement to be able to become a principal. What you learn on the job

about the complexities of education and the personal issues that are interwoven into the process are the actual elements that make you a success or failure. My basic beliefs about giving all students, disabled or non-disabled a quality education have grown to where I have now taken action with inclusion that satisfies my conscience and appears to be successful.

A transformational leadership style that encourages collaborative decision-making develops over time through trial and error and many experiences. In my case, it started out with a desire to work collaboratively with people and to lead by demonstrating moral and ethical standards. Transformational leadership is natural for some people and unnatural for others. I have found it is a good style for me and that it has led to creative solutions and highly motivated teachers. Collaboration shares the burden of responsibility with teachers who actually implement the decisions. My experience is that teachers are willing and eager to share this power. Never once have I felt a loss of power or respect. Instead, both have gained new meaning. Teachers want my advice, and there is an unspoken respect for the authority I have if I choose to exercise it. I know, at this point in my career, that collaborative decision-making works for me and my teachers. It is possible to teach and encourage educators to become participants in decision-making over time. It is not something you can force on individuals, but as they see their peers do it successfully, they begin trying it themselves. A principal needs to be ready to seize the opportune moment and suggest collaborative methods in ways that will be acceptable to all participants.

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

While personal philosophy and leadership style have been described in some detail in the previous chapter, existing knowledge and research relevant to this project needs to be explained. Effective leadership is manifested in a variety ways. Individual backgrounds, experiences, work assignments and personality affect leadership style. Written works on leadership, management and collaborative decision-making suggest the breadth of the subject. An exhaustive review of these writings would be interesting, but definitely too broad for the scope of this dissertation. This literature review will focus on those relevant issues which will expand the reader's understanding about inclusion and leadership as it pertains to the school and project.

Literature Review Position Statement

Full inclusion is an approach to educating students with disabilities that considers the regular classroom the least restrictive environment. It is an achievable educational concept that can take place when the principal, who is a transformational leader, in consort with the community and faculty uses collaborative decision-making to develop a full inclusion program.

Full Inclusion

For purposes of this study, full inclusion is the practice of educating the special education student in his/her home school in the least restrictive environment of a regular class of his peers. This can be achieved when special educators, specialists and regular education teachers work cooperatively to develop and teach lessons to the students with disabilities in a regular class with typical students. Lessons are planned to meet the individual needs of the student. The term typical student is used to describe children without disabilities. Inclusive education, full inclusion and inclusive practices are synonymous terms used throughout this dissertation that all mean inclusion.

Legislative Framework for Inclusion

In a monograph, the National Association of State School Boards of Education (1992), discussed the progressive steps public education has taken in providing for disabled students. Prior to The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-142), students with disabilities were frequently excluded from school or segregated in separate facilities. A parent of a child with disabilities who was sent to one of these schools described the facility as "a little building, surrounded by a cyclone fence, off on a remote corner of a vast elementary school playground. There was even a cyclone fence gate across the front door" (NASBE, 1992, p.6). The message this gave was that children with disabilities were very different from the rest of society and were excluded from normal participation.

In Brown v. Topeka (1954), the Supreme Court decided that the public schools are the vehicle by which any American can aspire to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Though originally applied to segregation based on color, Brown is being applied to segregation based on disabilities as well. Laski (1995) says, referring to the case:

That most important civil-rights decision (Brown v. Board of Education) signaled the end of legal segregation not only on the basis of race, but on the basis of disability . . . Inclusion and the full

integration of all individuals with disabilities in all aspects of our lives . . . has been both the first value and final objective of our national policy.

Inclusion advocates agree that this means that every student with disabilities should be included in a regular class. Regular public schools are not the same as specialized, separate schools for children with disabilities, and it is a denial of a child's rights to prevent him from attending a regular class because of his/her disability (Wang, Reynolds & Walberg, 1994). Court cases recently have affirmed the right of students with disabilities to attend their home schools. In Oberti and Holland (1992) the courts interpreted the law to mean that even children with severe disabilities must, in most circumstances, be included in their local school classrooms with non disabled peers.

Educators, parents and legislators began making changes in special education as a result of P.L. 94-142 which gave special students access to education. The law guarantees that all children, regardless of their disability, are entitled to a free and appropriate public education in the "least restrictive environment." In addition to the least restrictive environment, the act calls for students to be educated with children who are non-disabled. These are the concepts on which inclusion is based. P.L. 94-142 was renamed The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) in 1990 (P.L. 101-476 and P.L. 102-119). I.D.E.A. expanded the definitions of disabilities to include autism and traumatic brain injury. It also includes additional public supported services for the children with disabilities such as assistive technology, which is high and low technology equipment needed to help individuals with disabilities.

I.D.E.A. is scheduled for renewal by Congress in 1995. While few doubt that it will pass, pressure will be brought to bear to amend the law to give school districts more flexibility in preventing disruptive students with disabilities from attending regular public schools (Schnaiberg, 1994).

I.D.E.A. helped facilitateinclusive education. Special education has traditionally been taught in separate special classrooms with small groups of children with similar disabilities. This design is not what I.D.E.A. envisioned for most students. The term "least restrictive environment" as

used in I.D.E.A. means that each individual case needs to be considered for the classroom environment which provides appropriate education in the least restrictive classroom possible. This concept caused educators throughout the country to begin looking at current placements of students with disabilities. Since passage, the full meaning of this concept from I.D.E.A. has slowly become understood. Some schools have been motivated to bring children back to regular classes and to design implementation models to help regular teachers provide appropriate education for children with disabilities with their peers in their home school. Mainstreaming, regular education initiative (REI) and inclusion have been methods most frequently used by school districts to accomplish this. Inclusion, on the other hand, requires full-time placement in a regular class in a child's home school. This is a major difference and consequently, inclusion has been used much less than the other two methods.

The consistency in what the federal government wants for all children is evident in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act which states that children with other disabling conditions must be accommodated for in the "least restrictive environment" with whatever supplementary aids and services are needed so that the child can benefit. Section 504 broadens the public school responsibility to make adjustments to include all other students with special conditions that are not identified in I.D.E.A. Once again, the law affirms that all children are to be accorded a free, appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment.

Education with peers, least restrictive environment, and home schoolBeing educated in the least restrictive environment with peers is defined to mean:

> To the maximum extent appropriate, children with disabilities, including children in public or private institutions or other care facilities, are educated with children who are non-disabled; and special classes, separate schooling or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily

(300.550) . . . as close as possible to the child's home. Unless the IEP of a child with a disability requires some other arrangement, the child is educated in the school that he or she would attend if non-disabled (I.D.E.A., 1975, 300.552).

According to Fuchs (1994), ". . . a least restrictive environment must satisfy two criteria. It must 1) provide students with disabilities an education appropriate to their unique learning needs, and 2) do so in as close proximity as possible to normally developing, age appropriate peers (p. 23)." For some students with disabilities, the regular class would not provide the student with an education appropriate for their unique needs, therefore not every student should be automatically included in regular education classes, according to Fuchs.

Landmark court cases for inclusion. Oberti v. Board of Education (1992) was a full inclusion case that decided the school must provide reasonable support and services for the student with disabilities. In practice, this meant that school districts could not avoid the responsibility of providing reasonable educational services to meet the needs of a child who has a disability. Those needs include (but are not limited to) personnel, education program equipment and room space as needed on a case by case basis. The individual needs of the student shall determine what will be required.

I.D.E.A. provides little in the way of specific guidance to schools on how to implement instruction, nor did it provide for funding. How much special adaptation was a school expected to do? What is considered reasonable? These questions were answered somewhat in Board of Education v. Holland (1992) which defined criteria for full inclusion. The

court concluded the test for appropriateness of full inclusion for a child with disabilities shall be:

1) Will the placement interfere with others?

2) What are the benefits to the disabled student?

3) Will it cost significantly more to educate them in a regular class?

In the Holland case, the court ordered that the school must do full inclusion because these conditions were met. The costs are the responsibility of the local school district. This opened the possibility for students with all kinds of disabilities who met these criteria to be fully included in regular classes in their home school.

These three "tests" are broad and subject to interpretation, and therefore are not totally definitive for schools. Some special educators and school districts argued that there are students who are too disabled to attend a regular class. In the Timothy N. case (1991), the court determined that he was "too handicapped" to benefit from full inclusion, and subsequently placed him in a separate special education class. Thus each case warrants individual consideration on how full inclusion applies.

Court cases and special education due process hearings continue to define the meaning and implementation practices of full inclusion. The trend seems to be for an increasing number of children with a widening range of disabilities and severity to be eligible for full inclusion. Many school districts are beginning to respond to this situation proactively. They are trying to comply with the intent of the law.

Kinds of children being served by full inclusion. Schools are trying full inclusion with varying degrees of success at present. The kinds of cases being attempted in Peace County include students challenged with learning disabilities, Down Syndrome, mental retardation, physical impairments, and hearing and vision impairments. Seventeen inclusion programs in forty-five school districts are currently under way in Peace County. Some of these cases are not being done voluntarily by the schools. As they become more experienced with how to do inclusion, it is possible that the numbers and types of voluntary programs will continue to grow.

Advocates of full inclusion believe that it is good educational practice and is possible for all children with disabilities. Lou Brown of the University of Wisconsin, Madison (1994), said that "children with disabilities respond to the environment they are in. There are differences between special education classes and regular education classes." These differences influence how students respond. If restricted, the child never gets to experience new things, develop relationships with typical peers, and see how the real world is. Dr. Brown said that the social-emotional development of a child with disabilities and their peers is an important element of inclusion that benefits both. Longitudinal relationships and extra curricular activities help students with disabilities function in a regular world as adults. The greater the disability, the more the student needs relations with regular people (Brown, et al., 1991).

While the law and the courts have given direction on inclusion, little in the way of definitive criteria exists by which to determine whether full inclusion is appropriate or not. Trial attempts based on needs of the student have shed light on who benefits from inclusion. Dr. Brown gave examples of students with a wide range of disabilities including autism, cerebral palsy, mental retardation and behavioral disorders that have been successfully included in schools near the university. Each case involved special planning based on the needs of the student. In most cases, Dr. Brown was able to recruit university students to provide extra help for teachers and students.

Parent Perception of Inclusion

Kim Galant and Mary Frances Hanline (1993) pointed out that parents want their child with disabilities to have contact with typical peers in real world experiences not available in special classes. They state that parents generally report that their children do not have social difficulties with typical peers. However, the study was based on young children, and may not hold true for adolescents. Parent advocates of inclusion declare there are also benefits involved for typical students when they are exposed to students with disabilities. The benefits include friendships, protective, caring behavior, helpfulness, open discussions that help students with disabilities and typical students

to understand each other and learning experiences that cannot be simulated in separate, segregated classes (Sapon-Shervin, 1994).

Case-by-case consideration as to whether inclusion is appropriate is the position held by some educators. David O. Krantz (1993) writes, "Special education means entirely different things to different parents. Parents of a blind child for example, have a very different idea about special education than parents whose child is experiencing school learning problems." Inclusion that works in one case may not work in another. There may be lessons we can learn from one inclusion effort--success or failure--that can be applied to other inclusion efforts.

Opposition to Full Inclusion

Conflict exists between the rights of the student with disabilities and those of typical classmates and teachers. I.D.E.A. was designed to reinstate the civil and educational rights of the children with disabilities. Some advocates of these rights feel that changes in the law to limit these rights would start the disintegration of their rights which have taken so long to build. Opponents of inclusion feel it has gone too far and is unfair to typical children and those with disabilities.

The rights of the disabled v. the rights of typical students.In the case of Ocean View School in Huntington Beach, California, a severe behavior disordered student was fully included in a regular school. Schnaiberg (1994) reports that his disabilities cause constant disruption of the regular class and remain unresolved at this time. Parents of other students complain about the situation. Teachers and administrators have been unable to control the severe behavior disordered student. They argued in court that he poses a threat to the health and well being of students and teachers in Ocean View School in Huntington Beach, California. Because the student in question has a communicative disorder, he has procedural protections under the law (I.D.E.A.) that do not permit him to be moved from the current classroom without parental agreement, which is being withheld. The school district was blocked by federal court in its attempt to remove the student. Civil action by parents of typical children, while possible, had not been taken by the date of the report.

Part of the dilemma regarding the disruptive behavioral disordered student stems from the United States Supreme Court ruling in Honig v. Doe (1988) which limits school officials to suspending students to a total of ten days per year because of behavior resulting from their disability. A longer absence from school would violate the "stay put rule" stated in I.D.E.A. that prevents a change of placement from the current class without voluntary agreement of the parent or decision by a due process hearing. This is an aspect of the law that will likely come under debate when Congress considers re authorization of I.D.E.A. in 1995.

Inclusion--not good for any student?Fear that the regular school will be unable to meet the needs of students with severe disabilities is a real concern of most school systems. Is the answer to

add extra personnel? If you do add staff, how much money is reasonable to spend for full inclusion and how much of the added cost incurred by compliance with I.D.E.A. will be reimbursed by the federal government?

Albert Shanker, (1994) representing the American Federation of Teachers, believes inclusion of all students with disabilities is unjust to all. Children with disabilities will not be getting the education they would get in a separate class. He sees inclusion as the opportunity for the federal government to avoid properly funding I.D.E.A. as it should. The added cost of extra teachers and aides to work with one student with disabilities is unfair to all. A student with complex needs could require a wide range of services, which inclusion designers say, must follow the child into the classroom. To answer these problems, Shanker calls on Congress to amend I.D.E.A. in 1995 so that it 1) pays for the extra cost of educating students with disabilities, 2) provides training for teachers doing inclusion and 3) gives more rights to the school when determining special education placement.

Good (1986) cautions that considering regular education initiative (an educational plan similar in some respects to inclusion) as a universal solution to the educational problems faced by students with disabilities can become part of a new problem. As enticing as it may sound, there are many complexities and dynamics that exist in the classroom environment that have not been fully researched about REI. The argument applies to inclusion as well. If the goal is to improve instruction for students with disabilities, adequate research must be done to support the methods being used. Full inclusion may be a legal mandate, but mandates alone do not answer the problematic issues of implementation.

Kauffmann (O'Neil, 1994) believes that education is being rushed into inclusion. He believes that inclusion is good when appropriate, but disagrees that it is good for every student. He fears the "dumping" it does to regular education classes. He cites poor planning and execution as the destructive elements of inclusion. His interpretation of I.D.E.A. is that it asks, "What does the child

need and then what is the least restrictive environment in which to meet that need?" He objects to the idea of placing the child in the regular class, and then figuring out how to meet his needs.

"Any generic effort toward full inclusion is contrary to the individual nature of the I.D.E.A. and the individualized-education program process . . ." Is the regular classroom truly the least restrictive environment for all children? "Some argue that wrong attitudes and limited resources are the only barriers to full inclusion. There are children, however, for whom no amount of money or attitude shift would make a regular classroom safe" (Siegel 1995). He concludes that inclusion has generated valuable discussion and has done a lot of good, but that the law intends for the individual needs of child to be the determinant of whether or not they should be fully included.

Other critics of unrestricted full inclusion, Maloney (1994) and Fuchs (1994), believe it is disastrous to some students to be fully included. They take the more cautious approach of testing whether it is appropriate for the needs of the child before placement is made. Children with severe and multiple disabilities will likely be inadequately served educationally in the regular class.

Support for Inclusion

Proponents of inclusion believe that the problems associated with it can be overcome. Arlene Barry (1994) believes it is possible to include labeled students and that the benefits include reduction of the problems associated with labeling. She said inclusion works well when regular and special education teachers work together. She noted that special education teachers do not have a special bag of tricks. Good teaching is good teaching, and these methods work well with both typical children and children with disabilities. Studies done by O'Sullivan et al (1987) and Algozzine et al (1988) confirm that regular and special education teachers use similar instructional methods, communication patterns and learner involvement techniques. Barry believed that collaboration time for regular and special education teachers is very important for inclusion, and that teachers will need to spend more time to plan and execute inclusionary education. A report of the National Academy of Sciences (Heller et al, 1982) finds that labeling students in special education and placing them in separate, segregated special education classes is mostly ineffective at improving their education.

According to Wang et al (1994) the growing consensus in the education community is that separate, categorical education programs such as self-contained classes taught by specially trained teachers have produced too few benefits. These so-called "ideal" settings still leave the students untrained for life. She supports the idea of including children in regular programs and eliminating the labeling that is so damaging to self-concept and perception by others.

In a study by Wang and Birch (1984), a comparison of full time mainstreaming and resource room approaches was made. The study focused on students with disabilities and found that mainstreamed students initiated interactions with teachers more often than students not in mainstream classes and that they interacted more frequently with peers for instructional purposes. Students with disabilities in mainstream classes were more likely to do self-selected exploratory activities than teacher prescribed activities. These kinds of findings suggest that it is possible to create a learning environment that encourages increased performance by students with disabilities. With regard to achievement, Wang and Birch found that there was positive growth in achievement over time. The mainstreamed students made greater gains from fall to spring than their peers in resource classes.

Social problems associated with inclusion.What effect does the presence of children with disabilities in regular classes with typical students have? Critics, such as Shanker (1994), would argue that it can be disruptive to the education of typical students to have children with disabilities taking so much of the teacher's attention in class. In actual practice, the integration of the students is mostly positive unless some extreme conditions (see Ocean View School) interfere. In one qualitative study (Peck, Donaldson & Pezzoli, 1990), it was recorded that integration had caused deep personal reflection by the adolescent students. Values and personal principles developed. "If there's something personal between us, then they're going to be my friend no matter what other people say " (p. 246). These powerful words of a typical student about his classmate with disabilities demonstrates how bonds of friendship and sensitivity develop that may influence their behavior as an adult.

In another case of which I have personal knowledge, the five year old student was physically impaired with cerebral palsy, had speech, language and (very likely) vision impairments, and did not have a mode of communication other than a cry or laugh which occurred randomly. No channel for communication existed. The child had no swallow response and was fed through a gastro-intestinal tube. He had no control of his limbs or body and spent his day in specially designed chair and support equipment. In spite of all these disabilities, his classmates and teachers reached out to him as an individual person. The students would want him positioned so he could be included in their activities, even though he could not participate. The teachers reported no unkind or thoughtless statements or criticisms from the other children. Typical parents were equally tolerant of the child's right to be in the class. It took an extraordinary effort on the part of the school principal and her staff to include the child in the class, but it was done. From this experience perhaps there is a lesson in how typical children and a child with disabilities react to one another. Carried one step further, one may speculate that it may lead to creative solutions that afford more access to education (and life in general) for persons with disabilities.

What are the perceptions of children with learning disabilities about themselves? Bear, Clever and Proctor (1991) found that self-perceptions of students with learning disabilities regarding their academic competence, behavioral conduct and overall self-worth were not improved by being included in a regular class, The social problems associated with learning disabilities are the same in a separate special class and regular education class. At present, there are not too many studies in the area of social skills and self-esteem as it relates to inclusion. This is an area of research that could be expanded as inclusion becomes more and more common.

Cooperative learning. Cooperative learning is developing lessons that require children to work together on solutions. It can be used in virtually every subject. It is very popular among inclusion teachers. Typically a small group of five or six students work together to solve problems. Each member of the team has a specific role to play and they are encouraged to work together on solutions. It is an instructional tool used in many regular classrooms and is recommended for

inclusion classes (Slavin, 1990; Johnson & Johnson, 1982). Students with disabilities and typical students differ in what they contribute to a cooperative learning group. It does get all students involved and it does help students with disabilities to realize more of their potential. Peer assistance is a powerful motivator for a child with disabilities according to O'Connor & Jenkins (1993). Their research also found that cooperative learning, like any other strategy, needs to be adapted as an inclusion strategy. Cooperative learning affords a child with disabilities a new, motivating way to learn, and it also helps typical students learn how to interact with exceptional children and adapt to a different situation. Both types of students benefit from this inclusive practice.

In a study about relationships of students with moderate, severe and profound disabilities to their peers Hamre-Nietupski, Hendrickson, Nietupski, & Sasso, (1993), surveyed teachers and found that teachers of these students clearly believe that friendships can be developed and are beneficial to both groups of students. Teachers said that friendships are most likely going to develop if students with disabilities are included in regular classes.

Resolving valid criticism and making progress with inclusionNot every complaint or fear about full inclusion is unfounded. Some criticisms are valid and need to be addressed in order for full inclusion to be successful. It would be foolish for full inclusion advocates to ignore these criticisms, because they will ultimately grow until they damage the process. It is equally foolish for those who oppose inclusion to never try it based on untested fears. The courts have shown that the law provides for inclusion, and that reasonable efforts must be made to make it work. Perhaps compromises will occur when I.D.E.A. is renewed in 1995. It is safe to say that the fundamental principles underlying I.D.E.A. will still be with us in the future, and these principles support inclusion. Therefore, we need to move beyond the myths and fears and get on with the effort of making it work. Good leadership is an important part of such an effort.

Leadership

The word "leadership" creates mental images of persons in this role. We think of generals, explorers, presidents and religious figures, etc. We try to distill the magic ingredients that make a leader, and seek to discover the leader in ourselves. Some write books about leaders and leadership. We read these in an attempt to understand what it is and how we can improve our leadership skills. A person may be a natural leader; however study, practice and refinement will help improve his/her skills.

Some people appear to be born leaders, while others grow into it, or have it thrust upon them by circumstance. Good leadership skills differ across environments. Leadership in the world of business, politics, religion and military may be different from education, but at the same time employ the same skills in varying degrees. Good leadership is adapted to its setting. Leadership, even if it is natural, can take years to perfect. Many leaders are successful and develop the fine art of leadership and become masters of their circumstances. They are individuals who make the difference in what they do.

Some leaders are strong personalities with a commanding presence. Other leaders are unassuming, almost indistinguishable from those they lead. Some people equate good management with good leadership, but the two may not be synonymous. "Managers do things right. Leaders do the right things" (Bennis and Nanus, 1985, p. 21). A good school leader has to do the right things, set high moral and ethical standards, advocate child-centered programs, help teachers improve, develop partnerships and still be able to manage the many routine tasks that comprise a school operation. Schools are a unique environment for educational leaders to develop effective skills.

Importance of Principals

Barth (1990) like many educational researchers, believes that principals are the key to good education, that he/she is the most important reason teachers grow on the job and is most influential in creating an environment that elicits the most from teachers, students and parents. Effective schools research tends to corroborate this position. Jane Eisner (1979) wrote, "The key to a school's success is

the 'principal principle': The notion that a strong administrator with vision and with ability to carry out his or her goals can make an enormous difference in a school" (p. 59).

Strong leadership can take different forms. Is the strong leader the one who guides and directs every activity, or is he/she the one whose control is almost invisible, hidden behind the professional skill of the staff? Advocating shared decision-making with teachers, Phil Schlechty (Brandt, 1992) says, "I don't consider the principal as instructional leader; instead I see the principal as leader of instructors." The forceful, opinionated instructional leader may not succeed as a "leader of instructors." The principal Schlechty describes moves away from autocratic managing to interacting with teachers as peers, providing vision and resources in assisting them in doing their job.

DuFour and Eaker (1987) said that good schools always have good principals and that successful principals are able to articulate the vision of the organization and guide it through involving teachers in decision-making and developing collegial relations. The leader recognizes that coercion and edict are ineffective methods in a school environment (p.15). They also identify the importance of building consensus as a leadership quality needed by principals.

Regardless of what you read, there seems to be agreement that the principal is the single most important person for a school's success. "If a school is a vibrant, innovative, child-centered place; if it has a reputation for excellence in teaching; if students are performing to the best of their ability; one can almost always point to the principal's leadership as the key to success" (U.S. Senate Resolution 359, 1979). It has been known for a long time that the principal is the single most influential person in making good schools and programs.

The contrast between top down and bottom up leadership. What goes into effective school leadership is a critical focus for this dissertation, because skillful leadership is what makes inclusion happen. Imagine if you will, a memo from the school district central office indicating full inclusion would become policy on a certain date, and that all principals and teachers are to begin implementing the plan (provided by the district office, of course) on that date. Decisions are made at the top and channeled down through the principal to the teachers, students and parents.

Envision another kind of leader that encourages collaboration by developing personal and professional relationships within the school over time. Ideas percolate up through the school. The "leader" guides the school, focusing new ideas for the group and assisting in their development and implementation. Good ideas get discussed. People have input in what is done. In this school, the idea of full inclusion comes from the staff looking for support from other teachers and the principal. The instigators are the designers and implementors. Ownership is established from the start. Nobody is being told what to do by powers higher up the chain of command. Instead the leader assists the designers and implementors in making their ideas real. This school system is designed to respond to this upward flow of ideas; it is otherwise known as collaborative decision-making (Dolan, 1994).

Whether you identify the principal as the instructional leader or the leader of instructors, his/her goal is to bring members of the school community, teachers, parents and even students when appropriate into the decision-making process. Leadership of this sort still needs the principal to maintain control over the decision making process, but assist in letting the process work rather than impose decisions. Setting a moral and ethical standard, working with people, developing relationships and building a climate and culture that supports the vision and goals of the school are strong roles a principal plays.

The role of leaders and those they lead. It takes a certain type of administrator to exhibit this kind of leadership. It is a blend of personality, skills, knowledge, intuition and experience that make it work; however leaders alone do not make things work. The leader needs followers that resonate with their style of leadership. The leader is counter balanced by followers, who work within the team and their realm. Sergiovanni (1990) defines the term "followers" to describe those who are ". . . able to think for themselves, exercise self-control, and are able to accept responsibility and obligation, believe in and care about what they are doing, and are self-motivated, thus able to do what is right . . . with persistence, and most important, do it without close supervision" (p. 27).

Perhaps describing teachers as followers takes away from the essential vitality and decision-making ability of professional colleagues. DuFour (1987) said, "Too often teachers are asked to

commit themselves to someone else's notions about what they should value" (p. 15). This suggests a higher view of teachers as fellow collaborators rather than followers. Leaders need to build consensus and take the extra time needed to be sure their fellow collaborators are truly participants in what is being done. Otherwise, the result is just another form of top-down decision-making. Leaders and collaborators develop the way they are together over time. It is the interchange between people on personal and professional levels that establish the working relationship that is effective collaborative decision-making.

Eliminating fear. An interactive need exists between leaders and followers. Walton (1986) stated that drive out fear is one of Deming's fourteen main principles for revitalizing the workplace. "Many employees are afraid to ask questions or to take a position. . . People will continue to do things the wrong way or to not do them at all" (p. 35). A leader sets the tone of the organization. If blame is a common practice, or if fresh, new ideas are stifled with criticism, teachers withdraw and do not risk making a mistake or being subjected to criticism.

In his "Theory of Human Motivation," Maslow (1970), the psychologist supports the need for safety in order for individuals to function. He says everyone has safety needs, and if we perceive real threats to ourselves, we ". . . tend to respond to danger with realistic regression to the safety need level" (p. 43). Principals can dramatically influence the safety needs of their teachers by such things as how they use teacher evaluations, making fault-finding and blame an important part of supervision, ruling by intimidation or belittling ideas expressed by teachers. On the other hand, principals have considerable power to establish a safe, blame free environment that addresses problems while they protect the collaborative staff from the outside interference. The attitude and personal action of the leader establishes whether or not the school is hampered by fear.

Personal characteristics of leaders. "The real leader has no need to lead--he is content to point the way" (Playwrite Arthur Miller, 1947).

Ethical leaders of schools need personal traits that promote success. Newton (1989) identified a number of qualities that help make a good principal. Sensitivity and an ability to see the

world through the eyes of another person from their perspective and from their sense of right and wrong. Leadership requires self-discipline and integrity. It is difficult sometimes to do unpleasant things that are justified and right, but not to do them would be to abandon responsibility. Leaders need to be able to laugh at situations and themselves, because when they can do it, great relief is felt by their fellow collaborators. Being cheerful provides added reassurance that a leader is confident. Leaders are always under scrutiny with regards to their own obedience to right and ethics. An example lived is much more valuable than preached words.

Describing what good leaders are like has been the topic of many books. Understanding the personalities and needs of a team of collaborators and constituents seems to be very important. Gardner (1990) quotes the famous football coach of the University of Alabama, Bear Bryant as saying he knew his players better than they knew themselves. "How else could I get the best out of them?" (p. 50). Gardner identified courage, skill at dealing with people, capacity to motivate and the will to adapt to problems in order to find solutions as leadership qualities that succeed. Sergiovanni (1990) describes leadership by bonding as a shared covenant and fellowship with those you would lead. Carefully established close links between leader and followers yield success. Interaction between teachers and principal is free flow in this kind of relationship.

Choosing a leadership style. Leadership that flows from the top of the organization down to the majority of individuals that make up the organization is in sharp contrast with leadership that flows from the bottom up or is represented in a level organization. The football coach, like the military general probably have to practice top down decision making during a contest or battle. A battle field or football field are different circumstances than schools and require different leadership styles.

Transformational leadership is desirable in an educational organization because teachers are thinking professionals, colleagues that know a great deal about their specialty. The responsibility of educating children necessitates that they make decisions in the classroom. They should be involved in making the larger decisions in the school because they are the implementors, the individuals with

the expertise and ability to execute the decision. Their knowledge and experience should be used to make decisions that affect the program. Transformational leadership creates a climate where ideas and decisions are made by the group rather than by an individual in a top down manner. Ideas can flow up as well as down (Schlechty, 1991, p. 50).

The question, "Who should make decisions?" is at the heart of what kind of leadership style is needed. If you look at schools from an organizational basis, the complex nature of education and learning and the relationship between teacher and student, it seems obvious that decisions made at the top will have little relevance to what is happening in the classroom. Leadership and meaningful decision-making should start with the learning situation and work upward. Effective organization in schools is more important than platitudes on heroic leadership styles and classic management practices. Leadership viewed in a broad sense goes beyond the scope of one individual. This is especially true in schools where principals share power and decision-making with teachers and other important members of the school community, including parents and students.

The environment of a school lends itself to transformational leadership. However this type of leadership does not work as well in the role of a coach or a military field who under the pressure of conflict has little time to consult the participants about what they think should be done to solve the problem. There may be times when the coach or commander may solicit opinion and be more collaborative, but under the crush of circumstance they need to make decisions that are followed explicitly and immediately by their subordinates.

Some people would view sharing power with teachers as giving up managerial prerogative, and that collaboration takes away from the direction top leadership can give to an organization; however Schlechty (1991) said, "Empowering teachers does not disenfranchise principals. Rather, it empowers principals" (p. 19). The transformational principal can exert a powerful influence on the goals and direction of the school while still sharing decision-making with others.

Collaborative decision-making success in other environmentsAmerican business is waking up to what Asian economies, especially the Japanese, have been doing for a long time. The

employees make an important contribution to whatever the business is. In the Japanese system, they are enfranchised, brought into the decision process. Direction and facilitation can still come from upper management, but the flow from top down is not the only practice. Management's role does not disappear when employees have input, it simply changes. One of Deming's Fourteen Points is institute leadership. By this is meant that the role of the leaders is not to tell people what to do or to punish, but to lead. Leadership as envisioned by Deming is identifying the problems and then helping people do their job better (Walton, 1986, p. 35).

Developing leadership as a principal. If principals are to behave as transformational leaders and not just managers or technicians, teachers must be included in the process. "Teachers are, of necessity, part of a 'corporate' structure, and their effectiveness is . . . partly determined by the way the 'corporations' in which they work are organized and managed" (Schlechty, 1991, p. 143). Developing a leadership style that empowers principals to accomplish great things for the students must involve teachers. It is a change from the managerial, top down, technical view of administration. It is transformational, collaborative and problem solving by nature. The principal that can provide direction, help teachers do their job, protect the school environment from interference and share decision making with all involved in the work is practicing aspects of transformational leadership.

Know thy people-leadership by purposeful wanderingGood leaders are not separate from whom they lead. An old soldier I know commanded a tank under General George Patton. He would have followed Patton anywhere. When questioned why he felt that way he said it was because Patton was there with his troops. He would sit up in the open hatchway of the tank during combat. Patton had conviction and courage. His followers saw him in the heat of battle with them. The lesson to be learned from this about school leadership is to make yourself visible and be available to your teachers. You need to enjoy their successes and share their defeats, and let them see you be a leader under all circumstances.

Leadership by wandering around is more than just management. Management is doing things right and seeing that your people do things right. Leadership is doing the right thing. It is setting a high moral and ethical example and knowing what is taking place in the school. It is an excellent way for building relationships of trust and communication with the staff. Wandering gets you to where your people are doing their job. If teachers are skillful at what they do, they probably don't require a lot of supervision; however everyone likes to be seen doing his/her job correctly. It gives you a chance to show you know what they are doing and that you care. The informal compliment or word of encouragement means a great deal to people. When a principal is visible on a regular basis in the school, trust and openness exist. The same conversations would take place with or without the principal in attendance. The principal can get a good view of what is happening in the school and then analyze it to see what needs more attention or cries out for change.

Performance generally improves when the principal is frequently seen on the site. According to Frase and Hetzel (1990), management by wandering around is not aimlessly walking. It is purposeful and meaningful. Planning one's course in advance and thinking through what you might be going to see is helpful. Being out in the school rooms is helpful in improving instruction. If trust exists, teacher and principal are honest with each other and attempt to support each others' actions.

Dyer (1984) advocates effectively watching teachers in action. His ideas are tied to teacher evaluation and change, but they also support the need for the principal to be getting feedback on teachers' strengths and weaknesses that can be analyzed and used for improvement of instruction.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is a decision sharing process. James McGregor Burns (1978) originated the transformational leadership concept as the result of his study of the leadership styles of political, military, and business executives. He identified organizational leadership types and rated them as Type A, top down organizations to Type Z, organizations that have a level hierarchy, engage in shared decision-making and whose leaders are collaborative (Liontos, et al. 1992). Burns

identified type Z as transformational leadership. Some environments are more conducive to transformational leadership than others. Politicians caucus to seek consensus and the Joint Chiefs of Staff collaboratively make decisions, but it is not likely that a field commander or coach can make collaborative decisions in the heat of conflict, nor a principal depending on the circumstances.

Other researchers, notably Leithwood and Sergiovanni (1990) have applied Burn's transformational leadership concept to the educational setting. Transformational leadership is as much art as it is science. Leadership is not limited to a certain personality type or sex. Transformational leadership in schools, according to Sergiovanni, unites leaders and fellow collaborators in the pursuit of high goals and visions. It occurs when bonds and relationships have been developed, "fused" together through stages of development. The aim of the transformational leader is not to manipulate *subordinates* into doing what they are told, but to motivate teachers to become *collaborators* invested in what is being done. The leader needs to be credible. He/she need to live and act the beliefs they espouse. (Badaracco and Ellsworth, 1989; Sergiovanni; Schlechty, 1992).

Transformational leadership in schools involves shifting control. Kanter (1983) wrote that when control in an organization is relaxed, workers begin to come forth with innovative ideas. Empowering teachers allows them to develop solutions for problems. Relaxed control does not mean no control. According to Peters and Waterman (1982), an organization can be both "loose" and "tight." The challenge for the transformational leader is to provide enough control so that the loosely controlled environment does not come apart. Schlechty (date unknown) believes that there are some functions of leadership that should not be de-centralized. These include 1) the development and articulation of the guiding goals of the school, and 2) the selection and development of the indicators that will be used to assess the effectiveness of which goals are pursued.

Lewis (1986) also concluded that there must be a balance between loose and tight control. The central control of the school needs to exist, but adequate leeway must be given to the teachers to

do their work. Lewis also brought in the concept of getting feedback from your followers as a leadership method.

Feedback

Feedback can be informal or formal depending on the type of activity that is taking place. Frase and Hetzel (1990) said that feedback is necessary and need not be threatening to leaders or their ideas provided they have conditioned themselves to receiving this kind of information. Feedback techniques are necessary for a leader to know if he/she is leading in the right direction. This is even more important with team decision making. Feedback is a means of checking understandings and making sure all are moving in the same direction. Feedback occurs in schools when teachers have the perception that the principal is open and receptive to this information. Without it, transformational leadership and collaborative decision-making are almost impossible.

Using the power of the group. According to Katz and Kahn (1966), peer groups have strong power to persuade individuals. In a loose environment, free discussion is encouraged and decisions are made by the individuals involved. The transformational principal takes advantage of peer group influence to orchestrate the desired change. Letting influential teachers prove their ideas by implementing them stimulates others to act accordingly. In the case of inclusion, peers that are successfully involved provide powerful examples for other teachers who are close to deciding they can do it themselves. Peers also help each other accomplish gains.

Katz and Kahn, though pre-dating the collaborative decision-making philosophy, made some very significant observations about empowering peer groups. They saw that it does not lend itself to dominant hierarchical structures. It works in level organizations where freedom to express ideas is allowed. Peer groups also allow for the venting of frustrations in a harmless way. Just being able to release tensions verbally is valuable to the health of a teaching team. Often, team members can help find solutions to individual frustrations before they interfere with performance.

Summary

Full inclusion, like other innovative educational plans, is a complex issue involving theory, research and practice. Full inclusion is the practice of educating the special education student in his/her home school in the least restrictive environment of a regular class of his peers.

Those that support inclusion believe it is what the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.) intended. They believe that children gain socially and academically from being with their peers.

Opponents fear that full inclusion can be disruptive to the regular education students and teachers, and that it does not necessarily apply to all students with disabilities. They caution against adopting full inclusion without examining its impact. Costs for personnel and training for regular teachers working with inclusion are additional issues that impact negatively on full inclusion. Inclusion that works in one case may not work in another. The type and complexity of the disability is a factor in whether inclusion is successful. There may be lessons we can learn from one inclusion effort--success or failure--that can be applied to other inclusion efforts.

Full inclusion and collaborative decision-making are currently very popular subjects. There is an increasing number of schools trying inclusion, but they are still in the minority. Collaborative decision-making is being practiced in other settings besides full inclusion. It naturally applies to many areas of curriculum and instruction. The challenge of doing full inclusion lends itself to collaborative decision-making, at least in the view of this researcher, because no one person can possibly hold all the answers for how to make it work. The circumstances vary from school to school, from child to child and different professionals approach solutions to their unique problems in different ways.

Educational reform requires visionary leadership that guides the development of the plan. Leadership that responds to the circumstances and that brings together the individuals responsible for the plan is more effective than leadership that dictates policy and plans from the top down. This project is a collaborative decision-making effort to fully include children with learning disabilities in

regular education classes, and to use action research to help understand and refine the program and leadership skills needed to develop it.

Transformational leadership is an important factor in the success of this action research project on inclusion. Transformational leaders are good at establishing and articulating goals and vision, bringing participants into the decision-making process, motivating people and directing energy and resources.

Schools require a different type of leadership than is found in other environments. Business, politics, military and social organizations may have different and effective leadership designs. The environment of schools provides a logical setting for transformational leadership. Teachers are trained professionals that can make intelligent contributions to complex educational problems. A transformational principal work together with the teachers as a team, discussing problems and making decisions.

Principals need the ability to select compatible teachers and develop others through training and peer cooperation efforts. Principals need to be able to get feedback from their collaborators and incorporate that information into their actions as leader. Collaborators in this kind of organization are powerful factors in the quality and type of work that is done. The concept of collaboration between principals and teachers is very important to good leadership. Good school leaders develop professional, thoughtful, empowered teachers as a necessary part of collaborative leadership.

Outward manifestations of leadership and powerful, internal, private motivators seem to be major components of leadership. The outward or public view of leaders is perhaps easier to observe than the inner values and thinking that drives them. Much has been written about leadership methods and styles, but those styles alone offer no guarantee for success by simply adopting them as a practice.

Transformational leadership and collaborative decision-making lend themselves to developing educational innovations. The following chapters tell how they work together to establish a full inclusion program.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

The research questions considered for this study will be presented to the reader in this chapter. A discussion of action research, including background information and how it applies to this study will help the reader understand the research method. The focus of the study is the transformational leadership of the principal in the development of the full inclusion project.

The reader will be given a description of critical action research; the school setting, the criteria for learning disabilities and some insights about the children. An overview of the action research cycles that took place in the project is also presented.

Research Questions

The research questions in this study are:

1. How does collaborative decision-making by the principal and teachers enable inclusion of children with learning disabilities in one school?
2. How does action research assist in the development of the project?

3. What insights can be gained from the transformational leadership style of the principal in meeting the needs associated with full inclusion?

    A. Increased cost

    B. Training personnel

    C. Personnel selection

    D. Demanding regulations

4. How are the perceived constraints about inclusion dealt with in this project?

    A. Resources

    B. Impracticality

    C. Negative impact

    D. Disruption to typical classmates

    E. Time demands

5. What lessons can be learned from this project that could help other inclusion projects?

These research question address major concerns about implementing inclusion. This study answers them within the context of the project school.

Selecting A Research Model

The leadership of the principal in guiding the change from traditional self-contained learning disabilities instruction to full inclusion at Daybreak School is the central focus of this study. If you accept the literature findings that the principal is the key person in making instructional change happen, then inclusion, as a unique educational challenge, requires effective leadership to insure its success.

A team of educators made up of two regular education teachers, one special education teacher, an instructional aide and a speech therapist are the staff that taught the three full inclusion classes. They were involved in the day-to-day operation of the full inclusion project. They were also the collaborators and decision makers on the project.

The goal of the inclusion project was to instruct children with learning disabilities in regular classes in their home school with their peers. Action research was used because we did not have all the answers about how to do inclusion. The actual planning and design of our full inclusion project is on-going and improved by the use of action research. The members of the team and I share the philosophy that inclusion is a good educational practice that can be successful with children with learning disabilities. Our efforts in this project were based on: 1) the special needs of the children with learning disabilities, and 2) what we must do to meet the needs of the students with disabilities in the regular class without infringing on the rights of the typical students. I chose critical action research because I wanted to draw attention to how a transformational leader using collaborative decision-making could help make inclusion possible.

Action research enabled me, as the principal, to see how my transformational leadership style affected the inclusion project. It provided insight about the project itself that assists in recognizing needed improvements and in guiding collaborative decision-making during the course of the project.

What is Action Research

Social science has used qualitative research for years, however it is only recently that its value in educational inquiry has been recognized. The qualitative research paradigm is now recognized for its relevance in education because schools are complex social organizations which defy research attempts in the positivist paradigm.

My study is critical action research. It advances the concepts of inclusion, collaborative decision-making and transformational leadership. It helped guide the actions of the team in the implementation of full inclusion. According to Carr, (1986):

> Action research is simply a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices, and the situations in which the practices are carried out. . . Action research (is) a way of participating in decision-making about development" (p. 162).

I used qualitative research methods such as interviewing, observation, reflection, analysis, theory development and interpreting. In addition, I used quantitative survey data as a source of information from parents. Action research is a method of planning, fact finding and intervention. I did all the research for the project, except for the first parent survey, which was done by one of the team members. I relied on my own observations, discussions and interviews.

I used the technique of purposeful wandering around the school to make observations about what was happening in the inclusion classes and how they were integrating into the regular school program. The wandering activity led to informal conversations with teachers about inclusion related topics such as planning time, socialization of the students and scheduling. I made notes about these comments on index cards which I carried in my pocket. Later, I entered these notes in my journal. They became data that I reflected upon in my analysis.

I used team meetings as a way to gather data and to share what I was learning from my research with team. The team meetings were lively discussions about the project. I tape recorded

some of the meetings, but found it less valuable than making notes and entering them in my journal. The recorder took away from the spontaneity of the meetings. When I reviewed the data, I found patterns and themes which I then took back to individual teachers or the whole group for more explanation. This helped me to understand what the important issues were. I also took issues from the data back to the teaching team to help them make decisions about the project. At times, I observed that the teaching team had an intuitive sense for the same issues I was finding in the research and that they were able to make collaborative decisions without needing my input or direction.

Historical information about action research. Action research in education was developed in the late 1940's and early 1950's when social science researchers, notably Lewin (1947, 1948) and Corey (1953) developed a method of problem solving for organizations that involved action cycles. The idea was that research could be focused on aspects of an organization and improve the quality of its performance. Lewin (1947) said, "Action research is a three-step spiral process of 1) planning which involves reconnaissance or fact-finding; 2) taking actions; and 3) fact-finding about the results of the action." Corey (1953) described action research as ". . . a process by which practitioners attempt to study their problems scientifically in order to guide, correct, and evaluate their decisions and actions." Corey applied these methods to help teachers research what they were doing in the classroom for the sake of improvement of instruction.

Action research, according to Whyte (1989), is "applied research." It is not passive. The researcher acts as a professional expert, designing the research methodology, gathering information and interpreting the findings so that additional action can be taken as a result. The methods employed are clearly qualitative. The action researcher may choose to use analytical and interpretive data, keep a journal, do interviews, and make observations. He/she then analyzes the data and makes interpretations which are then acted upon as actions in the project. Then, the cycle of self-reflection starts again. Whyte's business examples frequently used an independent researcher that conducted

the research project in a business setting; however, the researcher can also be part of the project effort.

Action research is neither difficult to understand nor complex. Stringer (1993) describes a very basic, yet effective process by which groups can begin to engage in educational action research. He says; "Its simplicity makes it a powerful tool for orienting people to activities usually the province of professionals. . . . The LOOK/THINK/ACT routine encompasses three types of activity" (p.155). Looking is observing what is happening and developing a mental "picture" or concept of the situation. This is comparable to the statement of the problem and initial data gathering in traditional research. "Thinking enables people to reflect on their situation, to analyze issues and to delineate their concerns" (p. 155). Stringer described that this correlates to traditional definition, analysis and theorizing. The ACT phase is doing something with what you have learned. It is similar to implications in a traditional study. This is a simple design for action research that illustrates how the process works. It can help collaborative teams make decisions as they develop educational innovations, such as inclusion.

Watt, et al (1992) explains how teachers improved their instructional methods in computer technology through the use of journaling, observing classrooms and analyzing samples of student work. From this method, changes were made in teaching practices that yielded improved results. Their data analysis consisted of describing what was observed, looking for patterns that helped clarify the research questions and then dealing with the issues that the action research generated. The teachers gained insights about their students and their own teaching methods which led to making changes for improvement purposes. Their research was done collaboratively. They shared the tasks of making observations and analyzing data.

Action research as applied common sense.Action research gives greater control and accountability over the project. Joyce, et al, (1988) conducted action research projects which included teachers in a school wide inquiry into curriculum and school budgeting. Data included notes, documents, logs and interviews that had been collected by the team. The analysis was a narrative that

synthesized this information and made sense of what it said. Their final report told of their progress and how the students had done. They described action research as, ". . . disciplined inquiry. The value gained from conducting action research is determined by the faculty, whose members identify a common goal, how best to achieve it, and how to assess its attainment, always in terms of student learning" (Joyce, Bruce and Others, 1988, p.19).

To help understand the value of action research in education Corey (1953) said that, "Action research represents little more than a refinement of a process every teacher goes through as he tries to improve." Calhoun's (1994) description that ". . . action research or data used to guide the action of members of an organization is conceptually simple; it sounds, looks, and feels much like slightly formalized problem solving, which it is" (p. 21), is juxtaposed to Corey's more quantitatively based design of developing a rigorous procedure that would base judgments on careful observations, thus tying all interpretations and conclusions to the data itself. This deliberate, analytical approach to action research is also advocated by other interpretive researchers like Spradley (1979) and Erickson (1986) who believe that the interpretative research must be rigorously supported by the data.

Driving out fear. Honest, critical inquiry should be revealing of strengths and weaknesses. Fear of exposure and possible consequences for failure could prevent teachers and administrators from trying an action research project. However, if this fear barrier is removed, research can be done without restraint. Corey (1954), Deming (Walton, 1986) and Maslow (1970) saw the need for people to feel safety and trust in the workplace in order to be productive. Corey believed that in order for teachers to effectively improve instruction, they need to know, rather than guess, about their effectiveness and they need to feel safe about asking questions.

The Focus of This Study

This study focuses on the transformational leadership of the principal in helping transition to full inclusion in the school. There are many other aspects of the inclusion project that could be researched, but are too broad for the scope of this study.

The transformational leadership style I have developed gives me the ability to interact with the other team members and to make decisions together as a group. The success of the project depends on the team working together on the design and implementation of the project, curriculum, instruction and adaptations. As principal and researcher, my responsibility was to analyze and focus the problems we faced as a team. I did all the research except for one parent survey which was done by a member of the teaching team. The project takes place in Daybreak School which has a collaborative decision-making environment.

Defining The Problem

The purpose of this study is to 1) tell how the change from traditional special education classes to full inclusion is taking place in one school where the principal and staff share a commitment to the idea, and 2) describe the leadership role of the principal. Action research will be used to assist in data collection and analysis and to help formulate decisions.

Description of the Research Setting

Daybreak School is a medium size modern facility serving a suburban community near a large urban area in Illinois. The community is basically middle class, white, with approximately 15 percent economically disadvantaged families. Employment ranges from blue collar to white collar. Many families have both parents working. The wealthiest and best educated segment of the population is located in one area of the school district which has a concentration of people employed by large medical organizations.

The school district serves kindergarten through eighth grade and covers a large geographical area. There are subdivisions, villages and rural areas within its boundaries. Of the forty-five districts

in the county, our school district is the sixth poorest in assessed valuation per pupil. The expenditure per pupil for the 1993-94 school year was $4,200.00. There are 1,912 students in the school district and 450 in the project school as of October 1, 1994.

The intermediate school includes all the fourth and fifth grade students from the district. There are 204 students in each fourth grade and 208 in fifth grade. The school has eight self-contained regular education classes in each grade level. In addition, the school has a pre-kindergarten developmental education program that serves 50 children.

The students attended one of two K-3 schools before coming to the intermediate elementary school for fourth and fifth grade. Consequently, there is a socialization process that occurs when the children start fourth grade.

The culture and climate of the intermediate school is distinctly different from that of the K-3 schools. The school is geared to the social and intellectual development of the students. There are academic activities, band and intramural sports after school.

Students do the morning announcements. The students move around the building during the day going to band lessons, music class, grouping for math, science lab, computer class, library, speech, physical education and lunch. This variety of classes and movement around the school is different from their primary school experience.

The classes in the school are designed around the self-contained classroom model except for the subjects previously mentioned. The classroom teacher has primary responsibility for the instruction in math, social studies, language, reading, writing and art. Team teaching is done in math. Grade level group projects, such as Colonial Days, Sixties Fest and Space Day are done each year. Each class makes a unique contribution to these activities, and all students get to see and participate in the projects done by the other classes.

Collaboration example. The innovative and collaborative culture of the school is illustrated in this example of what teachers have done to shape the curriculum. In 1992, the fifth grade staff and principal began working with the idea that with so many teachers per grade level, we should be able

to make some innovative site-based curriculum changes that meet the needs of our students. The fifth grade team began by re-grouping all eight fifth grades into seven allowing the eighth teacher to teach science and computer.

Every class got science four times a week and computer class once. Science is taught as a laboratory inquiry-based program that integrates academic skills such as math, writing, reading and cooperative learning into the lessons. The Parent Teacher Organization provided thousands of dollars for the networked computer lab. The result of this collaboration is a program that generates enthusiasm in the students, support by the parents and satisfaction among the teachers.

The idea of teacher empowerment is accepted very positively by many, but not all teachers. This condition is not a deterrent, however. It does not have to be universally accepted in order to be successful. If a group of teachers are motivated, it is possible to begin.

The Learning Disabilities Program Background

The self-contained learning disabilities program at Daybreak School consisted of two self-contained learning disabilities classes taught by two teachers and an aide. The students in these classes were selected based on the extent of their disability. The students were considered too disabled to fully participate in a regular education class because of their need for intensive learning disabilities services. Efforts were made to mainstream every student with learning disabilities, that is, to attend regular classes for subjects within their ability to do.

The next change was movement towards increasing the mainstream class time for the self-contained students with learning disabilities. The regular classroom teachers showed a willingness to include the children with learning disabilities. In 1993-94, we home-based the students with learning disabilities. In the home-base plan, all the children were placed in a regular home room and came back to the learning disabilities class for instruction based on the individualized education plan (IEP). Home-basing had a major limitation. Schedules for music, physical education, computers, science, library and academic subjects became too complicated to manage for each individual child.

Development of inclusion for children with disabilities. We started an inclusion project for the children in need of part-time learning disabilities instruction four years ago. The special education teacher went to the regular classroom to help the students with learning disabilities. She worked with six regular education teachers servicing the children with learning disabilities. Prior to that, the children were pulled out of class for special education. We questioned why we could not do it for the self-contained students as well? This led naturally to the full inclusion project.

The beginnings of full inclusion. In early 1994, the special and regular education teachers desired to start a full inclusion project that would be better than the existing home base program. The plan would allow twelve children with learning disabilities to be in regular classes starting in August, 1994. As principal, I met with the teachers and together we drafted the initial plans for the project.

With only a few months left in the school year, we decided to inform the parents of the plan as a sounding board for the idea. Annual review meetings were held in April, 1994 with the parents of each student with learning disabilities to explain the plan and solicit their support. All parent agreed to the plan, though some had reservations.

The inclusion classes were set up with 21-22 pupils in each class while the non-inclusion classes averaged 25 pupils each. The non-inclusion teachers accepted this as a fair compensation to those who had inclusion classes.

The members of the teaching team. Throughout the rest of this study, teachers who participated in the project will be referred to by name. Mrs. Glasser is the learning disabilities teacher who teaches a fifth grade inclusion class and has technical responsibility for the special education students. Mrs. Minor is a regular education teacher with graduate training in gifted education. She teaches a fifth grade inclusion class. Ms. Hansen is a regular education teacher who teaches the fourth grade inclusion class. Mrs. Kapp is the instructional aide to the inclusion program. Mrs. Conn is the speech and language pathologist that instructs the inclusion children. Mrs. Barrett is a learning disabilities teacher who is instrumental in the development of inclusion at Daybreak

School. She teaches students with disabilities that used to be in the school's resource program, but who are now in regular education classes. These are the main members of the collaborative team.

How the children are distributed in classes:There are five inclusion students in Ms. Hansen's fourth grade class. Mrs. Glasser, the former self-contained learning disabilities teacher has six inclusion students in her class, and Mrs. Minor, the other teacher has five inclusion students. Mrs. Glasser has six inclusion students and Mrs. Minor has five inclusion students in their classes. The rest of the classes are made up of typical students that were hand selected for their demonstrated patience, ability to get along with others and achievement. In addition to her regular teaching responsibilities, Mrs. Glasser is the consulting special education teacher for both Ms. Hansen and Mrs. Minor. This constitutes the basic layout of the inclusion project at the school.

The Criteria for Learning Disabilities

The criteria for determining eligibility for the learning disabilities project is consistent with what is used by the Peace County Special Education Cooperative. To be in the learning disabilities project, a student must have a full case study that includes 1) a social development study done by a social worker, 2) a battery of individual achievement tests, 3) current physical, vision and hearing tests, 4) an individually administered intelligence test such as the Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children, Revised (WISC-R), and 5) an observation in the educational setting. The multi-disciplinary team including the classroom teacher, parent and special education personnel involved in giving the tests determine eligibility based on the following criteria.

1) Discrepancy: Ability scores are one or more standard deviations above achievement.
2) Must have average or above average intelligence, 85th percentile or higher.
3) Must have a processing deficit in one or more of the following:

    Auditory processing

    Visual-motor

    Memory

4) The discrepancy shall not be explainable by any other disability.

In order to be considered forthe self-contained learning disabilities class, a student's special education needs must require more than 50 percent of their day to be spent in receiving special education services. All the children in this study qualify for self-contained instruction and have been in a separate special education class for their entire school career.

The Children with Learning Disabilities

There are sixteen children with disabilities in the project. They include the new students that came into the program during the school year. There are ten boys and six girls. Ten students receive speech and language assistance. Four currently see a social worker. Six of the students take medication for Attention Deficit Disorder and/or Hyperactivity Disorder. Two of the students are hearing impaired and one has a significant health problem requiring an organ transplant. All of the students in the inclusion project are considered by the school district to be severely learning disabled. They have been in self-contained learning disabilities classes their entire school experience. All have had some mainstream experience in prior years. This is their first experience in a regular education inclusion class.

Theodore is a fourth grader. He has a severe problem with reading and is at the first grade level. Spelling, written language and math are at the second grade level, He has good auditory memory, but has a visual sequential memory deficit, poor word attack skills and does letter reversals. He has a history of social problems. He has speech and language problems and struggles very hard to formulate his ideas into simple sentences. His lack of contact with typical peers has made him unaware that his socially inappropriate behavior causes ridicule by other children.

Jane, a fourth grader, has a very difficult time staying on task and completing work independently. She often avoids doing work. Her expressive and written language is very low. Her reading and math are middle-second grade. She has Attention Deficit Disorder and takes medication for it at school. She has a hearing and health impairment.

Without medication, David, another fourth grader, is unable to focus on even simple tasks. Though clearly learning disabled, his primary disability is Attention Deficit Disorder/Hyperactivity Disorder. Even when working one-on-one with the aide, he cannot concentrate on any academic material without his medication. He gets physically hyperactive, crawling on the floor under desks, climbing over bookshelves and squirming in his chair. He has problems with visual perception and visual motor. His reading and language is more than a year below grade level. He is extremely impulsive, active and distractible. His highest academic area is math which is about six months below grade level. He requires almost constant attention by an adult to stay on task. He is aggressive and belligerent towards other students and teachers when unmedicated. When he is medicated, he is a likable child who is able to concentrate on his work.

Bill, a fifth grade student has emotional problems which, when coupled with his learning disability, makes him unable to maintain good social relations with other children. He can get very aggressive and resort to hitting and choking other children. His ability is in the low-average range. He is slow to grasp lessons, and is often pre-occupied with what another child has done rather than focusing on his own work.

Lisa is a fifth grader. She has had limited social experience and does not know how to interact with other children. She will often withdraw rather than join in activities with other children. Her primary problems are visual perception, spatial organization, math, written language, reading word attack skills and she is visually distracted. She also has speech and language problems in the areas of oral expression and following sequential directions.

Raymond is in fifth grade and has developmental delays in speech and language and vocabulary. He has poor verbal expression. He is distractible and has trouble staying on task. He has difficulty with short term memory. He has problems with spatial organization and has poor manual dexterity.

Tyler is in fifth grade. He is well-liked by the other students. He is tall for his age and has a friendly, sociable nature. His disabilities include visual-motor and sequencing problems. He reverses

letters when writing. He has difficulty organizing his work. He is low functioning in math and reading.

Carl is a fifth grader who is age appropriate socially, but has problems with reading, written language and expressive vocabulary. His long term memory problems make it difficult for him to recall what he learned previously. Consequently, his general knowledge is below grade level. He also has problems with visual memory.

Kim is a tall, somewhat reserved fourth grade girl who has visual organization problems that affect her ability to do schoolwork. Her long term memory is very weak, however her short term memory is a strength. She is at least a year below grade level in math and reading.

Nadine is a fourth grader. Her self-esteem is very low and it is a persistent problem her teacher tries to improve. Her learning disabilities include visual perception, organizational skills, auditory sequential memory skills. Her academic performance is at least a year below grade level in math and reading.

Kevin is in fifth grade. He gets along with his peers well. He is extremely slow in grasping ideas and concepts and it takes him a long time to complete work. He is often behind in his assignments. He has a problem with auditory processing and receptive language which may account for his slowness at grasping what is happening in class. He also has a motor coordination problem and works with the speech pathologist on language development.

Carrie is a fifth grader with a vivacious, bubbly personality. Her outgoing nature belies a host of problems which include auditory visual sequential memory, both long and short term. She reads at a first grade level. Carrie is hearing impaired and wears an FM hearing aide that receives and amplifies the teacher's voice. Her processing deficit is related to her hearing loss. She is significantly below in all academic areas. Other children like her because of her positive personality.

Grace is a fifth grader who struggles with reading, language and math. She has poor word attack skills in reading. Spelling is a very difficult subject for her. She has an auditory processing

delay. Her strengths include good visual sequencing, visual organization and following directions. Written language and math are both areas of significant delay.

Annie is a fifth grader with border-line low average intelligence. She recently moved into the community and her teacher believes there are environmental factors that seem to play a part in her overall low academic performance. There is no mother in the family and her older brother was killed recently in an accident. Her reading is at the second grade level. Her deficits are in the area of numerical reasoning, auditory memory, and concentration. She has poor written language. Her strengths include good abstract reasoning skills. She understands relationships and is good at making generalizations.

Tom is a fifth grader who came to our school during this school year. He has a severe reading disability which causes him to read at the first grade level. He has problems with visual memory, both short and long term. He is poor at spelling. His strength is his verbal expressive vocabulary. He does not like to read aloud because he is very socially aware and easily embarrassed if he hesitates or cannot pronounce words. He can be aggressive towards Bill, who has a behavior disorder, and his younger brother. This has been a source of trouble in class and on the school bus.

Wes is an athletic, well-liked fifth grader. He has had frequent unexplained absences from school and his parents seem unconcerned about how this negatively impacts his learning. His learning problems are in the areas of expressive verbal skills, auditory memory and processing. He is significantly below grade level in reading, written expression and spelling. His area of strength is math. His attendance has been a major factor in his progress.

These are the children with disabilities in the inclusion classes. They are fully integrated into regular classes and receive help for their problems from the teaching team members. Whenever possible, the children receive those services in the classroom unless the service, such as articulation therapy, requires a quiet, private area.

The inclusion children do the regular curriculum with modifications to meet their individual needs. For example, they will do a full assignment if they are able. Otherwise, the teacher will make

modifications, such as reduce the number of questions or allow answers to be given verbally instead of in writing in order for the student to complete the assignment. We use a modified grading system for the students with disabilities. Rather than the traditional letter grades, we use A, B, and then replace C with +3, D with +2, and E with +1. The teachers believe this is better for self-esteem than letter grades that imply failure. These modifications are done in class in a manner that does not draw attention to the children.

Applying Action Research to this Dissertation

According to McKernan (1991), action research is a form of *reflective inquiry* (p. 31). It uses the every day language of the participants and can only be validated by "unconstrained dialogue by the participants." Action research uses interpretive methods determined by the needs of the project. Accordingly, action research is often not fully defined until the researcher undertakes the exploration. McKernan said that action research is designed to deepen the researcher's understanding of the problem he/she is studying. My research is designed to help guide the development of the inclusion project and to raise awareness about inclusion as an educational practice.

Negotiating Access/Entry

As principal, my access is automatically established. It is important that every member of the team feel free to talk and act without fear of blame or recrimination. The basic needs of individuals were identified by Maslow (1970) and Deming (Aguayo, 1991) who said the workplace must be free of fear for the participants. Fear of failure leads to reluctance to try new ideas which would be detrimental to this study. As the leader, it is my responsibility to maintain an environment that is free from fear so the team members can do their work.

Observations of events and activities.Observations, group discussions at team meetings and individual conversations with teachers were the primary source of data. The teachers on the team provided secondary sources of information about what students, parents and other teachers were saying about the project. I kept a journal to record my data.

Interviews. Interviews of staff members were done in group and individual settings. I taped some of the interviews, but found this was awkward. Consequently, I made field notes at meetings which I later put in my journal. My practice was to check for understanding and accuracy the next day after a meeting by talking to team members individually about points we discussed. This was intended to confirm what was said. Sometimes, team members expanded on ideas, which gave additional insight into the project.

Written artifacts. Two parent opinion surveys were part of the study. In addition, narrative parent comments about the project were kept as part of the data.

Parent discussion group. The team met with a group of parents that had children in the three classes. This group was made up of parents of children with and without learning disabilities. The discussion focused on the project and what we had done during the school year. Their comments became part of the data used to develop the project for next year.

Tape recording. Audio taping was used for interviews and informal conversations. The recordings were converted into journal information that I used to analyze events and ideas.

Journaling. The main source for recording research information for this dissertation is my personal journal. This study focused on the leadership of the principal relative to the change from traditional to full inclusion. In order to reveal information about myself, it was important for me to record not only the interviews and discussions that take place, but my thoughts, impressions and actions, as well.

The following depictionshows the relative importance of each type of data used in this study.

Figure A.

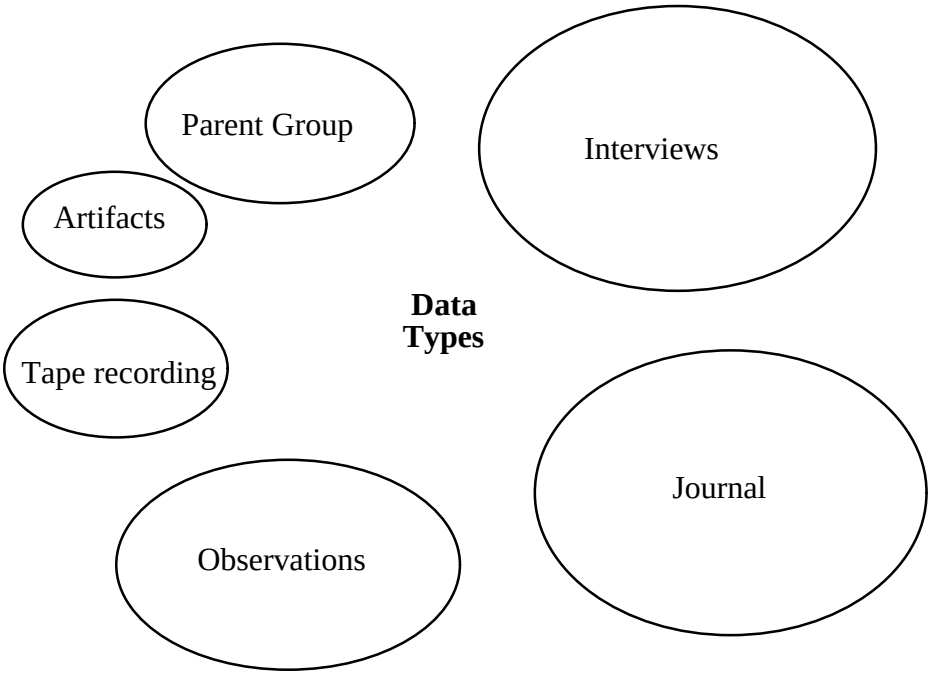

Figure A. This shows the types of data that were collected and their weighted importance in the study. The largest ovals represent data types that provided the most information. Smaller ovals represent other data types that were valuable, but were not used as much as the others.

Analysis of the Data

The last day for collecting data for the study was March 24, 1995. The data in each action cycle was examined, reflected upon and used for making decisions on the kinds of action needed for the project. Action research helped identify problems and options during the 1994-1995 school year. From considering the options, the team took action to improve the project throughout the year. Each type of data collected played a part in what we learned about the project. The data was used for reflection and theorizing throughout the duration of the project. Decisions were made by discussing the data and making decisions from it.

Whyte (1991) said that action research forces the researcher to rigorously check the facts with those who have first hand knowledge. In this study, the principal and the instructional staff discussed what we learned before we made interventions. Student input came through the teachers

based on their observations and the comments made by students. Data from the families was acquired through parent-teacher conferences, daily communications, a survey and a discussion meeting.

As information was collected, I studied it to help make on-going decisions and interventions to improve project performance. The team discussed the issues that occurred and took the necessary actions. This process constitutes an *action cycle.* Action cycles usually consist of input about the specific problem situation, additional data collection, analysis, decision-making and implementation of a change (McTaggart, et al 1984).

Interventions (actions) that result from an analysis of the data are an important aspect of the on-going nature of action research. These meaningful revisions are the action cycles that occur in the development of the project. Action research occurs in "real time." It is not based on historical events. It studies what is happening now for the purpose of effecting immediate improvements in the project.

Figure B.

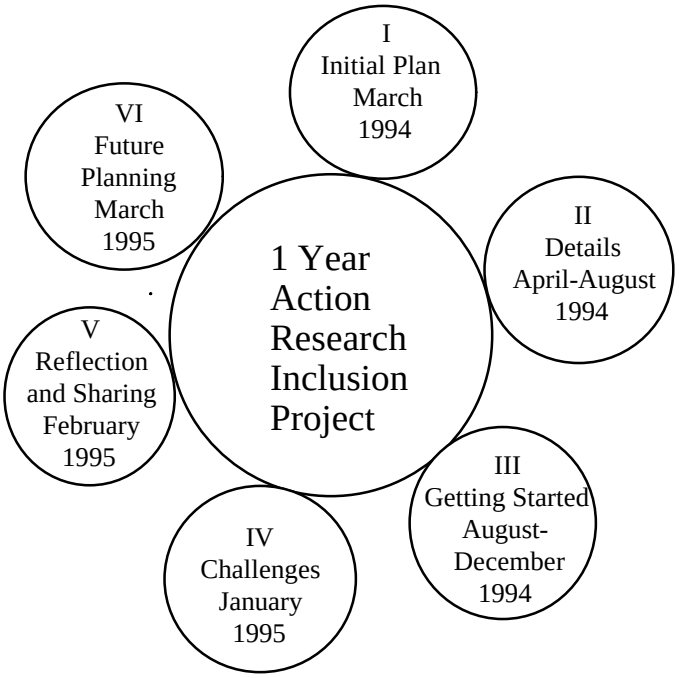

Figure B. This is a depiction of the action research cycles that took place in this project. Action cycles are data gathering and analysis that occur throughout the project and result in decisions that cause change. The entire action research project took one year. It moves clockwise from the Initial Plan of March, 1994 through six action cycles which ended in March, 1995.

Action Research Cycle Description

From March, 1994 to March, 1995, six action cycles developed to which the team responded. The brief description of each action cycle offered here will be followed by a detailed explanation in the next chapter.

Initial plan--cycle one: March, 1994. The team members had a mutual interest in the philosophy of full inclusion. They discussed plans for full inclusion of self-contained learning disabilities students in our school. The team identified the problems that needed to be addressed, and considered ways to meet those initial need. Data about students, schedules and teachers exists and was used in planning.

Working on the details--cycle two: April-August, 1994. Implementation began with using our information about the students to make up classes. Meetings with parents took place. An inclusion teacher was hired to join the team as a fourth grade regular class instructor. Student schedules were developed, and plans for team teaching and grouping were developed.

Getting started--cycle three: August-December, 1994. Classes began and we assessed the project's progress. Adjustments were made in schedules and grouping. The team met to discuss project problems and to find solutions. Teachers monitor student adaptation and performance. The team discussed instructional issues on a daily basis. Parent-teacher conferences were held with each family. New students with disabilities moved into the school and increased the enrollment to sixteen.

Challenges--cycle four: January, 1995. Concerns developed about the availability of time to meet during the day. Finding ways for Mrs. Glasser to get to the other inclusion classes were discussed. Student enrollment grew from 12 to 16 in the previous cycle and was having an impact on the project. It was apparent to the team that there were not enough special education teachers to handle the increased enrollment. Planning time and extra staff were real problems that recur in the data. The problems and possible temporary solutions were discussed by the team. The team implemented some interventions to compensate for the shortages. Teachers gathered objective and subjective evaluation data about inclusion student performance for up-coming annual reviews. The team began thinking about class placement of students for next year.

Reflection and sharing--cycle five: February, 1995. We shared our research at 1) a presentation to the Board of Education, and 2) a panel presentation of project at a county-wide special education workshop. The team discussed our impressions and the feedback from each presentation.

Future planning--cycle six: March, 1994. A written survey of the special education parents was done. A discussion meeting for all inclusion parents was held to talk about the project and get feedback. The information was used in the plans for next year.

Summary

The methodology used in this study is designed to meet the unique needs of the school. The teachers and I share the philosophy that full inclusion is a desirable educational innovation. The research used in this study is in the critical paradigm because it raised consciousness about inclusion and how it can be done through transformational leadership and collaborative decision-making. Action research provides a way for the researcher to look at the social dynamics that play an important role in understanding what is taking place in a school. Schools are social systems and action research is a socially responsible method of inquiry. Action research assisted in observing and recording the interactions with the participants and the conditions of the setting for the purpose of improving the project.

The action research methodology was planned specifically for the needs of this study. Action research uses quantitative and qualitative methods to gather data. The researcher analyzes the data, and in this study, interacts with the team members about what is being learned so that appropriate interventions can be made by the collaborative decision-making team.

The project faced challenges during the school year. Many lessons were learned from the action cycles that became part of the planing for the next school year. The next chapter explains the action cycles in detail.

CHAPTER V

THE INCLUSION STORY

March, 1994, was the start of the inclusion project for the self-contained children with learning disabilities at Daybreak School. The school culture of collaboration and innovation was at a stage in which we could now implement inclusion. The project is the result of other inclusion practices that took place in the school. This chapter will begin with a brief history of those events which led to the development of the project.

Since 1991, Mrs. Barrett, a learning disabilities resource room teacher, has worked with regular education teachers that shared a desire to have their children, who were part of the resource learning disabilities program, taught in their classrooms rather than pulling them out of class for resource instruction. As a result, several of the classroom teachers successfully did inclusion with the resource students.

The teachers liked the results. They commented that they liked having their students stay with them during the day. That way, they did not have to reteach when the student returned. They liked the extra help they got from Mrs. Barrett and Mrs. Conn, a speech and language pathologist, who would do team teaching with them in their classroom.

An Opinion Survey

Mrs. Barrett conducted a survey of parents in 1994 to find out how they felt the program served their child. In this survey, the term "REI" means regular education inclusion.

Table 5.1

Responses of Parents from the REI Survey Taken May 24, 1994 N = 10

Question	Frequency of Response					
	1	2	3	4	5	Total
1. My child benefited academically from participation in the REI program.	9	1	0	0	0	10
2. My child has benefited socially from participation in the REI program.	6	4	0	0	0	10
3. I need more information about the REI program.	0	1	1	6	2	10
4. My child received the support s/he needed in the REI program.	9	1	0	0	0	10
5. I agree with the philosophy and goals of the REI program.	9	1	0	0	0	10
6. I feel that the REI program is achieving its goals.	9	0	0	0	0	10
7. I feel that some changes should be made in the REI program.	0	0	0	9	1	10

1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = agree somewhat; 4 = disagree; 5 = don't know/need more information.

Note: This survey represents responses from parents with learning disabilities who were receiving learning disabilities services in the regular classroom. Ten surveys were sent out and ten were received.

The survey showed that parents were very pleased with their child's education in the REI program. This parental support was influential in making us consider doing full inclusion for the self-contained students.

Home-Based Mainstreaming

During the 1993-94 school year two learning disabilities teachers, Mrs. Glasser and Mrs. Oman, had team taught the self-contained students with learning disabilities. The self-contained students with learning disabilities were assigned to home rooms in regular education classes where they spent part of their day doing mainstream activities such as physical education, music, lunch,

recess and some academic subjects. The two special education teachers taught all other classes in their room. Twenty-two self-contained children were involved. Scheduling them for mainstreaming was a logistical nightmare which disrupted both regular and special education classes. Mrs. Oman moved to another state at the end of the school year. We began to look for options, since this plan had been so difficult to do.

The Inclusion Team and The Plan

Mrs. Glasser, the self-contained special education teacher, began discussing with Mrs. Minor, a regular education teacher, the idea of team teaching full inclusion classes which would include her self-contained learning disabilities students in regular classes. They had been working together with the home-base project. They shared teaching ideas and philosophy of teaching. The new inclusion plan called for Mrs. Glasser to become one of the regular education teachers during the 1994-95 school year with the self-contained students split between Mrs. Minor, Mrs. Glasser and Ms. Hansen, a new fourth grade teacher.

The inclusion team for the three project classes is made up of teachers; Mrs. Glasser, Ms. Hansen, Mrs. Minor, the aide Mrs. Kapp, and the speech and language pathologist, Mrs. Conn. As the only certified special education teacher on the inclusion team, Mrs. Glasser has responsibility for all special education meeting and paperwork requirements for the twelve special education children in addition to her classroom responsibilities.

The Action Cycles of The Project

Action cycles draw together the events and circumstances that surround critical junctures or stages in the research project. A cycle consists of data collection, identifying the concerns, critically thinking about solutions and taking an action or making interventions. This completes an action cycle, which then begins another action cycle. This section discusses what took place in the action cycles, the issues, the solutions and what interventions were made. The description of the action cycles offers insights into the leadership of the principal and the decision-making process of the team.

Events in this project will be explained as they occurred. Each cycle represents a period of time in which significant events around a particular theme or focus took place.

Initial Plan--Action Cycle One: March, 1994

The first meeting of the inclusion teachers to discuss the idea about doing inclusion for the 1994-95 school year occurred on March 8, 1994. The proposal would create three inclusion classes for the 1994-95 school year. Mrs. Glasser, a special education teacher, explained how the twelve children currently enrolled in her self-contained learning disabilities program could be placed in two fifth grades and one fourth grade in groups of four--two boys and two girls in each class, for next year.

I listened carefully to what they were saying. As a transformational leader, I was excited to see teachers taking an interest in developing an inclusion project. I encouraged the idea because I believed it was the next logical step in special education at Daybreak School. I did not interject any of my conditions or constraints into the discussion. They told me more about their plan and how it would work.

Academic and Social Goals

At that meeting, the team agreed that there are two basic goals for doing the inclusion project. 1) To challenge the students with disabilities with the regular curriculum, making content modifications and adjusting teaching methods to meet their individual needs. The challenge of the regular class would hopefully make them stretch intellectually to reach for the curriculum goals. 2) To give the students normal social contact with their peers. Self-esteem was an issue that the team believed was very important to the children we serve in the nine to eleven year-old age bracket. Mrs. Minor, who was teaching a self-contained learning disabilities class at the time, observed that the children displayed and verbalized their feelings about being "different" because they go to a special class, or get pulled out of regular class for speech or learning disabilities services. They frequently

used to sit together at lunch, isolated from other classes, and were teased about being in the "retard class" by typical students.

Children with learning disabilities will often make poor social choices in what they say and how they act. This can lead to confrontations with other students, isolation, fights and hurt feelings. Bill, a student with a learning disability and behavior disorder, calls names and touches other students and their property. He gets angry, aggressive and uncontrollable if he is confronted about his behavior or if another student treats him the same way. Inclusion for Bill is an opportunity to gain new friends and learn socially appropriate behavior. The team believed that inclusion can help improve these social issues by normalizing relationships with typical students and participating in cooperative learning groups.

Team Meetings

At a meeting on March 15, 1994, we talked about the adjustments the regular and special education children would have to make for this plan to work. It was important to all of us that the regular education students should not be slowed down for the sake of the special education students. It was also important that the special education students would not be overwhelmed by the content and pace of the regular education curriculum.

Our assumption was that these two, apparently dichotomous, needs could be met through curriculum modifications and innovative teaching strategies. For example, Mrs. Minor, a regular education teacher who has a graduate degree in gifted education, believes that intellectually high functioning students can be effectively taught along with their peers. She describes this as a kind of "inclusion for "gifted" children. Other students could benefit from these so-called 'gifted' activities. Consequently, she wanted to try teaching this way with the special education students included.

She and Mrs. Glasser also planned on grouping children according to achievement and academic interests for special lessons throughout the year. Sometimes Mrs. Minor would take a group of gifted students. Sometimes Mrs. Glasser would take a group of students with learning disabilities and slow typical students. They develop lessons to meet the students' needs. Subjects

such as reading, social studies and language would be ideal settings for grouping students according to interests and achievement for instruction. The idea is to let the teachers teach their strengths to groups of blended abilities.

Annual Reviews

Gaining support from the parents of the students with learning disabilities surfaced as a concern of the team. After all, the parents had always had a self-contained class for their children. We had told them that it was the best option for them. We were now telling them that inclusion is the best program for their child.

Annual review meetings were scheduled for April, 1994. Mrs. Glasser met with each parent to discuss their child's progress this year, and next year's annual educational goals and placement recommendations. Since all her students had been home-based in regular classes this year, she believed that the parents would accept inclusion as a next logical step for their children. She told them that fourth and fifth graders are more socially conscious than they were when they were younger, and that inclusion makes them feel like regular students.

Parental aspirations. Parents have expressed what they hope will happen with their children. Bill's father said he hopes that "one day things will click together for him," and that his problems will go away. Other parents with children in self-contained learning disabilities classes have expressed a similar hope by asking, "When will my child get out of special education?" Mrs. Barrett, one of the special education teachers and a parent of a child with disabilities said, "It is hard for parents to accept that their child is not normal, but they are not. I learned that about my son. I thought special education would make his problem go away, but it didn't."

The teaching team decided not to create an unrealistic expectation that inclusion will work a miracle and make the disability go away. We tell parents that education can help them adjust and adapt to the demands society will place on them, but it will be an extra challenge throughout their life. When Mrs. Glasser met with the parents in April, 1994, she explained that inclusion in regular

classes can help make that adjustment to the real world because it gives the student an opportunity to face realistic challenges and build self-confidence.

Teacher credibility. When Mrs. Glasser met with each of the special education parents to discuss the inclusion project, her credibility was put at risk. Parents have great respect for her as a teacher. They trust her judgment and skill at teaching. Their children love her as their teacher. A parent of a typical student in her inclusion class said, "Mrs. Glasser has done a wonderful job with my child." This is typical of her reputation.

Mrs. Glasser explained inclusion to the parents before mentioning it to the children so as not to adversely influence their parental prerogative. She encouraged them to discuss it with their children, and to contact her if they were hesitant.

The feedback she got from the parents was very encouraging. They wanted their children to be able to succeed in a regular classroom. They were supportive of the plan, and gave their permission to include their child. Mrs. Glasser's reputation and honesty helped the parents accept the plan. She, and the rest of us, were greatly encouraged by this development.

While the parents trusted her judgment, it did not mean that all parents were convinced inclusion was the answer. At least one of our parents articulated to Mrs. Glasser that her child needed one-on-one special help in a separate special education class. Mrs. Glasser tactfully explained that the reasoning behind including her child in a regular class was to give her real life experience and that her special needs would not go unattended. She would get the special help she needed within the setting of the regular class.

Other members of the inclusion team such as Mrs. Conn, the speech and language pathologist, and Mrs. Barrett the resource learning disabilities teacher, held conferences with their parents that would be participating in the program. Their explanations were similar, and the feedback they got was very positive.

Summary--Cycle One

The inclusion team formulated the idea for the inclusion project in this action cycle. The needs of the students were the primary consideration for inclusion. Home-based instruction was evidence that the students could adjust to regular classes. Inclusion was a natural progressive step.

A special effort was made by Mrs. Glasser to meet with all the parents and to gain their support. Her credibility and reputation helped win their confidence. Once the teachers and the parents were willing to try the inclusion plan, I explained it to the superintendent and gained his approval.

Working on the Details--Action Cycle Two: April-August, 1994

This was a very demanding cycle. We had several major issues to address. The teachers continued to work on curriculum plans for the classes. In May, 1994, I was going to select the fourth grade inclusion teachers from two of my regular education teachers; however, they took parental leave for the 1994-95 school year. This meant that a regular education teacher would have to be hired to take the fourth grade class.

Explaining the Idea to District Office

The basic plan was being openly discussed by the team at the school. Up until now, the superintendent was not aware of the plan. My responsibility was to explain what we wanted to do and seek his approval in much the same way that the teachers had involved me. Principals in my district have the authority to make instructional improvement utilizing existing staff. The principal is responsible for what happens in his/her school.

I described the project to our superintendent. I explained our goal of educating the self-contained students with learning disabilities in the regular classes and how the inclusion project could be done with existing staff members and classroom space. We would have to do some hand selection to make up the class rosters and schedules. I explained that the teachers were enthusiastic and willing to do the work involved. The superintendent, who advocates site-based management, let us go forward with the project (May 13, 1994).

Personnel Selection

Because the life of a principal is filled with many responsibilities, especially as the school year comes to a close, the vacancy was not advertised until the end of May, 1994. It would be my job to hire a teacher during the summer who would be: 1) capable of teaching an inclusion class with the assistance of the team and, 2) have personal qualities that would mesh with the collaboration team.

An explanation of the selection method may give the reader some insight into the principal's contribution to the project. Normally, I advertise a vacancy at a number of colleges and universities and post the vacancy at each of our other schools. I screen the candidates based on their applications and supporting information and then interview five candidates for the vacancy. I seriously considered having the teaching team join in the selection of this teacher because of the close working relationship that was required; however, I was hiring in the summer when the team members were on vacation, therefore the responsibility to select the right person was solely mine.

I wanted a teacher who had the personality to work with the team members. They needed to have a philosophy about education and children that is compatible with what the team and I believe. I looked for kindness, good humor, patience and human perceptivity in the candidates. I wanted someone who interacts with children rather than teaching "at" them. Ms. Hansen met all the qualifications and was hired. Although her only experience was as an aide, I believed she would make a good teacher.

Ms. Hansen came from another one of our schools. She had experience as an aide working with children with learning needs that were not in special education. She had a successful background, good recommendations and she had a personality that would easily adapt to the children, parents and the rest of the teaching team. I had interviewed her twice before making the decision (June 23, 1994). It was extremely important to me that the teacher would become part of the team. The worst case scenario would be if poor communication or alienation developed.

When the other team members got back from vacation, they found Ms. Hansen busy setting up her room and full of questions and ideas about her students. She adjusted right away with the

philosophy and teaching approach of the team. Her teaching style was untested as of yet, and she would face many methodological challenges teaching the inclusion class.

Curriculum Planning

Mrs. Minor and Mrs. Glasser told me that during the summer vacation, they spent many hours discussing teaching strategies and how to solve problems related to the curriculum. They dealt with how they would group students instructionally, what kinds of things could they do that would be fun and exciting for the students at all intellectual levels in the classes and how scheduling into science, music and physical education could take place. The science, physical education and music teachers helped accommodate the needs of the inclusion classes with regards to scheduling. They worked together to make all the parts fit into place. Everyone got a share of the special services. Teachers worked collaboratively to solve the scheduling problems.

Class rosters. Having met the first challenge of parental acceptance, the inclusion team began to deal with program planning. The team met with me (June 3, 1994) to discuss the selection of students for the three classes. Our standard school policy is to make classes a heterogeneous balance of all abilities and an equal number of boys and girls. Given the fact that we would have four very needy students in each inclusion class, we decided to keep the class size four students smaller than average. We anticipated the possibility of students with learning disabilities moving into the school and that they would have to be included in these classes, if that occurred.

Each class that had the special education students would have three or four less children than the average regular class to allow for growth and ease of instruction. We also decided not to burden the inclusion teachers with additional students with learning problems that were not identified in special education. We hand selected high, average and low average regular education students for the class. Mrs. Minor has a background in gifted education, so we included a group of high ability students in the class. The plan was to incorporate lessons that would appeal to all groups of students and to use peer assistance through cooperative learning activities as a method to make this happen.

In my estimation, Mrs. Minor is a very competent teacher, and if anyone could make this happen, it would be she.

Scheduling. As principal, I let the teachers, the instructional experts who were going to have to live with the situation, make decisions regarding the schedule (August 10, 29, & 30, 1994). They took on the problems of scheduling that I previously had to do. They were very insightful about how schedule considerations would impact other non-inclusion classes, and they did not want to generate any negative feelings towards inclusion by the other teachers. They studied the options, discussed them among themselves and came to consensus on what to do. Their energy and morale gave momentum to the project. Finally, they came to me, as principal to ratify the schedule.

As a principal, I do not have a problem with letting teachers design schedules; however, I have to stay involved, as I am ultimately responsible for what happens in the school. In addition, there are some things I have to consider as an administrator. I have to make sure the schedule is equitable and fair to all students and teachers. I also have to take into account any possible conflicts the schedule would have with our collective bargaining agreement such as plan time, total teaching time per week and adequate lunch for teachers. The team solved almost all these problems in the schedule they proposed. There were no major problems left to solve.

Computer instruction and science are taught as separate classes at Daybreak School. Ms. Hirth teaches both subjects in a science room and a computer lab. Scheduling time for all the classes was made easier by the fact that there was one less class without the self-contained learning disabilities class. This lightened her teaching load, and Ms. Hirth was willing to modify lessons, assignments and assessment to meet the needs of the students with learning disabilities. This same situation applied to physical education and vocal music. These teachers were used to having students with learning disabilities mainstreamed into their classes, and they adapted well to this assignment. They were equally supportive of the project (August 29 & 30, 1994).

The inclusion program intended for the special education students to be like all their peers. They were to be in all the same classes and have the same opportunities as their typical peers. They could join band, participate in intramurals and all school sponsored events.

Prior to registration in August, 1994, my office staff made up class rosters and registration packets for the each student (August 3, 1994). Class sizes were kept smaller than the average class. We expected there would be more challenges, and a few less children might make the task easier. The teaching team and I double checked every aspect of the enrollment of each class to make sure we had done things right. We wanted to get a flawless start.

Special Education Paperwork Responsibilities

The inclusion teachers spent many hours outside of school during April-August, 1994 working out lesson plans and teaching scenarios they believed would be successful. In addition to this, Mrs. Glasser would be responsible for the considerable task of keeping up with special education requirements such as head count reporting, Individualized Educational Plan meetings with each parent, annual reviews, and coordinating social work assistance. I saw this as the work of two people, and indeed it was a problem that surfaced through my observations and interviews with team members in action cycles during the year.

Training and Induction Into Inclusion

I was concerned with training the teachers about inclusion. Mrs. Barrett and Mrs. Glasser expressed the same concern to me at a discussion on August 25, 1994. While they were both trained in college and well read on the subject of inclusion, we were concerned that our regular education teachers, specifically Ms. Hansen, needed training and mentoring to help make her successful. The team members had a plan to help her get the training she needed. Mrs. Glasser, the lead inclusion teacher, gave as much consulting help to Ms. Hansen as she could fit into her schedule. In addition, Mrs. Kapp, our highly experienced instructional aide, spent most of her time in Ms. Hansen's class, helping with instruction and relaying questions back to Mrs. Glasser in her class. The mentoring system worked and helped get Ms. Hansen off to a successful start.

Ms. Hansen quickly demonstrated her ability in the classroom. Mrs. Glasser had to leave her go on her own because of time commitments. She kept in touch with her before and after school. Mrs. Kapp, an experienced instructional aide, helped Ms. Hansen acclimate to her new assignment. Mrs. Kapp worked with the students with learning disabilities for years, so she knew their needs instructionally. Ms. Hansen and Mrs. Kapp developed a good working relationship.

Staff development. The team absorbed and used information on inclusion like a dry sponge. They attended a conference on October 14, 1994, that dealt with inclusionary practices and philosophy. This event stimulated discussion and confirmed our inclusion practices. We were becoming excited with the progress of the project.

At the August 10, 1994, meeting, we scheduled lunch so that the entire team could be free at the same time to discuss problems and concerns that develop. Mrs. Barrett, an avid reader of special education research, shared what she found with the team. I overheard informal discussions about inclusive education among the team members at lunch and after school. This kind of sharing of ideas is self-stimulated staff development.

Ownership by Teachers

The second action cycle included challenges such as class rosters, scheduling physical education, music and science, curriculum planning and grouping of children for instruction that had to be answered before we got started teaching the fall semester. The teachers donated the time to do this work over the summer vacation. Working through these problems helped expand the understanding of the teachers about the complexity of fitting the inclusion program into the school. They became empowered to take action when they saw something that needed attention.

Summary--Cycle Two

In this action cycle, the inclusion team planned the project in detail. Students were placed in classes, schedules were prepared and the teachers worked on how they would team teach. All of the planning proved to be well done. The students started school in August, 1994, and the classes operated without confusion.

I hired a new teacher who would be part of the inclusion team. It was important to me that this person would have experience with special education students and have a personality that would integrate with the other members of the team. The other teachers welcomed Ms. Hansen and helped her adjust to the assignment.

Building strong collaborative relationships was an important theme in this action cycle. The decision-making power of the group was evident in how they were able to adjust to changing conditions on a daily basis. They arranged lessons, changed groups of students and met whatever needs had to be done all on their own. They rarely came to me, the principal, to solve their problems.

Getting Started--Action Cycle Three: August-December, 1994

During this cycle, the team met almost every day to discuss the curriculum and to adjust how they were grouping and scheduling students for lessons. I did not attend those meetings. I met with the inclusion team members weekly and visited the inclusion classes to collect information and follow the progress of the project.

One of the superintendent's goals wass for our schools to become site-based with regard to decision-making. Our project was consistent with this goal. I met with him and explained the general project plans. I explained how scheduling concerns were resolved and that we were confident the project would fit into our regular program. He was supportive of the plan. He accepted my judgment and the work of the team and did not place any restrictions on what we were doing.

Students and Teachers Learn to Adapt

The classes began teaching children in August, 1994. The planning of the team was thorough. The children with disabilities integrated well in all three classes. The teachers made efforts not to draw special attention to these children. Both Mrs. Glasser and Mrs. Kapp were asked by typical students if they were the teachers who taught the "slow" or "retarded" kids last year. Mrs. Glasser said the students thought having her as their teacher meant they were "slow" or "retarded." They both found answers that allayed the doubts of the children. Essentially, they reassured the boys and girls that they used to have only students with learning disabilities, but that now they are teaching regular students.

Working relationships between typical students and students with disabilities began to develop. Cooperative learning was commonly used in the classes. The teachers reported that the typical students would make compensations for the inclusion children. Mrs. Minor gave an example of this. Lisa was part of a cooperative learning group of students that had the responsibility to decide what each child's role would be for the assignment. Like all the others, Lisa go a productive task she could do. No reference was made about her learning disability. The students simply found tasks that each of them was good at doing, including Lisa.

Positive social relations between the students began to develop from the first week of school in August. The teachers had observed that the typical children and those with disabilities integrate when they play outside, except for Bill, who continued to have relations problems. Tyler is liked by all the students. His teacher said, "He is a good athlete and he is kind and fair." Being part of the group was a new experience for most of the inclusion students. The playground supervisor said,

"Theodore had made a group of friends. They play soccer together." Before inclusion, Theodore did not integrate well with other children and did not participate in games outside on the playground. His teacher noticed that Theodore's language is improving because he has "more conversation with other children." Mrs. Kapp and Mrs. Conn believed his socialization has contributed to "Theodore's increased ability to phrase his thoughts in complete sentences. Last year, he answered in two or three word phrases. This year, he is using complete sentences" (November 2, 1994).

Last year, the students with learning disabilities were frequently shunned or involved in fights. As principal, I frequently had to deal with playground and bus discipline problems involving Theodore during the 1993-94 school year. This dropped off almost completely when he got in the inclusion class.

Bill, another inclusion student has a behavior disorder. He still has the same kinds of problems he had last year in the separate self-contained class. He loses his temper, calls names and hits other children. What is different in inclusion is that when these behaviors occur, his typical peers are aware of his problem and do not aggravate the situation by calling him names. Their tolerance has helped the teacher help Bill with his problem. Mrs. Glasser and I have been able to focus on Bill's behavior more effectively because the other children are refraining from reacting to his inappropriate behaviors. The typical students have grown in their understanding about disabilities and how to react. They are tolerant of Bill most of the time despite his behavior.

Mrs. Kapp, the instructional aide, works with Ms. Hansen, the fourth grade teacher. In the start of the school year, Mrs. Kapp took the four inclusion students out of the regular class for math and reading and to do make-up assignments. She was less than convinced that inclusion would work for these children because of the degree of their disability and the fact that they had only been in self-contained classes up until now.

The children were taken out of class for academic instruction. However, if inclusion was to get a chance, we knew the students would have to be in the inclusion class. Mrs. Glasser used gentle

persuasion over the period of several weeks to encourage Mrs. Kapp to transition the students back into the classroom for instruction.

The students adjusted to the regular classroom instruction. Two of these students, Jane and Theodore, were very dependent on Mrs. Kapp last year. Mrs. Kapp said they were "becoming more independent, responsible and capable" by being in the regular class. Both students were getting some "B's" on their tests. Mrs. Kapp said these grades are "something that would not have been possible last year."

Lunch Meetings

The teaching team met over lunch informally to go over plans and grouping changes. This became a regular practice. Flexibility was the name of the game. They discussed teaching situations and adjusted groups and teaching strategies on short notice to meet the needs of the students. When I met with them to discuss the program, the teachers spoke of "challenging all the students." Mrs. Glasser did not want the inclusion classes "to become remedial." Mrs. Minor and Mrs. Glasser agreed that their "goal was to challenge all children at their own level." Mrs. Glasser wanted "to bring whatever help is necessary to the student with disabilities" (December 2, 1994).

Schedules and curriculum modifications.The scheduling with music, physical education, band and science was working well. Each one of these special teachers agreed with the philosophy of modifying the curriculum and assessment methods, if necessary. The students with learning disabilities participated fully in all these programs. They were eligible to be in school band and after school intramural sports. An observer could not tell them from any of the other students.

Notes from my observations (October, 1994) indicated that both teachers and typical peers made adjustments for their talents and weaknesses in a natural, non-critical way. The teachers encouraged the students to cooperate and consider one another in their activities. Mrs. Minor and Mrs. Glasser report that the typical students "show responsibility to include the students and are concerned about their feelings ." Several of the team members expressed the belief that these positive social interactions were very important now and in the future when these children become adults.

Science could be a challenging academic subject, especially for students with learning disabilities. Ms. Hirth, the fifth grade science teacher took special consideration of their particular learning styles. Ms. Hirth grouped the students so that those with learning disabilities were included with others that were good at sharing jobs and have non-critical personalities. She said that the children seemed unaware that she was doing this. If a student was not good at writing, she would give them perhaps, a job of taking something apart for the group and let someone else do the writing. She might let them tell their answers to her rather than have to write them out. She found that they were "equally or more talented (than typical students) on the computers," and often more motivated than the typical students (December 2, 1994).

Parent-teacher Conferences

We had conferences with every parent in November, 1994. The team, including the speech and language pathologist and social worker, developed schedules so that they could be included in conferences with special education parents. The goal was to be as informative about their child's progress as possible and to discuss any concerns they have with the parent.

Team planning session for conferences.We met as a team to discuss how to prepare for conferences (November 2, 1994). Mrs. Glasser would need a substitute to cover her class so she could get to the conferences with special education parents in the other classes. I arranged this.

A major goal of parent teacher conferences is to report student progress. In fairness to the students with disabilities who were learning the regular curriculum, the team had developed modified work requirements and a modified grading standard. This was reported to the parents. The inclusion children did the regular curriculum with modifications made by the teacher to meet their individual needs. For example, they would do a full assignment if they were able. Otherwise, the teacher made modifications, such as reducing the number of questions or allowing answers to be given verbally instead of in writing in order for the student to complete the assignment.

The modified grading system for the students with disabilities was a variation of traditional letter grades. We used A, B, and then replace C with +3, D with +2, and E with +1. The team

believed this was better for self-esteem than letter grades that imply failure. These modifications were done in class in a manner that does not draw attention to the children.

The teachers said that some of the typical students were aware of the difference and most were willing to accept it. Rachel, a typical student, was the only in Mrs. Glasser's class to complain that, "They get it easier than we do. That's not fair." Mrs. Minor and Ms. Hansen said it was not a problem in their classes.

Communicating with the parents. The students had been in the regular program for a full grading period. They were exposed to the regular curriculum, though with modifications. This was very challenging to them. As a team, we had hoped the academic performance of the inclusion students, based on teacher subjective evaluation, would be better. While we were not disappointed, we continued to look for ways to improve the academic program.

Socially, the students were doing well. The teachers reported that the students had made new friends and that they were inviting each other over to their homes. Mrs. Glasser said, "Perhaps this (socialization) is more important than the academics." Mrs. Kapp told me that one of the inclusion students who could not make friends last year, had indeed made friends this year. They play together outside. We saw that the students were acclimating to the regular classes, and this encouraged us to believe we were doing the right thing by changing to inclusion (December 6, 1994).

There were examples of academic gains as well. Theodore was getting a "B" in science. Last year, he would only give one word answers to questions. This year he has been using complex sentence structure. It is her impression that he is picking this up from listening to other children state their answers (November 2, 1994).

The teachers asked the special education parents how they thought their child was doing in the class. Most expressed their approval for the inclusion project. Theodore's mother was pleased that "he was not getting in trouble on the bus and playground." Lisa's mother expressed some concerns that "the self-contained program provided more one-on-one help." None of the parents were asking for their child to go back in a self-contained program (November 6 & 7, 1994).

The Administrative Team Meetings

The district administrative team brought up a discussion about inclusionary education at a meeting on November 2, 1994. Concerns expressed were about the concept of inclusion rather than a criticism of what my school was doing. One administrator felt that inclusion was being forced on us by Peace County Special Education Cooperative (PCSEC) who were including two students with physical disabilities to the regular education program. PCSEC was not sending any additional help

for one child because he did not need it. Not all the teachers at that school were willing to make modifications to meet the needs of the student. Another principal said they were concerned that they were expected to do inclusion without enough training, and yet another principal said it isn't realistic to do inclusion without additional personnel.

My concern hearing this was that I was in the minority by trying inclusion voluntarily at my school. The problems mentioned could become reasons for not trying inclusion. I did not want to create a tension with the administrative staff that made them feel they were being forced into inclusionary practices. It was our choice to do inclusion which was made possible by the circumstances unique to our school. I realized that as the district special education coordinator, my actions were seen as policy setting, possibly forcing them into something they were not ready to accept. I needed to articulate that this was not the case for two reasons. I did not believe any good can be accomplished by forcing a school staff to do something that they are not ready for and I did not want them to interfere with what I was doing at my school.

Problems That Surfaced Through Action Research

Now that the project was operational, we found several problems that required action. One of the problems was the extra work the inclusion teachers were doing to make the project successful. Mrs. Glasser had more work than any teacher because of her responsibilities as the special education teacher. She did not complain about this work because she took it on willingly, but that did not make it fair or right. In October, 1994, Mrs. Minor and Mrs. Glasser both told me that they needed more time to prepare for conferences. We hired two substitutes to get them release time in order to prepare for conferences.

Mrs. Glasser said there was not enough time to get necessary work done. "We need to work out planning time for teachers." Mrs. Glasser, the teacher with dual responsibility for regular and special education students, simply did not have enough time to get her responsibilities done. Another teacher told me Mrs. Glasser was working nights and weekends keeping up with the work load. One of our principals, a personal friend of Mrs. Glasser, corroborated this. After investigating further, I

found that the other members of the team were also working weekends and every day after school on inclusion related issues. They needed more time for planning.

I began thinking seriously about getting another teacher; however, our school district does not hire additional staff during the school year unless there is an extraordinary need. I did not think we had enough justification yet. We did not have evidence to support that what we were doing warranted hiring extra personnel. Inclusion was so new that neither the administration or school board understood it completely. Until we could fully explain about inclusion and show its success, I believed we had to make do with the existing personnel.

The addition of five new students with learning disabilities created an another demand on time and personnel for the team. On November 14, 1994, the team discussed this and decided that we would need to develop a rational for hiring a substitute teacher on a weekly basis to free Mrs. Glasser to do consulting in the other inclusion classrooms. This was only a temporary improvement.

The increase in students strengthened our position that another teacher was needed. Based on State Board of Education guidelines for special education personnel, we should hire an additional teacher when we exceed fifteen students being serviced by a full time teacher and instructional aide. This was an objective standard that said we needed an additional teacher in order to comply with state standards. If we had another teacher, we could release Mrs. Glasser to do more consulting and team teaching with the other teachers, while the new teacher took over her class.

On December 6, 1994, I discussed this matter with the superintendent. I told him of the increased number of students and the request of the team for additional help. He took the matter under advisement and we were to discuss it again at a later date.

The teachers told me that the physical distance between the inclusion classrooms created an additional problem for communicating between teachers concerning students and lessons as events happened. We had not thought about room location as a problem in the initial planning stage. The teachers kept the same rooms they had the year before. Moving rooms would require relocating other teachers.

At the December 12, 1994 team meeting, the teachers said that if the rooms were near each other, they would be able to talk rather than rely on students to be able to explain their assignment and what they need to complete that day. Being on different sides of the building really hampered the communication process. Because a move would require displacing another classroom of students which might create a negative attitude by other teachers about inclusion, we decided to correct the problem next year by moving rooms closer together.

These problems activated the team members to devise some short term solutions. Substitutes were hired for the temporary need for release time, however no permanent solution has been found yet. I had mentioned the personnel problem to the superintendent. I decided to wait until March, 1995, when the district would be considering staff for next year, to go back to the superintendent with a request for extra staff. I felt I would have more information about the program to justify the request at that time. Personnel and time demands were two areas I carefully watched in my action research data collection.

Socialization

At our December 2, 1994, team meeting, the discussion focused on socialization. The inclusion teachers felt that while academics were important, social interaction and self-esteem were equally important. They felt they needed to keep working at ways to improve social interactions between typical and special education students.

At the meeting, Mrs. Minor recounted how an inclusion student was not turning in assignments on time. She knew the child could do the work in a timely fashion, but was not putting forth enough effort. Mrs. Minor put her name on the board (which is a practice in her classroom) as a reminder that her work was late. The child was really surprised to see her name on the board. This was the first time it had ever happened to her. Mrs. Minor said that was the last time she had to put her name on the board. She has now adjusted to the work load. The teacher felt that her growth is the result of exposure to the rigors of the regular class.

Mrs. Glasser said, "The kids in the class have been . . . understanding of the students with disabilities, but they have their limits. Bill is so annoying to the other children." Mrs. Barrett added, "If it wasn't for the structure you have set up in your class, Bill would be in constant disagreements with other children." The structure seemed to be working fairly well. Mrs. Barrett said, "It is hard to pick out who are the students with disabilities in the inclusion classes."

Mrs. Minor said she lets the students set up their seating arrangements. "The children like to sit with the students with disabilities. They are well liked. This would not have happened when we were doing the home-based program last year, but it is working well this year." Mrs. Barrett added, "You have to provide an environment to make that happen."

Ms. Hansen reported that the class "is very understanding of the students with disabilities." Another team member commented that a teacher can put the students with disabilities in situations which promote social success by selectively grouping them with students who are good at including everybody in the project and who have positive social skills. Mrs. Barrett observed that adults with learning disabilities will often have trouble finding and holding a job. Helping our students learn socialization skills is one way of helping them hold jobs as adults. They learn what the real world expects and how to deal with people who do not have disabilities.

In spite of the problems just mentioned, the teachers do not want to go back to the old way. Mrs. Reed, one of the regular teachers said, "You can't take it (inclusion) away from us. We can't go back to the way it was." She explained that we have progressed, and we can't go backwards, we must push ahead (November 15, 1994).

Personal Observations

Action research increased communication between the teachers and the principal. I found myself more directly in touch with what is happening on a day-to-day basis. Teachers came to me and discussed what was happening. Before doing collaborative decision-making, teachers would come and ask me for decisions on small issues. Now that the teachers were the designers, they do not ask--they inform. For example, scheduling was previously done by me. Now the teachers handle it

themselves. They did not expect me to make the decisions, but rather to know of them and support them.

Teachers on the team were aware of the inclusion efforts in two of the three other schools. They knew what the perceptions of teachers in those schools were, and what they liked and what they disliked about inclusion. They seemed more politically alert and sensitive than when decisions were made by the principal and passed down to the teachers. At one team meeting, the teachers talked about the best way to present the idea of extra personnel to the superintendent. They suggested inviting him to the team meeting and let the teachers inform him of the need.

During this cycle, the teachers became the stakeholders and were willing to share ideas with the other staffs. This seemed to have real potential for expanding cultural change across the school district.

Summary--Cycle Three

We were learning to adapt the plan to the reality of the students and the school. What we conceived as a theoretical idea, was now beginning to take form. The team was responding to the needs of all the students. They were adjusting the inclusion project to fit the needs of the children.

We were realizing the impact inclusion is having on the students. We were learning how the students were integrating socially. The teachers shared many insights about the students and the effectiveness of the inclusion program.

In this cycle, action research data showed a recurring need for additional staff to help the inclusion program. We started the project expecting to use the existing staff, however the realities of inclusion proved to be demanding on the teachers, especially Mrs. Glasser, who was responsible for all the special education students.

In October and November, 1994, five new students with learning disabilities moved into the inclusion classes. Getting to know their individual needs and making adjustments to include them into the project was very challenging to the team.

Another lesson learned in this cycle was the importance of communication. The team discussed the project daily with each other. Decisions were made routinely by the teachers without my intervention.

They decided issues such as lessons and grouping of students. Another important type of communication was parent conferences with all the families in the inclusion project. We got feedback from them that encouraged our inclusion efforts.

Challenges--Action Cycle Four: January, 1995

In this action cycle, we continued to adjust for the impact created by additional students moving into the inclusion project. We also had to plan for making presentations about our project. The challenges faced in this action cycle were not completely solved, but the team continued to work at finding solutions.

The twelve original students had been prepared for inclusion. They had been in the home-base program last year and had worked with our teachers. Their disability and needs were well known to us. We had planned on the possibility for some new special education students, but no one thought that we would get five new students.

The new students have been described along with the other children in Chapter IV, had arrived in October, 1994. Their case studies and multi-disciplinary conference reports indicated that they had learning disabilities similar to the existing students. They all had been in self-contained learning disabilities classes with some mainstreaming into academic classes. None of them had ever been in an inclusion program.

The team seemed very challenged by the added number of students. Mrs. Glasser said she had worried about putting them into an inclusion class because their ability and experience were unknown to us (January 3, 1995). She knew the other students because she had experience working intensively with them. Whatever reservations the teachers may have had, they proceeded to fully integrate the new students into the inclusion classes.

From my routine wandering observations, the new students were normally accepted in the classes. On one of my observations, Tom, one of the new students was participating in social studies in Mrs. Minor's class. There was a discussion about the Revolutionary War taking place. The teacher was raising questions and students were randomly answering. Tom answered a map question about where Valley Forge was located. He was uninhibited in volunteering an answer. He appeared to perform much like any other student in the class.

Carl, another one of the new students had a difficult time adjusting to the class and work load. His teacher initially saw some "oppositional behavior" to doing work, though she felt he was capable of doing the assignments. She dealt with him much the same as she would any child. She insisted he finish his work before going out to recess. Mrs. Minor communicated via phone and note with Carl's mother about what was happening in class. According to the teacher, his mother supported what she expected from Carl. He adapted to the expectations of the class and his oppositional behavior subsided in a few weeks (January 18, 1995).

Despite their initial concerns, the inclusion teachers told me that the new students developed friendships and were adapting to the program. Integration into a new school can be a challenge for any student, with or without disabilities. Socialization and adjustment of the students are major concerns of the teachers.

The Need for Extra Help

The teachers continue to state the need for another teacher for the program. While visiting Mrs. Glasser's class in early January, 1995, she said, "This is really a hard year. Contacting parents is difficult. There is no time during the day to call, so I call them at night." I did a follow-up conversation with Mrs. Glasser on how extra personnel could help solve these problems. She said that she needs more time to go to the other classes to monitor and help the other teachers. If we had another teacher in charge of the classroom, Mrs. Glasser could be free to go to the other rooms and help make modifications for the students with disabilities.

She also said she "was very concerned about the lack of time to meet with the other teachers to collaborate and discuss the needs of the students" (January 3, 1995). An extra teacher would make Mrs. Glasser available to meet with the other teachers when they have a planning period caused by music and physical education.

In the third action cycle, I reported a preliminary discussion I had with the superintendent about the need for an extra teacher (December 6, 1994). I knew that staff considerations by the administration would take place in March, 1995, and that we may not get another teacher. The State Board of Education guidelines call for an additional special education teacher when enrollment goes above ten. These guidelines are occasionally ignored by school districts due to budget considerations, but they are considered out of compliance with the regulations. Our school district tries to operate within its budget, which means additional teachers are not considered until the next school year, unless there is an extreme need.

My experience as a principal is that it is easy to make hasty personnel decisions based on unexpected events, such as increased enrollment. Five new students were a problem. However, I felt that we did not know enough about the students to know what impact they were going to have on the project. Teachers and children need time to adapt to each other and the setting.

In any event, we were going to have to wait until next year for any possible increase in staff because that is the hiring policy. This offered no relief for our immediate needs. On January 18,

1995, the team thought up an idea that would make more time for planning. Mrs. Minor had been using her science period to help a fourth grade teacher. Rather than continue to do that, it was decided that she should have those 25 minutes per day to deal with the increased inclusion load. Mrs. Glasser needed more time to do consultative work with the other two inclusion teachers and to do required testing and paper work. We decided to have a substitute come and fill in for her once or twice a month to help get us through the last half of the year.

Planning How To Use an Additional Teacher

I began developing my case for an additional teacher based on State Board of Education staffing requirements for special education (January 19, 1995). I phoned Peace County and Illinois State special education offices to get the correct information regarding staffing. The State requirements call for a full-time teacher for up to ten students with learning disabilities, and up to fifteen students with an aide. We qualified for an additional teacher under these requirements.

I found that it is difficult to apply absolute numbers, such as one teacher for each ten students with disabilities, to inclusion classes. The staffing regulations are based on the pre-inclusion, self-contained special education class model where the teacher was expected to do all the work with a limited number of children. Inclusion involves regular teachers that assist the students on the special education teacher's case by helping provide much of the primary education to the children with learning disabilities. However, the work load on the special education teacher is still considerable since he/she now has students in different locations to manage, increased paperwork to do, and additional collaboration with teachers about the students.

An idea for next year. An idea for using an additional teacher next year came up at a team meeting on January 18, 1995. Mrs. Glasser is teaching one of the inclusion classes this year in addition to being responsible for the special education students IEP's, annual reviews, head count, and multi-disciplinary conferences. This was necessary for the first year to get regular education teachers involved and willing. Now that the first phase of the inclusion project is working and more regular education teachers have inclusion experience and are willing to be involved, we could hire another

special education teacher for the classroom and free Mrs. Glasser so she could monitor students and work with the teachers on modifications and lesson plans. The sixteen students could be spread over four classes which would result in an average of four students per inclusion class. This would be a manageable load. Mrs. Glasser would also be free to meet with the other teachers during their planning time.

Request for an additional teacher. I made my request for an additional teacher at the March 8, 1995, administrative meeting. I wanted to make it clear to the administration that we had a demonstrated need based on this year's experience. Inclusion cannot be done correctly if it is not supported by enough staff. The inclusion program will have sixteen students again next year which, according to the State staff requirements, call for hiring an additional teacher. This would be necessary whether we did full inclusion or separate, self-contained classes. The request was accepted along with other staff requests and will be acted upon in May, 1995.

Preparing For Group Presentations

Part of the design of this action research was to share the project with professionals and parents in order to get valuable feedback about the project. I believe these groups were discrete sources of information for our action research project, and I wanted to get their input. At the team meeting on January 5, 1995, I raised the issue of having them share knowledge about our work with others for the purpose of informing and getting feedback. The team gave me their support for presenting the program to the board of education and the parents of children in the inclusion classes.

Our first audience was going to be the Board of Education. The superintendent encourages the practice of featuring a curriculum presentation each month. I wanted the school board to be aware of innovations and changes that are taking place in special education. None of the board members have children with disabilities, so this would be an opportunity to explain what the teaching staff is doing for these children. We decided to avoid making any request for additional staff at the meeting, but rather show what we are doing with what we have for the students.

The second group I wanted to address about the program was the parents of children in the inclusion classes. They have lived with the inclusion project for the year, and potentially have some valuable feedback to help us make changes in the project for next year. I wanted the teachers to take ownership of the idea of presenting to these groups and come up with how they wanted to do it.

At the January 18, 1995, team meeting, we talked about plans for the Board presentation. I decided to leave them intentionally incomplete at this time so that team members could think about how they would do it.

We met again two weeks later to discuss the presentation to the Board. The team had ideas about what should be said. We decided to have the whole team present at the February 21, 1995, Board meeting and have a panel discussion. Mrs. Barrett and Mrs. Glasser were to present the inclusion concept and how the students were grouped and the other members were to give details about how it is working in their classrooms.

Some of the comments about inclusion the teachers decided to make were: "Patience and tolerance (towards the students with disabilities) are learned by regular students. They assist the students with learning disabilities." "The students with learning disabilities accept correction and help from their peers. Even Bill (the student with behavior problems) takes help from other kids when he would reject it from an adult."

The teachers did not want to portray inclusion as perfect. They wanted the Board to know the negative side as well. Mrs. Barrett said, "When you do inclusion, the problems become less obvious. It is easy to not see the need for additional staff and time because the students are not in a separate class. We could give the impression that all is going well, when in fact we have problems." Another teacher said, "One parent liked the special attention her daughter received in the self-contained program." Mrs. Glasser said one parent lamented to her that, "They (the parents) have to help their child at home with their assignments." Mrs. Minor said that, "Expectations in regular education are harder than self-contained classes."

The teachers believed that there were positive social aspects to inclusion. "Self-esteem increased with inclusion." "Inclusion gives them reality experience in a protected way." "Social behavior has improved with the children with disabilities." The team discussed the presentation for more than an hour. At the end of the team meeting (January 18, 1995), Mrs. Reed, said it was inspiring to hear what everybody had to say about inclusion.

Another speaking engagement for the team. I told the team that the presentation to the Board would be a rehearsal for the presentation to the parents. I received a call on February 16, 1995, from the PCSEC training coordinator who asked us if we would be willing to share our inclusion project with teaching staffs from other school districts who were interested in trying inclusion. The meeting would take place on March 7, 1995.

At the next team meeting, I asked if they would be willing to do this. They did not want to be considered some kind of experts at inclusion. If that was understood, they would be willing to talk about what we were doing in our project. The presentation before the Board of Education took on new meaning. It would be a dress rehearsal for both the parents and the training session.

The Constraint of Time

Time was a constant enemy. Teachers did inclusion related work in the evening. Some of our team members had many graduate class obligations that limited the number of afternoon days we had for team meetings. During my informal wandering observations, I had observed that despite the time limitations, the teachers work very hard and were committed to doing inclusion. They took from their personal time to do what is necessary (January 12, 1995).

Summary--Cycle Four

The challenge of personnel for the inclusion project at Daybreak School was clearly a demonstrated need. Each team member was contributing beyond the normal teacher work load to make inclusion successful. Ownership of the project by the teachers was very evident in the commitment they were making.

In order to serve this many children, another special education teacher was needed. I made a formal request for an additional teacher in March, 1995. It was to be acted upon by the Board of Education in May, 1995.

I wanted the team to present the inclusion project to the Board of Education, the parents and at an inclusion training program. This was a way to get feedback that was helpful in making improvements in the project. In this action cycle, the team did reflective thinking about the project in preparation for presentations to several groups in the next action cycle. Discussing what we were doing as a team strengthened the unity of the team members and their commitment to inclusion.

Reflection and Sharing--Action Cycle Five: February, 1995

Time continued to be a problem in getting all the work done. The team faced having to get individual special education achievement testing done for annual review meetings coming up in May, 1995. This involved the individual testing of all 16 children. Mrs. Glasser, Mrs. Conn and Mrs. Kapp were to be responsible for the testing. In addition, all the classes were tested for Illinois Goals Assessment Program during the third week of March, 1995, and the school district does its annual achievement testing using the Metropolitan Achievement Test in April, 1995. The work load of the team members stretched their endurance to the limits of their capacity.

A Solution for The Planning Time Problem

We thought of another intervention to make more time available to the inclusion team to get some of these time consuming tasks completed. In addition to Mrs. Kapp, there were two other para-professionals that worked on playground supervision and in the library. We decided to use some of their time to supervise the three inclusion classes to release the teachers for meetings, testing and work (February 1, 1995).

Progress in The Classrooms

We continued to see signs of positive impact on students. Individual student progress continued to be noticed by the staff. Mrs. Kapp was pleased that Theodore was getting a "B" in science. She said he would not have been able to any of this work last year. "He seems to be responding well to being in with typical students" (February 16, 1995)

To help de-emphasize the differences between typical students and those with disabilities, Ms. Hansen and Mrs. Kapp switched groups so that the typical students did not draw conclusions that just one of them was in the room to help the students with disabilities. Mrs. Kapp said that, "At the beginning of the year, the students said, 'You teach the retarded kids.'" She added, "Now, they think of me as just another teacher," and "To be honest with you, I was not too keen on this idea (inclusion) at all. I didn't think it could work. But now I am convinced it works." (February 16, 1995).

Meeting With the Principals and the Superintendent

An unexpected problem developed at the Middle School, which shared the campus with Daybreak School. They needed an additional hour per day of aide time to serve their large special education group. They requested that our aide, Mrs. Kapp come over for that hour. Being in need of extra help at Daybreak, the team felt this would be impossible; however the decision would be made by the administrative team.

On February 13, 1995, I met with the other principal and the superintendent to talk about our current staffing levels and needs. My thought was that we could work this out through discussion. It did not make sense to, "Rob Peter to pay Paul." I described how we used the aide in the inclusion project. Her time was very valuable to each teacher. We could not give up some of her time without taking away from our program.

The superintendent turned the discussion to other options besides using our aide, such as hiring a one hour, part-time employee, possibly a school bus driver, to do the work or using a parent volunteer. The Middle School principal was able to find a parent who would work that one hour for compensation. This filled the need without taking away from the inclusion project.

One of the responsibilities of the leader is to protect the environment. Each principal looks at his/her school and does the same thing. What could have developed into an unfortunate debate over limited resources that would have left a bad attitude towards inclusion, worked out harmoniously through the help of the superintendent. This led to another meeting of the principals on February 15, 1995, to discuss special education staffing needs across the district for the 1995-96 school year. This was the first time the principals held this kind of advanced planning meeting. Previously, staffing ratios were a central office decision. This year, under the guidance of the superintendent we were becoming more site-based in determining our needs.

The Inclusion Project Gets a Computer

A local organization donated $1600.00 for special education purposes. On February 3, 1995, the team discussed what it would buy that would benefit the students and the program. Computer technology is a big part of the regular instructional program at Daybreak. A twenty-eight workstation

computer lab is used by the students every week. Mrs. Glasser has three computers in her room, and has discovered that students with learning disabilities are not intimidated by the computers. She believes computers are a level playing field for them and their peers. It is stimulating. They are more willing to use a word processor to write than pencil and paper. The team decided to get another stand-alone multimedia computer for the inclusion program that would be a resource tool and writing center for the students. It could also be used to produce computerized IEP's and assist in scoring individual achievement tests. This would save team members a considerable amount of time.

The Board of Education Presentation

The team met on February 16, 1995, to discuss the presentation to the School Board. The inclusion teachers attended and spoke informally about how they were serving students with special needs. The goal was to inform the Board of Education about the instructional changes brought about by inclusion and to let them meet the collaborative decision-making team.

The team's presentation to the School Board on February 21, 1995, followed a lengthy Unit District proposal presentation. Some of us felt that the timing was bad and that the Board would be pre-occupied with that issue. However, the experience proved to be just the opposite. After a few minute break, the school board re-assembled. I asked them if they would mind sitting in the audience seats and let the inclusion team sit at the board table for the presentation. This seemed like a welcome irregularity after the intense meeting on the Unit District. The inclusion team was ready to start. I introduced each member and gave a brief overview of inclusion and then let the team members speak. As was described in Action Cycle IV, the team made their comments about inclusion. Their presentation showed their knowledge and commitment to the inclusion project.

Comments from the Board. One member asked if inclusion should be done at all of our schools. I answered that question by saying that "Instructional methodologies need to fit the needs of the students and individual school culture. We chose inclusion based on our needs at Daybreak. We do not intend to generalize it for all schools. The teachers at each school need to decide if inclusion will work in their school culture."

Two other Board members agreed with what the team said about how inclusion offers "valuable socialization and builds self-esteem." Mrs. Glasser replied, "Inclusion may not result in higher academic achievement for students with disabilities this year. In fact, the challenge of the regular education class is more difficult than the former self-contained program, but the challenge is what the students have been responding to in a very positive way. They want to be like their peers."

The Board gave words of encouragement to the team and thanked them for the presentation. The superintendent made the concluding comment to the Board that, "The inclusion project is an

example of site-based management as I envisioned it for our school district." The project was evidence that local schools could develop programs that address their needs and that collaborative teams could be empowered to accomplish meaningful things.

The next day at school, theteam members assessed how they did. Some were excited, while others were relieved that it was over. All of them felt a sense of accomplishment for what they had done.

The last team meeting we had in this action cycle was held the next week to adapt the board presentation to what we would say at the PCSEC inclusion training class on March 7, 1995. I wanted as many of the team members to present as possible. It took place during the teaching day, so we needed to cover classes and do some large group instruction in order for regular and inclusion teachers to be free. The team decided who wanted to go. Some were stay back and work with the children. The team planned keep the presentation informal and open for comment and questions.

Preparing to Meet With The Parents

At the February 16, 1995 team meeting, Mrs. Barrett said she used a short survey with the parents of children in her program last year. We decided to adapt it to find out what the parents were thinking about our project and to generate interest in a parent discussion meeting. I believe that the parents are both the consumers of our services and potential collaborators on how we shape the program. Like any good business would do, we want to know if the children and the school are succeeding with inclusion.

Summary--Cycle Five

This was a very busy action cycle. In a short period of time we had to deal with time constraints, work load, public presentations, personnel and future plans. The team members were becoming veterans at collaboration, making decisions and speaking about their work. Taking responsibility was evidence of teacher empowerment.

My experience making presentations to the Board of Education was helpful in guiding and preparing the team for their first exposure to such an assignment. Meeting with the Board of

Education has caused them to grow in confidence. They received favorable approval for what they were doing. This was a great confidence builder for all of us.

Future Planning--Action Cycle Six: March, 1995

This is the last action cycle in the year-long research project. In this cycle we made a presentation to the PCSEC inclusion training meeting, surveyed the parents, held a parent discussion forum and continued planning for next year's project. I wanted to use as much information about the inclusion project as possible in this process. I believed meeting with the parents will provide useful information for team planning.

Making The Request for An Additional Teacher

At the March 8, 1995, administrative meeting, I made a request for an additional special education teacher based on the research we had done. I explained that the teacher would replace Mrs. Glasser as a classroom teacher. Mrs. Glasser would then service all the inclusion classes as a team teacher with the regular education teachers. The new teacher could also help with some of the special education paper work responsibility. The discussion by the administrators led to the conclusion that there were no guarantees we would get the extra staff. A decision on this request would be made by the Board of Education in May, 1995.

The PCSEC Training Meeting

Following the Board of Education presentation, the team made a similar presentation on March 7, 1995, to a group of educators that were either trying inclusion or thinking about doing it at their school. We met on March 1, 1995, and decided to do an informal panel discussion for the group of approximately 100 teachers and administrators.

At the presentation on March 7, 1995, the regular education team members told the group about how many students with disabilities were in their class and how they grouped them for instruction. Ms. Hansen made some comments about how she and Mrs. Kapp worked together to teach the children. Her statements showed how organized she was.

Mrs. Conn, the speech and language pathologist, told the group that she goes into the classrooms to help with language lessons and that she takes students that need to work on articulation problems to a quiet area out of the room. Mrs. Minor and Mrs. Glasser explained how they grouped the students in both classes so they could teach their individual strengths to groups of children who needed it most. Mrs. Minor explained how she grouped gifted and average students to do some lessons while Mrs. Glasser worked with some average students who could benefit from the same lessons she was teaching to the students with disabilities.

One of the members of the audience said, "In her district, the first demand of the staff when they were told by the administration they were going to be doing inclusion was, 'We need more

personnel.'" This person said that she was impressed that we did not make pre-conditions before trying inclusion. Her district has an average class size of less than 20 students. The request of their teachers for more help as a condition for trying inclusion seemed unjustified to her, but the district was wealthy and was ready to hire. Another member of the audience complimented us on "doing so much with so little," while another person said the teachers "communicated about your project in a very genuine, sincere way."

The Parent Survey

Realizing the importance of feedback from parents about the inclusion project, the team decided (February 16, 1995) to send a survey home to the parents of the special education students in early March, 1995, to get a sense for how they felt about the project (See Appendix for complete survey). In addition, the survey asked if they would be willing to attend an evening meeting with the staff to discuss the project. All the parents in the classes were invited to the evening discussion meeting.

The survey was mailed to each parent on March 1, 1995 and a return envelope was included for their quick response. The team used questions from last year's survey, and adapted them to the present inclusion program.

Table 5.2

Responses From the Parent Inclusion Survey Taken March 1, 1995 N = 10

Question	Frequency of Response					
	1	2	3	4	5	Total
1. My child benefited academically from participation in the REI program.	3	1	1	3	2	10
2. My child has benefited socially from participation in the REI program.	3	4	2	0	1	10

3. I need more information about the REI program.	3	4	1	2	0	10
4. My child received the support s/he needed in the REI program.	2	2	4	2	0	10
5. I agree with the philosophy and goals of the REI program.	3	2	3	0	0	10
6. I feel that my child is achieving his/her goals in the REI program.	2	1	1	5	1	10
7. I would like to see my child continue in an REI program next year.	3	1	4	1	1	10
8. Would you be willing to attend an evening meeting with the staff in March to talk about our program?	Yes = 10			No = 0		10

1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = agree somewhat; 4 = disagree; 5 = don't know/need more information.

Note. Sixteen surveys were sent out. Ten were received. These results show the frequency of response to each question by the parents. The survey had three "agree" type choices and one "disagree" choice. This should be taken into consideration when interpreting the results of the survey.

Even though the positive responses out-weighed the negative, the team members were disheartened by the negative responses (March, 14, 1995). The two most negative responses were for questions 1 and 6. Both of these questions pertained to academic achievement. The opinion was split. Half the parents gave positive answers, while the other half were negative. Two parents responded that their child needed more help from the program. This feedback could help strengthen our need for an additional teacher.

The positive responses were in the area of social benefits for the children. Nine out of ten parents responded positively about the social gain for their children. Eight out of ten parents wanted to see their child continue in the program next year.

Some of the parents wrote comments about the program. "I think the inclusion program is very beneficial to helping educate my child. . . A person will only achieve to the level he is exposed to." One parent recognized the need for additional staff: "If this inclusion is to continue, the staff

needs support (aides) . . . The inclusion team and teachers are floundering, understaffed, and stretched to the limit . . ." Another parent wrote, "I would like to see how Kim is doing, and see if she needs more help." The survey showed that all ten parents wanted to come to a discussion meeting. In response to the discussion meeting, one father's comment is a sign of our times: "I work a 2nd shift. I would like to ask if we could have a meeting during the morning hours." This comment suggests there is a need for more communication with parents. Perhaps, the negative responses were related to the need for frequent and improved communication with parents about inclusion and how their child was doing academically and socially. There were no simple answers to the responses that were made. Issues overlapped and affected one another. This kind of data could be internalized by the teachers and considered as they teach and make decisions.

The team received the copies of the survey on March 14, 1995, and studied the results in preparation for the parent meeting. On March 20, 1995, the team met to make final preparations for the parent meeting. We had to get over our own fear of possibly hearing negative comments about our project. Mrs. Glasser and Ms. Hansen said it is important not to say something that could identify or stigmatize any students with learning disabilities. We decided to speak in generalities rather than mention specific names. We decided to sit in a circle with the parents and have a discussion in the round.

Meeting With The Parents

The discussion meeting with the parents on March 21, 1995, was an informal occasion. Of the eleven parents that came, eight had children with learning disabilities and three were parents of typical students. The team members presented how the program works and described typical events of the school day. They explained that all the students were mixed together and that it would be difficult to distinguish who were the children with disabilities.

Mrs. Glasser explained that we used a modified grading system with the students with disabilities. The grades were: A, B, and instead of C, D and E, we used +3, +2, and +1. The team believed this is better for self-esteem than the traditional letter grades. A parent of two typical

children in the program commented that, "Fair treatment is important to her children." She felt the modifications were fair to everyone. She added, "Last year my children referred to them (children with disabilities) as, 'the L.D. kids.' I have not heard that at all this year. My children are both high achievers. They have had good preparation in the inclusion classes."

Mrs. Minor explained how she and Mrs. Glasser each took groups of students for reading and language arts. Mrs. Minor, who's specialty is in gifted education, took the gifted group and half of the average group while Mrs. Glasser took the other half and the students with disabilities. They changed the students in the groups as the year progresses. Ms. Hansen said, "The children had one teacher before, now they have adjusted to switching to other teachers. It flows smoothly."

Homework was discussed. Some parents of children with disabilities wanted to see homework on a regular basis, while others' felt that their children needed extra help at school to do the work rather than bring it all home. Tyler's father said, "He brings all his books home every day," and that the homework was not too much for him.

Lisa's mother suggested the children carry assignment books so the parents know what is expected. Another mother agreed, saying, "You don't always get the whole explanation." This seemed especially true for the children who had trouble remembering and expressing themselves. Carl's mother suggested that the children get extra time at the end of the day to write their own assignments and have the teacher check to see that they did it right. She said, "Carl was in self-contained previously. This program has been great for him. It has been good for his self-esteem."

Kim's mother had written a critical comment on her survey, but at the meeting she was more understanding after hearing the teachers explain the program. "This is the best report card Kim ever got."

A parent of a child without disabilities made some observations. He was an older than average parent. His wife was a former special education teacher. As a child, he remembered that children with disabilities were sent to a different school. This bothered him. He thought it was good

that the school was doing inclusion because it teaches all children how to get along and help one another.

The meeting ended with that parent's comments. It lasted one hour and fifteen minutes. Teachers and parents gathered and talked to each other and enjoyed cookies and coffee. They were interacting as individuals without the professional barriers that sometimes exist between parent and teacher.

Summary--Cycle Six

We have come to the conclusion of the action research project with new insights gained from the presentations the team made. Discussing our program in front of an audience of educators interested in trying inclusion helped the team to understand that we had dealt with limitations, such as personnel and time, that had prevented other schools from trying inclusion. They saw that not all schools were collaboratively developing their programs. Some of them were mandated by administration and the teachers were required to make it work.

The parent survey revealed strengths and weaknesses of our project. Negative information is helpful in making improvements. If all we received were flattering remarks, improvement might come to a stop.

The teachers met with the parents and both groups learned from each other. The teachers saw that parents were concerned about academics, homework and self-esteem. The parents saw how hard the teachers had been working on behalf of their children. The need for an additional teacher was affirmed in the parent survey and meeting.

The team is working on incorporating these ideas in the plan for next year. This is the last action cycle for this dissertation, however, the team will continue this process of improving the inclusion project.

Summary of Chapter V

This chapter reported the events that took place in the action cycles. Over the course of one year, there was six action cycles. In the beginning, the inclusion team used information gathered

from their own experience and a survey of parents of students with disabilities to formulate an inclusion plan. Planning included meeting with parents, special education paperwork, scheduling, placing children in the three classes, hiring a teacher and curriculum.

The team demonstrated their ability to make daily decisions about the instructional program, deal with new students moving into the school and work together collaboratively for the good of the program. Team members demonstrated their commitment to the program by the many hours of additional planning and meetings they did.

We found that there was a need for an additional special education teacher to make the program more effective. This was evident to the teachers and also an observant parent who noticed the large amount of work the special education teacher was doing.

We found that students with learning disabilities like being in regular classes. They improved their social skills and developed friendships with typical children. They found the work more challenging than a self-contained special education class.

We sought input about the project from other significant sources. They included the Board of Education, a county-wide inclusion training class and the parents from the inclusion classes. We shared our project with them and got valuable feedback. In addition, we did a survey of the special education parents to learn their impressions and concerns about inclusion.

This chapter concludes the one year cycle of this action research project. The inclusion team is going forward with plans for next year's inclusion project that use the lessons learned from this action research.

CHAPTER VI

ANSWERING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This chapter will discuss what was learned from the project. The research questions of this study will be reviewed and answered. The focus of the study is the leadership role of the principal in the development of the inclusion program. Transformational leadership is my style as principal. It played an important role in the development of the culture of the school and the collaborative decision-making of the teachers.

Action research allowed me to study the complex social setting of the school and the interactions between people, and make sense out of what happened. The action research for this study was designed to deepen the understanding of the problem and to guide our actions in the project.

The experiences we had in the action cycles provided some answers to the original questions considered for this research. The research questions are discussed in this chapter.

The Research Questions

1. How does collaborative decision-making by the principal and teachers enable inclusion of children with learning disabilities in one school?
2. How does action research assist in the development of the project?
3. What insights can be gained from the transformational leadership of the principal in meeting the needs associated with full inclusion?

    A. Increased cost

B. Training personnel

C. Personnel selection

D. Demanding regulations

4. How are the perceived constraints about inclusion dealt with in this project?

A. Resources

B. Impracticality

C. Negative impact

D. Disruption to typical classmates

E. Time demands

5. What lessons can be learned from this project that could help other inclusion programs?

Discussing the Questions

School is a social activity. Separating parts of this project into question groups for discussion purposes risks diluting their contextual meaning. In addition, the information from the action research that answers the questions was not found in neat, concise form. It came from fragments and experiences that, when reflected upon, made sense and seemed to answer the question. Therefore, the answers are really discussions of the possibilities that apply in the context of this study.

Question 1: How does collaborative decision-making by the principal and teachers enable inclusion of children with learning disabilities in our school?

As a principal, I believe I do not have the power to make people do what they do not want to do. I believe that mandating teachers to do inclusion would certainly lead to failure. This would be top-down decision-making, which goes against the philosophy that people take ownership of things that they choose.

My transformational philosophy as a principal is to help teachers become activated on important issues like inclusion, and to empower them to do something about them. Teachers will

assert their moral and professional convictions by taking on challenges and solving problems if given the opportunity by their principal. This happens when the culture of the school and the teachers are ready to make that important step towards collaborative decision-making.

The culture of Daybreak School was ready for the inclusion experience. The members of the team were a group of regular and special education teachers who had experienced collaboration. They had experience working together last year with home-basing students with learning disabilities and fully including the resource students. Full inclusion of the self-contained learning disabilities students was a natural step of progress.

The inclusion teachers. I believe the professional qualities and personal characteristics of the teachers helped make for successful collaboration. They are child-centered, issue oriented professionals that respect each other's ideas and needs. This was evidenced by the amount of time each teacher devoted to the project. They worked before and after school and on weekends to meet the demands of the classroom. They maintained weekly written contact with all parents about the progress of the children. They telephoned any parent when an immediate answer was needed or there were questions to answer.

The special education and regular education teachers shared a lot in common. Some of them took graduate courses together. They discussed school issues, and were not afraid to present their ideas to me. Inclusion had also brought them together in the classroom where they were able to observe each other and see how they taught. They have adjusted to having each other in their classrooms. They learned various teaching styles from each other and how they could be used to the advantage of students.

The teachers demonstrated they were ready for collaborative decision-making by initiating the plan and discussing it with me. They knew what had to be done to make the plan work and they were willing to do the work. They said they believed the plan was good for children, and I agreed. I used my power to assist them.

Not every teacher in the school is ready to be this collaborative or is willing to accept responsibility. They would prefer to have the principal make the decisions they would then execute. As principal, I have to work with each teacher or group of teachers on their own level. I realize that resistance to empowerment by some teachers has developed from prolonged exposure to the old top-down model where decisions are made for them. The inclusion teachers generated their own enthusiasm for the project. I added strength to that enthusiasm by giving my support. When teachers encourage other teachers, it is much like bathers in the pool that beckon their friends to "come on in, the water's fine." Teachers help other teachers acclimate to new ideas by setting the example of trying a new idea.

The concepts of the children. When the regular and special education teachers began working together in the regular classes, stereotypes about children with disabilities as being different and difficult to teach began to break down. Regular and special education teachers found that they shared many of the same instructional methods. This finding concurs with the research by Davids, Gallagher, et al (1994) which said there are no significant differences in the teaching methodologies of regular and special educators. The regular teachers at Daybreak worked together with special education teachers to develop instructional techniques that met the needs of the students in the inclusion classrooms. The regular teachers took ownership of all the children in their rooms. Mrs. Reed said she preferred to have the children with disabilities stay in her class. She likes team teaching the students with Mrs. Barrett.

My research showed that the children socialized together without regard to disability. As one mother of typical children said, "Last year my children referred to them (children with disabilities) as, 'the L.D. kids.' I have not heard that at all this year." There were other experiences reported by the teachers that the children with disabilities were included in playground games and overnight parties with other children. Cooperative learning groups in class included students with disabilities. The teachers reported normal cooperation among the students. The teachers were

cognizant of their students with disabilities, but they included them in the regular activities of the class.

Question 2. How does action research assist in the development of the project?

Discovering what action research is and how it could help the project was a challenge in itself. Most educators are probably more familiar with the empirical-analytical research paradigm. Most educators were taught this method in undergraduate and graduate level courses. However, many school related problems do not lend themselves to empirical-analytical research because they are complex social situations that cannot be de-contextualized for purposes of empirical study. They require interpretive methods to study the interrelationships and identify courses of action.

Learning interpretive research methods requires leaving the rules of the other paradigm behind and developing a whole new concept of research. Action research is defined by the researcher based on the individual research needs. At first, I had to learn all that I could about action research and connect it with the interpretive research paradigm I studied in the doctoral program.

I found that I needed to view my project as a sociological activity and use the observational methods of interpretive research to identify the "reality" of the school and the inclusion project. I used common qualitative methods, such as field notes, observations, interviews and artifacts to collect data. I analyzed what I found by looking for themes, going back to the informants and getting additional information and then formulating a theory that I used to guide the teaching team. Action research is as McKernan (1991) says, "reflective inquiry," that helped deepen my understanding of the problem I was studying.

My view of instituting change in the school as a principal is different as a result of using action research. I believe action research can be applied to many types of school improvement. It helped me to observe, gather data and analyze what was happening with the project, thereby sharpening my decision-making process. It kept me focused on the large issues, which helped keep the project moving forward. I was able to raise issues with the teaching team in a more objective manner since I was reporting what I saw and heard. It got the teachers involved in the data and helped them identify problems and possible solutions. Action research can easily be adapted by principals and teachers to their specific school problems.

Action research design does not follow a set of rules. There are many different adaptations in the literature (see Whyte, 1991; Carr, 1986 and McKernan, 1991). I believe that the action research design I developed provided the structure needed for my critical research into inclusion.

As mentioned earlier, I went back to the informants with a theme and questioned them further on it. This was the case with regards to the recurring evidence that we need an additional teacher. I checked every aspect I could to validate that need. It helped strengthen the argument for an additional teacher rather than an aide or no personnel at all. If all of this makes action research sound like nothing more than common sense, you have discovered a basic principle about it. Action research is, as Lewin (1947) said, ". . . a three step process of 1) planning which involves reconnaissance or fact finding; 2) taking actions; and 3) fact-finding about the results of the action."

I thoughtfully considered what the information reflected about the project. I looked for significant issues, such as the need for extra personnel. I took the significant issues back to the team for further discussion and problem solving. While we were not able to hire another teacher this year, the team did take an action to help alleviate the problem by using a substitute teacher and other staff members to release the inclusion teachers for planning and meetings. I also used information from action research to describe the inclusion project to the School Board and the parent discussion group. The Board presentation also served as another source of feedback from the School Board members about the project. It also caused the teachers to articulate their work and become more knowledgeable about how it impacts the total system of the school. Action research helped me show how a transformational leader can guide a collaborative group of teachers in making a change to inclusion.

As a result of this project, I have come to believe in the potential action research has as a method to understand the complex social system of a school. Action research helped us focus on the problems we faced and on possible solutions.

Question 3: What insights can be gained from the transformational leadership of the principal in meeting the needs associated with full inclusion?

There are some aspects to the project that were more administrative than instructional. They had impact on the how the project worked. Because they were administrative concerns, they were more the responsibility of the principal rather than the teachers. As principal, I considered these issues based on how I could best help the team with this project.

Increased cost. One of the cautions in the literature about inclusion (Shanker, 1994) is that inclusion costs too much for the extra personnel needed to do it. At least one wealthy school district represented at the PCSEC training meeting "bought into" the notion that you must increase the number of personnel dramatically when you try inclusion. They were willing to hire extra personnel as a pre-condition for trying inclusion. Our project started with the idea of using our existing personnel, and if we could justify extra help, we would ask for it. Our research showed that we do need an extra teacher to run a good inclusion program. However, this is the same number of teachers we would be requesting if we ran a separate, self-contained learning disabilities program. In essence, this is not an extra cost.

For some administrators, the perceived cost factor alone is enough of an excuse to avoid trying inclusion, however it was not a deterrent to me. Our school district is not wealthy, and we could not afford to add staff as a pre-condition for inclusion. We have to demonstrate need, which means experience a shortage, in order to get extra help.

The team believed the inclusion project to be workable with the existing staff. This was carefully calculated based on the twelve children we anticipated in the program. My research showed the need for teacher release time for the inclusion teachers to do more planning and for Mrs. Glasser to be free to get into the other inclusion classrooms for training and collaboration, these were problems related to not enough personnel. These shortages of time and personnel were with us right from the beginning. I think it is safe to say that we underestimated our personnel needs from the beginning. The evidence was there from the start of the school year that some staff members were doing the work of two.

Knowing that we would not get additional personnel during the school year, my efforts were to stimulate thought among the team members about how we could solve this problem with what we have. When the time came to request personnel, I took our need to the administrative team for consideration. A decision on my request is pending for the 1995-96 school year.

Training personnel. Training is an important part of inclusion. The kind of training you get depends on the needs of the team members. Mrs. Barrett, one of our special education teachers had experience with inclusive education at another school. Mrs. Minor had an inclusive philosophy about special education and discussed it with other teachers until they understood and embraced it themselves. Both of these teachers worked with regular education teachers, bridging the perceived differences between their different instructional realms. This is a form of informal, collegial training in which two or more teachers learn expertise in a given area from each other.

The opportunity to learn from each other got impetus from the graduate courses the team members were taking. They did cooperative mini projects related to inclusion and team teaching which brought them closer together on a personal and professional level.

My personal belief that inclusion was right caused me to encourage teachers to try inclusive practices. At first, they started out with resource children in the regular classroom and mainstreaming of self-contained children for selected subjects. I let them know I liked their efforts and that I wanted them to keep trying new ideas. The teachers took more control for planning and began to move boldly towards a full inclusion program. I encouraged this.

We shared articles from periodicals about inclusion. Reading what was being done in other schools was helpful in developing a philosophy about inclusion and an awareness of what the potential problems were. This helped me to know if the proposed inclusion project was based on knowledge and analysis of what other schools were doing. We became our own resource persons.

I arranged for our team to go to the PCSEC Conference in October, 1994, which dealt with inclusion and REI. This was the second or third such meeting for me and some of the team members. This meeting confirmed what we were doing, and gave us confidence. Staff development money was

available that could be used for inclusion training, but the team did not place a high priority on going to outside conferences and training sessions.

Personnel selection. Hiring a teacher is an important role for the principal. Two staff members became parents and decided to take parental leave for the school year. One of those teachers would have been on the inclusion team. We needed to hire one additional teacher that would teach the fourth grade inclusion class. The existing staff knew each other personally and professionally and already were a working team. With this in mind, I wanted the team to be involved in the selection of the teacher. This would help insure that the new person would be compatible. However, this situation occurred in May, 1994, when there was little time to set up a team selection process. Hiring would have to be done in summer when the teachers were on vacation or attending graduate school, therefore the hiring had to be done by me.

Knowing this, I took the hiring responsibilities into my own hands. I hired half of the teachers on the team. The other half had worked in our school district at other schools before coming to Daybreak. I wanted a teacher who could work with my teachers. The individual must be open-minded about inclusive education and be child-centered. I looked for kindness, patience and human perceptivity in a candidate. I told them about the inclusion program and my philosophy of collaborative decision-making. I wanted them to know I value teacher participation. Some candidates received this kind of information with reservation so they were not included on my final list.

I like teacher candidates to tell me about a memorable mistake they made. From this I get a sense for how they handle failure, or even if they will admit failure. The candidate's sense of humor often shows up in this kind of answer.

The candidate is also gathering information about me in the interview. I want the candidate to hear some of my concepts on leadership and teacher empowerment. How they respond gives me insight into whether they accept the idea of working on a team with decision-making responsibility.

I hired a candidate that had been a teacher aide at the Jasper Upper Grade School. She had experience working with children with learning disabilities, slow learners, behavioral problems and unmotivated students. Her principal gave her a very good recommendation. Some of my teachers knew her and had respect for her teaching style. As a result, she was welcomed by the team. They began enculturating her to our project immediately. The personal qualities I had seen in the interviews came out as she got involved with the project. She proved to be a flexible and effective teacher.

Demanding regulations. Though I expected this to be a considerable challenge to our inclusion project, it actually was not much of a problem. The regulations I was worried about pertained to meeting instruction time commitments on Individualized Educational Plans. The plans for our students were written specifically to provide direct instruction on a certain skill or subject for a specified number of minutes each week. This constitutes a contract with the parent as to what the school will be doing for the child. The IEP's had been written when the students were in self-contained classes. Inclusion takes a completely different approach to addressing their learning problems. We would not be addressing the IEP objectives in the same controlled self-contained environment, and therefore, it was impossible to meet the number of minutes of direct services each week. The students were getting the instruction, but it was being done in group rather than individually and it was being done, in part, by regular education teachers.

I questioned the legalities of how we were doing IEP's with PCSEC and was told that schools that try inclusion were not being challenged by the State about strict compliance to IEP standards. Inclusion efforts, while not State policy, were encouraged and a flexible interpretation is used regarding the regulations. Learning this relieved Mrs. Glasser and myself from worrying how we were going to find the time to meet all the IEP requirements for one-on-one instruction.

Question 4: How are the perceived constraints about inclusion dealt with in this project?

The perceived constraints about inclusion I found in the literature include: personnel resources and time constraints (Shanker, 1994; Schnaiberg, 1994), impracticality of including students with disabilities in regular education classes (Fuchs, 1994; Maloney, 1994) and negative impact and relations with typical classmates (Good, 1986; O'Neill, 1994). These constraints did not prevent us from trying the inclusion project.

The constraints are as much intellectually created issues as they are real problems. We were aware of the potential problems these issues could cause our project, and therefore we planned on how to deal with them.

Resources: financial, personnel and time. The project did not result in any additional direct costs to the school district in its first year. We originally planned to serve twelve students in three inclusion classes using the staff we had available. However, by November, 1994, our enrollment increased by 33 percent, from twelve to sixteen self-contained children with learning disabilities. This stretched our personnel to the maximum, though we were able to fit the new children into the existing inclusion class. The teachers had to devote an increased amount of attention to the larger numbers of students. The additional students also increased the special education paperwork and meeting requirements.

In projecting for next year, the team agreed it needs an additional teacher to take over one of the inclusion classes so that the lead special education teacher can share her time in each inclusion classroom. This is an increase based on demonstrated need. However, inclusion is not the cause of having to hire extra personnel. We would have to hire an additional teacher, based on the same number of students, if we ran a self-contained learning disabilities program next year.

I think we underestimated what we could accomplish with the existing staff. Changing from a self-contained program to inclusion with the special education teacher taking on regular education responsibilities in addition to her other obligations was expecting too much. It may have been barely manageable with twelve students, but the increased enrollment exacerbated the problem.

The project required more time from everyone involvedThe teachers worked after school, evenings and on weekends to keep the curriculum flowing and to find solutions for the problems. The lead special education teacher had the greatest burden, being technically responsible for the special education students and teaching a regular class in addition. The concern for the amount of time she had to spend is also another justification for an additional teacher.

Based on enrollment alone, the requirements of the State Board of Education for staffing special education programs calls for two teachers when the enrollment exceeds fifteen. We know that we will have the same number (at minimum) for the start of next year.

There will not be a need for increased classroom space because the lead teacher will share her time in each inclusion classroom. She will be able to use existing office space for her additional responsibilities. We learned from the action research that the rooms need to be located near each other so the teachers are able to communicate easily. Students move from one room to the other and the teachers were not able to explain what they covered in class because of the physical distance between rooms.

The remarkable commitment of extra time and energy made by the inclusion team teachers is unique and commendable. There are many teachers who would not be willing to make the effort in Daybreak School. My belief about their commitment and dedication is that this was their project. They conceived it, and therefore took ownership of it. Consequently, they put more time and energy into it because it was their own.

Impracticality. Any change can be accused of being impractical. History shows that teachers felt that blackboards were impractical. The same argument is used by some who don't want computers in the classrooms. However, once these changes take place, their practical utility becomes apparent.

Teachers had to adapt to a new population of students and their intellectual and social needs. Once they tried inclusion they liked the results they were seeing with their children. The social

aspect was very compelling to the teachers. With regards to separate, self-contained classes, a regular education teacher said, "We can't go back to the way it was."

Team members became more positive about inclusion as the year progressed. As one team member said, "To be honest with you, I was not too keen on this idea (inclusion) at all. I didn't think it could work. But now I am convinced it works." To her surprise, the program worked and she is now convinced it is the right thing to do. This also shows how the power of persuasion of the peer group can include people in productive way in the plan even though they may not fully understand it or agree with it.

Negative impact and relations with typical classmates.Once again, this perceived constraint was not a problem for our project. All the special area teachers including music, science, physical education, library and computers made special efforts to integrate fully the inclusion students academically and socially.

Nine to eleven year old students are characteristically helpful, friendly and socially acceptant of people with differences. During the project, we observed that the typical students would make accommodations for a child with disabilities without even being asked. They knew, for example that the student could not write, but he was good at taking things apart, so they wrote and drew a picture of what was being dissected by the student with disabilities. In another case, one of the inclusion students was asked to be on an academic quiz team for "Battle of the Books," a reading contest. She had never been included in anything like this before. Instead of negative impact, what we experienced was a positive impact both academically and socially.

We were originally concerned that typical students and their parents might view inclusion as lowering the standards of the class, and therefore reducing the quality of education for their child. The inclusion team kept the requirements of the classes at the normal high standards. They taught lessons for the high group and set up projects that students of every ability could learn at their own level. This took a lot of creative team planning. The teachers grouped students for instruction, but

were very careful not to label or to allow students to make inferential labels about the instructional groups.

It was brought out at our parent discussion forum that parents of typical students accept inclusion as a natural thing at Daybreak School, and that they do not feel their child's education was compromised by being in the class. One parent said he thinks it is good that the school is doing inclusion. It teaches all children how to get along and help one another. Another parent said inclusion teaches understanding and tolerance.

Question 5: What lessons can be learned from this project that could help other inclusion programs?

There were lessons from this inclusion project that can be beneficial to other schools considering or doing inclusion. I have separated these lessons into topics. These are my thoughts and conclusions about these issues.

Staff selection. It is very important to select teachers that can work with each other. There has to be a working relationship between the teachers and the principal built on trust of each other's judgment and mutual support for the decisions of the group. In our project, the teachers interested in doing inclusion joined together naturally. They shared the same interests and philosophy and they liked working together.

A principal has to carefully hire new teachers, making sure that they will work with the team and that the team will accept them. Though it was not possible in this project, I think it would be helpful to have the existing team help in the selection of a new teacher for the project.

The inclusion team was made up of regular and special education teachers. It is important for these teachers to be compatible with each other and to share the same goals and philosophy. If a teacher is forced to do inclusion it will probably end in failure because the personal commitment is not present. The principal has to thoughtfully assemble an inclusion team that can work together and who are enthusiastic about the idea.

Student selection for inclusion classes.Putting students in inclusion classes deserves careful attention. We tried to keep a balance of boys and girls. In addition, we looked at achievement and teacher recommendation to select students that were in the high, average and low-average range and who had good social skills. The typical children had to be tolerant and be able to adjust to the students with disabilities in their class. Socialization can be enhanced by careful selection of students.

We kept the inclusion class size at 21 or 22 pupils. The regular classes average 25 pupils each. This difference was justifiable because of the extra demands on the teachers caused by having the students with disabilities.

Planning time for teachers. We learned that teachers need time to collaborate on lessons and compare notes on student performance. They need time to meet the needs of coordinating the special services needed by the students with disabilities. One way of doing this is to arrange mutual time when teachers can get together during lunch, recess, music and physical education periods. Inclusion increases the need for this kind of planning time.

Informal communication can be done if the inclusion rooms are near each other. We found that valuable time was lost because teachers did not see each other until lunch or after school. If their rooms were near each other, they could briefly get together and talk.

Teacher induction. It is important that a new participant get the training necessary to be an effective inclusion teacher. I hired a new teacher for the project this year. She had some experience as an instructional aide, but there was a lot to learn about having an inclusion class. The team members helped make her an effective member of the team. They mentored and guided her. Our experienced instructional aide spent most of her time in her class helping her with the students. The lead teacher and the regular classroom teachers included her in discussions and planning. Over a period of a few months, she adapted to the inclusion program.

The mentoring process could have been better if the lead special education teacher would have been free from regular class responsibilities to help team teach and mentor the new teacher.

Professional development. Training is very important when considering inclusion. While outside experts and workshops may offer valuable staff development experiences for the inclusion team, it is important not to overlook the expertise that exists locally. Principals should use the expertise within their school team to develop partnerships with teachers so they can exchange methods and ideas to improve instruction. An interchange of ideas among colleagues is often more effective than going to training sessions and listening to speakers.

This process ofhelping each other was impressive to me. It was an example of peers teaching peers. Mrs. Barrett was a constant source of research which she shared with the team members. These ideas stimulated thinking and generated ideas at team discussions.

Mrs. Barrett and Mrs. Glasser philosophically understood inclusion and practiced it long before this project took place. They helped other teachers on the staff become interested in inclusion. They helped train and guide their colleagues just as effectively (if not more effectively) as an outside expert.

Teachers will request staff development that they perceive will benefit them if given the opportunity to do so. This method is preferable to having the principal choose staff development and insist the teachers attend. The principal can make resources available to send teachers to workshops and meetings that they request. Staff development is more meaningful if it meets the needs of the teacher and if they have had input into what they need.

Team teaching. When regular and special education teachers got together in the same classroom to teach inclusion, we found that mutual respect and sharing of ideas proliferated. Teachers found that they use many of the same methods with both typical and special education students. This helped dispel the belief that special education teachers taught "differently" than regular education teachers. The regular education teachers found that they could be effective at teaching students with disabilities.

The teachers shared ideas and teaching strategies and worked at solving problems together. All of this happened as a result of letting teachers work together. Special education teachers came into the rooms to help with lessons the regular classroom teacher had planned. The inclusion students were included in the whole lesson.

Cooperative learning. Cooperative learning is a natural partner for inclusion. By putting students with disabilities in cooperative groups, they can learn from other children and build self-esteem by being able to contribute to the group. We found that typical children want to include students with disabilities and they are sensitive to their problems. This builds lasting relationships and social awareness. Cooperative learning is not only good for inclusion. The same positive effects occur when it is done in regular classes.

Deciding on inclusion: hierarchical or level decision-making.If inclusion was mandated by the administration and required of the teachers, I don't believe it would have been successful. Our inclusion plan came from the teachers and my role as a principal was to support and facilitate the project. If administration is interested in trying inclusion, I suggest going to the teachers and build an interest in it without the presumption that they have do it. A principal that has established a school culture that supports innovation will find such a task much easier than the principal who tries to decide all the issues. Inclusion, like other instructional programs, needs support of the teachers in order to succeed.

Building a collaborative environment.Could the inclusion project have taken place without collaborative decision-making and teacher empowerment? My research showed that collaboration was vital to the project at Daybreak School. The project was conceived by teachers collaborating with each other. Discussions by the team led to actions that improved the project. I cannot imagine how the project could have succeeded at Daybreak without collaborative decision-making.

Most schools have faculty members who are naturally inclined to be self-initiating problem solvers. They know how to communicate positively with their peers and are not over-bearing. They are good listeners and are respected by most of their colleagues. These are the people a transformational principal can look to for help in building a collaborative decision-making team.

Building a culture conducive for collaboration takes time, even years to develop before starting a complex project like inclusion. Education and discussion about collaborative decision-making and teacher empowerment can be stimulated by a transformational principal to help start the thinking process of teachers. A principal considering collaborative decision-making may want to help develop the process by listening to what the teachers are saying will improve the program or school, and then guide them into trying a project that is manageable. From my own experience, I believe starting small and building on a series of successes is better than trying one big project that ends in failure. Inclusion is not a small project with which to start. The implication from my

research is that inclusion could not have happened in our school if it had been a top-down decision rather than an idea the teachers chose and collaboratively developed.

Successful collaboration by a group of teachers stimulates other teachers to participate in the process. However, be aware that collaborative decision-making and transformational leadership are threatening to teachers who prefer the old top-down leadership style and their subordinate relationship and who do not want to change or make decisions. They can be uncomfortable and unhappy if they believe it is being forced on them. They may even work against the change if they feel threatened by it.

A transformational principal may want to make it clear that no teacher is going to be made to do collaborative decision-making, however, they should be expected to be positive and supportive of teachers who want to participate in collaborative decision-making. The principal has to work with both types of teachers effectively.

A transformational principal has the responsibility to provide leadership on ethical issues. Inclusion is such an issue. The principal can help educate teachers about the responsibility we have to students with disabilities and that they have the right to be in the "least restrictive environment" with their peers. These are good, ethical arguments for considering inclusion. All teachers can help accomplish this by having an open mind and considering the options inclusion has to offer. I have found that with time, nurturing and peer acceptance of collaboration, most reluctant teachers will abide by the decisions of the group and may learn to participate as their acceptance grows.

Transformational leaders need to get assurance from their central administration that the philosophy of collaborative decision-making and teacher empowerment are acceptable pursuits to avoid potential conflict in the future. Central office administration must be acceptant of that fact that collaboration takes more time than unilateral decision-making. A principal needs to make a personal commitment to the idea of teacher empowerment and be willing to devote the extra time and energy needed to make it work.

We found that teachers became interested in inclusion from the influence of their peers. Their acceptance of inclusion was strengthened by the results with their children. One of our regular education teachers said, "We can never go back to the old way. This is too good."

Summary

Action research proved to be a useful method for assisting with the inclusion project. It helped identify the problems and issues and guide the team to consider interventions that were needed to improve the project.

The perceived challenges were dealt with by the team. We found that the increased enrollment and time demands on the teachers warrant an additional special education teacher. Concerns expressed in literature on inclusion about its impracticality and negative impact on typical students were not issues in our project. We found that teachers that tried it like it because of the social integration of their students and that it is a practical way to educate all the children in their home school.

Children with disabilities can be successfully integrated into the regular classroom setting. Their social and academic needs can be met by creative planning and team teaching. The process of integrating them with their typical peers does not have to be disruptive or have a negative impact on the education of all the students.

Transformational leadership and collaborative decision-making help make inclusion work. The culture of the school benefits from these philosophies. The teachers in the project were empowered to make decisions. They demonstrated a high level of commitment to the project which exceeded that of the average teacher. They took ownership of the project and did everything in their power to make it successful. As principal, my role was to help them accomplish their work. We function as a team. The organization is horizontal rather than vertical. Ideas come from all members of the team and receive equal attention. This process contributed to our successful experience at inclusion.

CHAPTER VII

REFLECTIONS

This critical action research project was designed to study the development of a full inclusion program in a school focusing on how the transformational leadership of the principal helped make it happen. This chapter describes what I learned about full inclusion, leadership, collaborative decision-making and action research. These elements interacted with each other throughout the research, each playing an important role in the success of the project.

Full Inclusion

Full inclusion provides for all children to be educated in the least restrictive environment. The least restrictive environment means the regular education class for most children with disabilities, but I think the right to determine that should be done on a case-by-case basis. Parents, school and (when practical) the child need to be involved in determining what the least restrictive environment is to be.

In my opinion, schools can do much more than they are doing to include students with disabilities, however, it probably will not succeed if it is a autocratic, top-down decision. The teachers at Daybreak School were interested in doing inclusion. They planned and executed the project. Parental feedback was used to help improve the program. The teachers took ownership for making the project a success. This is an example of the kind of commitment that is needed to do full inclusion.

Severity of disabilities. In this study, all the children had learning disabilities. Some of the students had secondary disabilities including, hearing impairment, behavior disorder, attention deficit disorder and other health impairments. We were able to make adaptations so we could instruct these children in the inclusion classes. However, would we be able to fully include students with more severe disabilities?

The opponents of inclusion say that inclusion results in the dumping of children with disabilities into classes without adequate assistance (O'Neill, 1994). Good (1986) said that inclusion sounds like a universal solution, but it doesn't take into account the complexities and dynamics of instructing children with disabilities.

In this study, we were able to make inclusion work for students with learning disabilities, some of which had secondary disabilities such as speech and language and behavior disorder. We were able to instruct those students using regular teachers in regular classes. Our study did not show that inclusion works with all types of disabilities. We were able to compensate for these children with the personnel we had. It is my opinion that the challenge would be much greater for disabilities such as severe behavior disorder and profound mental retardation.

I think the challenges to full inclusion increase when the child is a physical threat to themselves or others, such as the Ocean View School case in Huntington Beach, California (Schnaiberg, 1994). In that case, a child's behavior had injured other people, and he was uncontrollable even with extra personnel assigned to the task. In my opinion, we were able to educate students with learning disabilities with the staff we had in the setting of Daybreak School. This was easier to do because the students with learning disabilities had acceptable social skills. If they were behavior problems, we might not have had the success we did.

I think inclusion has to be determined on a case-by-case basis. I would like to think inclusion is possible for most children with severe disabilities, and would be willing to try if the teachers were allowed to make the planning decisions and extra personnel was available, if needed.

There are some situations in which the disabilities are so severe that neither parent, child or school would view full inclusion as an option.

I disagree with the critics that claim inclusion is a dumping ground for children with disabilities. We were able to provide quality academic and social development opportunities for the children. The teachers that worked with the children support inclusion and believe it is a good idea.

Problems we found with inclusion. This study found that planning time and personnel were limitations. Teachers worked extra hours before and after school and on weekends to do the planning necessary to have a quality instructional program. In addition, we showed there was a need for an extra special education teacher. If you hire a teacher for special education reimbursement, based on the number of special education students you have, that teacher has to hold a special education teaching certificate. Our lead teacher served the dual capacity of regular education teacher and being in charge of all the special education meeting and paperwork responsibilities for the sixteen children. This was too demanding, and justifies another special education teacher.

Critics may say this increase in personnel was caused by inclusion. We would have the need for another special education teacher even if we operated self-contained classes, based on the number of eligible students with learning disabilities. I think that we could have used an additional teacher right from the start. Mrs. Glasser believed that the inclusion project would be more credible if she taught a regular class. This gave her double responsibility. Now that inclusion is working, it would be a better to have her devote her full attention to team teaching, mentoring and doing special education requirements.

Was inclusion unfair to the other children? Critics of inclusion claim that all the attention that is focused on the children with disabilities takes away from the typical children. In this study, we found that having children with learning disabilities integrated in the regular classroom did not take away from the other students. Teachers reported that the children worked harmoniously together in cooperative learning groups and that they developed positive social relationships. The teachers were alert to balance the time they spent with each group of children. Parents commented that their typical

children received a good education in the inclusion classes. From this, I conclude that our inclusion project was not unfair to the typical children. I think it gave them the positive experience of learning how to get along with other children who have learning and social problems.

Another benefit of inclusion was for the typical children who struggle in school, but who are not qualified for special education. By bringing the special education services to the regular classroom to help the inclusion students, these marginal students can also get assistance which was not available previously when we operated self-contained classes. Inclusion does help more than just the special education child.

My Views on Inclusion

The problem of resistance to inclusion by schools and teaching staffs is predominant. Human nature resists what it fears. Unfortunately, inclusion is discriminated against because of what people believe it is, when in fact, it does not have to be an unpleasant experience for schools.

What Marilyn Cochran-Smith (1991) described as, "challenging the hegemony of the educational and societal status quo," is precisely what I believe educators must do with regards to inclusion. Those who believe in inclusion as being right for children must work for change in spite of the inertia our current system exerts to resist change. "Why fix what is working?" is a familiar phrase in education. More appropriate is the question, "Is it really working?" The present system works for those educators who believe separate, segregated education is best for children, but separate, self-contained classes are not designed to educate the child in the least restrictive environment. It may be good for the educational system, but it is not necessarily good for the child.

The rights of students with disabilities were not being fully addressed prior to inclusion. Inclusion has made people, courts and schools think about the meaning of I.D.E.A. The law states that students should be educated in the least restrictive environment with their peers whenever possible. Separate is not equal. Children belong with their peers in the least restrictive environment possible. Fortunately, the resistance to inclusion by educational systems is beginning to break down with the passage of time.

When the courts began to rule in favor of inclusion, the educational system began to change slowly and reluctantly. Inclusion, rightly conceived and carefully executed can be good for almost all children with disabilities.

Before getting involved with inclusion on a voluntary basis, I was involved in a due process hearing opposing full inclusion of a child with severe and multiple physical and mental disabilities. We lost that hearing, but I gained valuable insights about inclusion. Our educational team gave the mandated inclusion case its best effort to make it work. The adversarial nature of the case made it very difficult. The unfortunate death of the student ended inclusion prematurely. As a result of this experience, I began to believe that a positive, proactive stance on implementing inclusion was a better option. We received an opportunity to prove that with another inclusion case of a student with AIDS and learning disabilities. We learned it could be done successfully through collaboration between the parent and school. This was a successful case of inclusion that we applied to the project in this study.

Inclusion can be a catalyst for changing the philosophy and methodology of educating children with disabilities. My research project paralleled the conclusions of Davids, et al (1994), which says that special education and regular education teachers use essentially the same teaching methods. The old myth that special education teachers hold some special powers to help children with disabilities and that regular classroom teachers need to send their children to them for help is questionable.

Our regular education teachers expressed a sense of empowerment to be able to help their students with disabilities. Through collaboration and team teaching with special education teachers, the regular education teachers approached these students with confidence in their teaching. They became willing participants, and found themselves capable of helping all children with challenges.

Summary and Recommendations on Inclusion

This study showed that inclusion is a viable alternative to segregated, self-contained special education classes at Daybreak School. Inclusion provides children with disabilities an education in the least restrictive environment of their home school with their peers.

The positive results of inclusion we observed included good socialization with typical peers, cooperation between children, collaboration and team teaching among the teachers and a support by parents and school officials. The negatives we experienced in this study included two critical comments by parents that felt inclusion did not meet the educational goals for their children, the need for more planning time for teachers and the need for an extra special education teacher to be part of the inclusion project next year.

Based on the needs of this project, my recommendation to the superintendent was to hire an additional special education teacher for next year to serve up to twenty children in the program. An additional teacher would allow Mrs. Glasser to serve the children with learning disabilities in each inclusion class.

I think that there are other regular education teachers at Daybreak School that would be willing to try inclusion based on what they saw happen this year. We could try to recruit one or two more teachers that would be willing to take two children with disabilities in their class for next year. That would lower the number of children with disabilities in each classroom. The extra services the teacher would get from the special education teachers could be very helpful to other students in their room who need extra help.

Transformational Leadership

I believe that transformational leadership and collaborative decision-making made the inclusion project possible. My role as a transformational principal was to create a culture and climate in the school that supported collaborative decision-making and teacher empowerment. Within the school culture, teachers discovered they could innovate and experiment. The leadership style of the principal had a major impact on whether this happened. The idea needed my support or it would never have progressed.

I agree with Maslow (1970) who said people need a safe environment in which to work. Transformational leaders take it upon themselves to make the environment safe for the teachers to do their work. This kind of leader works closely with the teachers and knows what is taking place in the

school. They are supportive and encouraging of all the team members. They are visible to the staff and are available to people who need to talk to them.

Administrators are given their position and authority by the Board of Education. However, the power of a leader to influence and guide is bestowed by their followers, not the Board of Education. Principals that view their teachers with respect, as capable colleagues, who set a high moral and ethical tone for their behavior and are willing to fight for what is right, gain the respect and devotion of the teachers. This is the only power a leader really has. The power to influence other people is given to a leader by those they lead.

The Impact of My Leadership

This was the hardest part of my research to describe. I hoped this study would reveal more of what I do as a transformational leader. I tried to describe my role and involvement for the reader in the previous chapters, and I hope this provided an insight into my work as principal.

A complete description of the role of leadership in this study has not been achieved, in my opinion. I don't think this study adequately recorded all of my involvement. It identified some of my roles such as hiring teachers, getting feedback, being visible in the school and guiding the inclusion team, but it missed some of the subtle, yet important aspects of my leadership.

Originally, I expected action research to be able to document my role. I found that it is difficult, if not impossible to observe myself in an objective way. I take my own actions and what I say for granted, when in fact, they are important to the development of the culture of the school. What I say and do may be visible to another researcher, but were not visible to me.

In order to learn more about the role of a transformational leader, I think the research needs to be conducted by somebody else. This could be accomplished by getting information from the teachers about the leader. This information could take the form of teacher interviews and/or a questionnaire. I think I could have processed this kind of data; however, it may be a better alternative to have a separate researcher analyze the data and discuss its implications. The self conducted action

research of this project was a limitations that made objective observations and interviews with the transformational principal impossible.

Summary and Recommendations on Leadership

Leadership is an important factor in the development of inclusion at Daybreak School. My study intended to explain how transformational leadership helped make the change from separate, self-contained special education classes to full inclusion. This goal was not met to my satisfaction.

Decision-making teachers need to be able to turn to their principal for support and guidance. The principal has to do whatever they can to assist the development of the project. Transformational leaders work at getting teachers to take on decision-making roles.

In this study, the teachers clearly had decision-making responsibilities. The relationship that existed between the teachers and the principal was like I envision it should as a transformational leader. It was characterized by mutual trust and respect. I was able to relinquish power to capable teachers who, in turn, manifested leadership in their responsibilities for the project. Transformational leadership was essential to establishing collaborative decision-making, which was essential to the development of full inclusion at Daybreak School.

Collaborative Decision-making

A transformational leader sets an ethical and moral vision for the school and seeks to develop collegiality among teachers. Collaborative decision-making is a natural partner to transformational leadership. From an organizational point of view, collaborative decision-making may appear "loose rather than tight." Decisions may take longer to make because you are depending on the consensus of a group rather than that of an individual.

The trust and working relationships that exist among teachers as a result of collaborative decision-making produces solid support for decisions of the group. This study showed that the inclusion team was very responsive and capable of making necessary changes in the inclusion project and that teachers took ownership for the project.

Some administrators believe collaborative decision-making is risky because it shares control of the program with teachers. They believe they are ultimately responsible to the board of education for what happens. I found that when collaborative decision-making is shared with teachers, it is important that administrators are fully aware of developments. There has to be good communication between teachers and principal. Teachers have to keep the principal informed and the principal has to keep the superintendent informed of both good and bad developments and how they are being addressed. In a collaborative system such as this, administrators are not taken out of the decision-making cycle; they are part of it.

Reflection and dialog between teachers and the principal are necessary when you are implementing educational change. This is true to any type of school improvement a team decides to do. If there is no communication and mutual support, it is not likely that the project will succeed.

In my own experience with collaborative decision-making, I have found that teachers keep me informed and seek my approval. While I may have the ultimate power of the veto, I find very little need to use it.

Summary and Recommendations on Collaborative Decision-Making

Collaborative decision-making was a critical factor in this inclusion project. The teachers developed the initial plan and worked together collaboratively on the changes and adjustments the project needed.

The team members worked together. They did team teaching and became very familiar with each others' teaching style and beliefs. This helped develop respect and mutual trust between them.

The way the team helped train and induct Ms. Hansen, our new teacher, into the project has important meaning for how teachers get trained to teach. The new teacher got support on the job from several teachers who were focused on helping her do the assignment. Her success and their success were linked together. They needed each other.

This suggests some possibilities for improving how schools train new teachers. Collaborative decision-making had created teachers that took ownership for the project. When

ownership is felt by teachers about their work, I think they are more motivated to help a new teacher. In addition, if they help in the screening and selection of new teachers, this helps build ownership and willingness to help the new teacher adapt to the setting. Another advantage is that a new teacher gets to work with a number of teachers on a collaborative team, therefore they get to see more than one example and viewpoint. They also get exposed to reflection and dialog that takes place among the team members which can help them become critical thinkers about instructional issues and their own practices.

We also learned that the team had expertise on inclusion within itself. They were able to share ideas and integrate research into their practices. Communication between the team members and team-teaching contributed to the sharing of ideas and methods.

Action Research

I originally thought of doing an interpretive case study of one of our first inclusion students in the attempt to find out what there is to learn about inclusion through the eyes of a participant. As I got involved with collaborative decision-making and full inclusion at Daybreak School, I felt it was more important to show how an innovation like inclusion happens as a result. It was an opportunity for me to use my transformational leadership and experiences gained from our first inclusion attempts to develop a new project from its inception.

Interpretive case study methods were not going to work for this particular project. I began to learn about action research as a useful way to study a project while it was taking place. I discovered that action research is defined by the user for the specific study they are doing. Literature on action research such as Whyte (1991), Carr (1986) and Calhoun (1994) describe how action research was done in various situations. They describe the principles of action research, but ultimately the researcher has to develop his/her own design for a particular study.

I designed my action research plan based on being a participant in the project. This study was critical research because I wanted it to show how transformational leadership and collaborative decision-making can work together in the development of full inclusion. I wanted action research to

help me organize data collection from my interactions with people associated with the project, comments that were made, my observations and interviews, the surveys and other items related to the project. I wanted action research to help me analyze the information and help direct the improvement interventions by the team. These were the expectations I had for my action research.

Lewin (1947), one of the original action researchers described it as a simple process of planning which involves reconnaissance or fact finding; taking actions; and fact-finding about the results of the action. My action research is explained accurately by Lewin's description. I think action research is a simple, but powerful method for inquiry into what is currently taking place.

A lot of information came forth as a result of the action research. I had to find a way to identify what was important. Having graduate school background in interpretive research, I adapted concepts of looking for themes in my data and identifying major concerns that repeated over time. This was my way of separating the chaff from the wheat, so to speak. I also used quantitative methods to help identify parent concerns about inclusion.

I found action research is a form of disciplined inquiry in which you must reflect back on what your are learning in order to find meaning. I would use it again in another situation. I think it is highly adaptable to real life school improvement situations. In her book, "How to Use Action Research in the Self-Renewing School," Emily Calhoun (1994) compiled ways a faculty could design research to work on solving local school problems. I think her book is indicative of a trend towards using action research as a tool for educational improvement. There seems to be more interest in interpretive research as it applies to school restructuring.

This action research study helped convince me that interpretive research is a socially responsible form of inquiry for educational settings and is my personal preference. I like qualitative inquiry. As a school principal, I can respond to the descriptions and situations described in qualitative educational research. It describes the "reality" of a school where issues are often interrelated and should be studied in context with one another. Qualitative research, such as action research adapt well to this kind of situation.

In this study, I conducted the action research and interacted with the team members by discussing themes that emerged from my data. This was necessary, since they were not trained in doing action research. Now that I know how to do it, I would like to share with teachers its simple methods so they can use it to do their own research. I think it is possible to have individual or small groups of teachers working on several mini educational research projects at one time in a school. Helping teachers become self-actualizing (Sergiovanni, 1992) is one of my goals as a transformational leader. I view helping teachers gain a new skill in self research as consistent with the goals of transformational leadership.

Action research is simple enough to use so that teachers could do it without adding greatly to their work load. An advantage is that action research helps you organize what you are doing, gather data and reflect on it before taking a corrective action. It is a way of recording what you are doing so you can make intelligent decisions. Its simplicity and utility make it attractive as a teacher research method.

Summary and Recommendations on Action Research

Action research is a useful method for studying actual school problems as they happen. It organizes and analyzes information for the purpose of making decisions and changes in the research project. It was a good methodology for studying our full inclusion project.

I recommend that action research be adapted so classroom teachers can do their own research on instructional ideas. Participant action research can be adapted to many types of actual problems. It can assist teachers in making decisions about how effective they are and what they should do to improve.

Action research also has implications for training new teachers. This method could be included in what teachers are taught so that they can learn how to analyze their environment and make improvements in their instruction. New teachers need to know how to question the status quo in schools so they can implement positive, fresh ideas effectively. The need to become critical in a

positive sense. They need to be able to constructively question what they do and how they do it in order to improve instruction.

Project Summary

I have observed this project through each cycle of development. I have seen it grow from a seedling idea to a full grown reality. I believe full inclusion is good for children. I think educators and parents need to work together to develop appropriate inclusion plans for children. One of the strong features of this project is the child-centered philosophy of the principal and the teachers. This helped guide what was done in the best interest of children.

This inclusion project taught us that integrating children with learning disabilities into regular education classes at Daybreak School could be done successfully. The lessons that we learned from the one year project will help us in the plans for the coming year.

One of the highlights of this project for me was meeting with the teachers and the parents from the classes in a discussion group. The sharing of ideas and concerns about inclusion was an important source of useful information about how to make inclusion work better. The discussion group was an example of positive parent involvement in the development of an educational program. I can see possibilities for more parent involvement like this in the future. I believe the concept of collaboration should extend to the parents. I believe that parent involvement can result in strengthening educational innovation.

If inclusion is to continue to succeed as an educational idea and not just fade away like so many other educational innovations, it needs to demonstrate that it is right for children with disabilities to be included in regular education classes and that it is practical. Our project offered evidence that it was possible and practical to do inclusion.

Inclusion holds the promise of building understanding and tolerance between children which will later exist as adults. We saw children sharing and taking responsibly and concern for each other in this project. We saw them compensate for what their friends with disabilities could not do for themselves. We saw poor social relationships turn into positive relationships as a result of inclusion. These non-academic personal growth aspects are important to individuals and society. As children become adults, the lessons of tolerance and caring may have far reaching implications for solving the

issues of the world. As teachers grow in their ability to work with children with disabilities in their classroom, inclusion will become more commonplace.

The most important lesson from this project was not inclusion. It was that educators can implement almost any type of school improvement project if they work together to accomplish it. It is important to have a transformational leader that develops a school culture that fosters innovation, who believes in collaborative decision-making and teacher empowerment and uses qualitative methods, such as action research to assist in the development and study of the project. When ideas can percolate up from the teachers in a school and gain support from the leadership, progress will take place. Teachers, principals, students and parents are stakeholders in educational reform and they all need to be considered and involved in school improvement.

Inclusion, like other school improvements, is the product of a school culture that supports collaborative decision-making and trying innovative ideas. The principal is largely influential on the climate and culture of the school. This study showed that the role of a transformational leader had great impact on what teachers believe they can say and do. They became empowered to create the project and to make decisions. They took ownership for their work. I believe this kind of commitment and growth can take in any school where the teachers and transformational leader work together for change.

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APPENDIX

Note: This is the survey the project team sent home to parents of special education students in March, 1995.

Dear Parents:

During this year your child has been in a class where children with learning disabilities have been included with students without disabilities. The project design is to provide an education in a regular class that meets the special needs of your child through direct and consultative services of the special education staff. We have come to call our program Regular Education Inclusion (REI).

You can help us evaluate the effectiveness of our REI program as we plan for next year.

Please mark your response to each statement on a scale of 1 to 5. 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = agree somewhat; 4 = disagree; 5 = don't know/need more information.

1. My child benefited academically from participation in the REI program.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My child has benefited socially from participation in the REI program.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I need more information about the REI program.	1	2	3	4	5
4. My child received the support s/he needed in the REI program.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I agree with the philosophy and goals of the REI program.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I feel that my child is achieving his/her goals in the REI program.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I would like to see my child continue in an REI program next year.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Would you be willing to attend an evening meeting with the staff in March to talk about our program?	Yes		No		

You comments, questions or concerns: (please use the back of the page)

The REI Team thanks you for your help.

Note: This is the discussion meeting letter sent to all parents.

Daybreak School

Office of the Principal

March 17, 1995

Dear Parent:

We are going to have a discussion meeting with the parents of students in Mrs. Glasser, Mrs. Minor's and Ms. Hansen's classes on March 23 at 7:00 p.m. in the school library. Our integrated approach to educating students with special needs in regular education classes is the focus of the meeting. We especially want feedback from you, as parents that we can incorporate into the plans for next year.

We hope you will be able to attend this parent meeting with the teachers and myself. This will be an adults only meeting. Light refreshments will be served. If you can attend, please fill out the bottom half of this letter and send it back to your teacher by March 21. We hope to see you there!

Yours truly,

Paul R. Hain

(detatch and return to school)

I (We) will be attending the parent teacher discussion forum on March 23 at 7:00 p.m. in the Daybreak School Library.

Name(s):_____ _____

DATA COLLECTION DATES REFERENCED IN THE STUDY

March 8, 1994	Initial meeting
March 15, 1994	Team meeting
April 21 & 22, 1994	Annual review
May 12, 1994	Team meeting
May 13, 1994	Superintendent meeting
June 3, 1994	Team meeting
June 23, 1994	Teacher interviews
August 3, 1994	Team meeting
August 10, 1994	Scheduling
August 13, 1994	Superintendent/administrative team
August 25, 1994	Partial team meeting
August 29 & 30, 1994	Planning meeting
October 12, 1994	Observation
October 14, 1994	Inclusion Conference
November 2, 1994	Informal discussion with teachers
November 2, 1994	Administrative team meeting
November 7 & 8, 1994	Parent-teacher conferences
November 14 & 15, 1994	Team meeting
December 2, 1994	Team meeting
December 6, 1994	Discussion with superintendent
Deember 6, 1994	Discussion with inclusion teachers

December 12, 1994	Team meeting
January 3, 1995	Team meeting
January 5, 1995	Team meeting
January 12, 1995	Observation
January 18, 1995	Team meeting
January 19, 1995	Planning session
February 1, 1995	Informal discussion with teacher
February 3, 1995	Discussion
February 13, 1995	Meeting with principal and superintendent
February 15, 1995	Administrative team meeting
February 16, 1995	Team meeting
February 21, 1995	School Board meeting
February 23, 1995	Planning meeting
March 1, 1995	Team meeting
March 7, 1995	Workshop presentation
March 8, 1995	Administrative team meeting
March 14, 1995	Survey results
March 23, 1995	Parent meeting