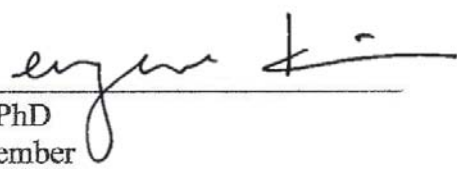ACCEPTANCE

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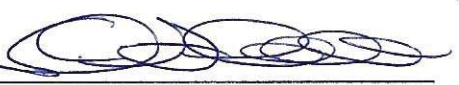
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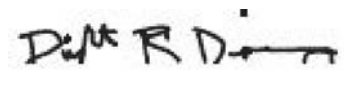
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HOW CASE MANAGEMENT DUTIES IMPACT INSTRUCTIONAL TIME TO SUPPORT
STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

by

Diane Michael

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements for the
Degree of
Doctor of Education
in
Educational Leadership
May 2, 2020

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ABSTRACT

The central principle of any school system is the focus on better pedagogical strategies for all students; including students with disabilities (SWD). Large teacher workloads can take time away from this instructional purpose. The primary aim of the current study was to investigate the attitudes of special education teachers, general education teachers, para-educators, and administrators, about the way the roles of personnel are managed by schools. The intent of this study was also to investigate their beliefs about the school principals' roles in supporting special education teachers and students.

There were 64 participants, administrators, para-educators, general education teachers, and special education teachers from three high schools in a small southern California district known as District ION. Participants were asked to fill out a survey that asked about their experience working in education. The two research questions were addressed in this study using a mixed methods approach. How do schools manage roles of personnel to increase the effectiveness of special education? What are the beliefs to support the ideal roles for school staff in relationship to SPED?

The results of this study indicated that the teachers of record (TOR) spent nearly double the amount of time performing IEP-related duties than their general education colleagues. The results of this study also indicated that nearly half of the general and special education teachers believed that there was a general lack of administrative clarity and support when working directly with students with disabilities (SWD) in a classroom setting. Further research should be conducted to explore a potential correlation between the amount of time teachers spend on IEP-related duties and achievement of SWD. Further research is also needed to answer questions

concerning educational leadership and the role leaders play in creating the supportive

professional conditions that promote achievement for SWD and the general student population.

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thank you for supporting me and believing in me. To the Hobkirk family: thank you for always loving me and supporting me since I came to Santa Monica. Joanna: thank you for all of your support. Jeff Keller, thank you for helping me see this through from start to finish. Dr. Isma Seetal: thank you for being the editing queen and making the process fun again. To Mr. Luis Ramirez: they always say to "start from beginning". But if it were not for meeting you on the sidewalk at John Adams Middle School and for your unwavering belief in me, I would have never been able to do any of this in California.

And so, in conclusion: *THANK YOU!*

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Special education in California accounted for more than $9.3 billion, which represented 16% of K–12 spending in 2006–07 (Lipscomb, 2009). An extensive reform of special education financing in California about a decade ago sought to improve the way the state funds education for the disabled, who make up about 10% of public school students (Lipscomb, 2009). Did reform in special education achieve its goals? In large part, yes—but more can be done. The author suggests that to realize the equity goals of reform, policymakers could equalize base funding rates and make adjustments for local conditions such as numbers of low-income students and regional labor market wage levels (Lipscomb, 2009).

Previously, many stakeholders believed that special education funding was a major encroachment on the general education budget. This concern was partially addressed in the Local Control Funding Format (LCFF) in 2016 by California legislature, which is currently being implemented in California school districts. The four student subgroups that are supported by the LCFF include: bilingual students, homeless, foster-care, and special education students who are consistently performing lower than their peers on achievement tests.

Since the passing of the No Child Left Behind Legislation (NCLB) in 2004, there has been a major movement to include children with disabilities in classes with their general education peers (NCLB, 2004). The central idea of the current research is to examine strategies that provide better opportunities for teaching staff to remain engaged in the classroom, thus meeting the needs of special education students more effectively. During this study, an interview with the Director of Special Education of the targeted district, called District ION, in the current study, revealed that there has been a marked increase in litigation within the district. The district administration has instructed staff to prioritize the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

(IDEA) deadlines, and file the correct paperwork needed to minimize the number of lawsuits the district is currently facing, instead of focusing on instruction.

According to O'Connor, Yasik, and Horner (2016), children with learning disabilities have not been meeting academic expectations and are essentially in need of effective instruction that addresses academic difficulties encountered in the classroom on a daily basis. O'Connor et al. (2016) identified at least two factors that should be implemented in order to support student achievement, especially that of students with disabilities. There needs to be educationally appropriate instruction for students with disabilities in the general education classroom and a qualified teacher to provide the appropriate instruction (O'Conner et al., 2016). Unfortunately, the researcher of the current study and many of her colleagues have had to sacrifice the quality of instruction provided to students in order to meet the demands of the individualized education program (IEP) compliance within District ION.

The state has also audited the district and determined that District ION is out of compliance with the requirements of the IEP and needs to remedy this by the proposed state-mandated deadline (Personal communications, director of special education, District ION, May 18, 2017). As part of her coursework at Concordia University Irvine, the researcher conducted a study for her action plan research assignment which examined the role of the Teacher of Record (TOR). The duties of TOR have minimized teacher presence in the classroom and increased the number of substitute teachers available to cover for those classrooms. However, these measures impacted the school budget negatively for the 2014-2015 school year. The study focused on the financial investments of District ION, particularly, the amount of money spent on substitute teachers working in the classroom. At the same time, TORs were assigned other roles such as scheduling IEP meetings, administering assessments, and maintaining student IEP records.

While conducting this research, the author discovered that District ION spent nearly $111,000 for funding 17 staff members to schedule, administer necessary assessments, and update student Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for compliance with state and federal requirements. Although District ION showed some agreement with the study's findings, the final conclusion was that there was not enough evidence to demonstrate a measurable negative impact on student achievement. There was no action taken by the district to provide adequate support, such as re-hiring retired special education teachers to substitute or utilizing student teachers to assist the TOR in completing the mandated IEPs.

Currently, special education teachers spend a large portion of their working day performing non-pedagogical tasks such as maintaining legal documentation of Individual Education Plans, which in turn leads to numerous hours spent assessing and reporting on students with special needs. The amount of instructional time per day is determined by the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) for the local educational agency (LEA) (California Department of Education [CDE], 2018). The variation and array of curricular and program options are also determined by the local educational agency (California Department of Education [CDE], 2011). The special education teacher uses the instructional delivery model of Special Academic Instruction (SAI) or a collaborative education program to make accommodations and transition the students into regular education classes as is appropriate. However, according to Education Code (EC) 56360 (CDE, 2011), there is no language indicating what should actually be included in these models or the length of time it takes to teach them. There are state statutes such as Education Code (EC) 51220 (Kemerer & Sansom, 2009) that have been put into place that specify the curriculum and number of minutes needed for students to make gains in

academic achievement, yet the amount of time needed for the instruction of general education students, especially students with needs, varies by district or the LEA (CDE, 2011).

Educational leaders must understand the importance for staff to remain in the classroom and teach strategies and key points which support special education students in reaching the same academic achievements as their general education peers. Many factors contribute to the lower performance of students with needs, including cognitive delays, auditory processing deficiencies, hearing and visual impairments, and fine- and gross-motor delays (Kemerer & Sansom, 2009). The role of the teacher is central to these students' success; teachers should be present and fully engaged in the classroom for real learning to take place. Unfortunately, TOR case management duties have created the opposite effect: teachers are requested to focus on non-pedagogical work to help school districts maintain compliance with the federal and state education laws.

Children do not receive a quality education without the consistent presence of a qualified special education teacher in classrooms (Fullan, 2010). Unfortunately, the increased TOR case management duties in the small urban school district in Southern California targeted in this study, diminished the amount of time provided to teachers for classroom teaching tasks, which could have impacted the overall achievement of the students adversely. The absence of daily interaction between special education teachers and the special education students could lead to insufficient academic performance.

The overall performance of special education students in District ION in 2016 was 512 on the Academic Performance Index (API) test, which falls far below any other subgroup. The socioeconomically disadvantaged students' score was 736 (Noguera, 2016). These students were from all schools within district ION. A possible reason for which students are not achieving at

the level expected of them and the disparities between expectations and reality have not been reduced is the current site leadership's approach to authority and compliance (Senge, 2010). The lower student performance may also, to some extent, be attributed to the impact of amplified focus on Teacher of Record (TOR) duties. The Teacher of Record is often pulled out of the classroom to address legal issues regarding IEP documentation and implementation. Although smaller district goals, such as compliance with IEPs, have been reached through school programs, the staff has little to no clarity on the pedagogical direction to take in order to support the most vulnerable students and, eventually, close the achievement gap. There has not been a clear indication of the need to address the amount of time teachers spend in the classroom in helping students learn and improve directly. Education Secretary Damian Hinds stated at the annual Association of School and College Leaders conference that teacher workload was one of the biggest threats to teacher recruitment and retention (ResourceEd, 2018). Based on data collected from interviews and surveys conducted by ResourceEd (2018), teachers expressed their perception about the impact of workload stress on the quality of teaching. Not only did teachers believe that pedagogy was negatively affected, but also perceived that very few administrators were addressing the problem, thus causing teachers to experience higher levels of stress, which ultimately could lead to attrition (ResourceEd, 2018).

A general model that all states use, developed by John Carroll in 1963, establishes the link between learning and time (Florida Education Association [FEA], 2018). This particular instructional model shows that learning is dependent on the amount of time during which a student remained actively engaged in the learning process and not on the amount of time, in minutes, purported to be required by governing bodies in education (FEA, 2018). If special

education teachers continue to follow this model, they need to be fully present in the classroom to promote active student engagement.

Problem Statement

There have been concerns expressed by various stakeholders at a small urban high school in Southern California that students with disabilities were not progressing academically as compared to their general education peers. The researcher uses the districts' California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASP) data and reported instructional times as basis to advocate for the integrity of teachers' roles to be maintained in the classroom. According to the Academic Performance Index, data gleaned from Dr. Pedro Noguera's research (2016) report for the smaller urban school district, students with disabilities (API = 512) have not performed comparably to other subgroups in mathematics; while 20% of the general education students did not meet the mathematics standards, the percentage of students with disabilities not meeting the standards were significantly higher. There is a performance gap of nearly 60% between special education and general education students in District ION. Eighty-six percent of all the students with disabilities in the state of California did not meet the standards in the area of mathematics. Students with disabilities performed better in District ION, with 79% of students reaching standards. There was only a 7% difference between the state and district percentage performances. Thirty-nine percent of special education students in District ION failed to achieve minimum standards in English language arts standards. In contrast, 3% of general education students in District ION fell below the minimum English-language arts standards. The special education students in California performed significantly better at 19% in English language arts than special education students in District ION at 8.91%. According to the data presented by Dr.

Noguera in 2016, students in this subgroup performed significantly lower when compared with the performance of all California students in special education.

Lipscomb (2009) states that special education accounted for nearly $9.3 billion of California's K-12 expenditures in 2006-2007. Special education funding is normally a major encroachment on the general education budget (Lipscomb, 2009). Although special education needs and spending have increased, there has not been an increase in special education funding. This concern for adequate funding was partially addressed in the Local Control Funding Format (LCFF) in 2016 by California legislature, which has been implemented in California school districts. There are four subgroups in this population being addressed by LCFF: the bilingual students, homeless and foster-care, and special education students who are consistently performing lower than their peers on achievement tests.

The researcher maintains that the current dilemma facing District ION is that students with disabilities (SWD) have significantly lower achievement scores, which may, in part, be attributed to the additional duties that Teachers of Record (TOR) perform that prevent them from spending quality time in the classroom.

Purpose of Study

The primary purpose of this mixed-methods research was to investigate the attitudes of special education teachers, general education teachers, para-educators, and administrators, about the way the roles of personnel are managed by schools. Particular focus was placed on examining the amount of time teachers need to support students with special needs in their classrooms. The intent of this study was also to investigate the beliefs of various local actors in schools such as special education teachers, general education teachers, para-educators, and

administrators about the school principals' roles in supporting special education teachers and students. The specific research questions addressed in this study are:

      1. How do schools manage the roles of personnel to increase the effectiveness of special education?

      2. What are the beliefs held by school staff about the supports needed, so the ideal roles of teachers in special education can be upheld?

Significance of the Study

      The researcher was concerned with the academic progress of students with disabilities within her general education classroom. She believed that these students were not receiving the support that they needed to achieve the same academic goals as their general education peers. She made it her mission to find these supports both within and outside of the classroom by collaborating with colleagues and administrators. These collaborative efforts enabled the researcher to focus on the necessary pedagogical strategies required to assist those individuals with disabilities in improving their academic performance. The researcher believes that more could be done, at the level of the school and the district, to support her students. The current research seeks to explore a problem of practice that the researcher has witnessed within her district, that is, the lack of support for special education teachers, particularly in alleviating their non-pedagogical tasks. At the same time, the study also addresses a gap in the research on special education. Klinger and Boardman (2011) assert that there is a failure to conduct and address the complicated issues that many schools face in the area of special education. Klinger and Boardman (2011) maintain that educational research comprised of mixed-methods would enable educators to collect data relevant to the issues of special education such as; school culture and climate and student diversity. This researcher believes that conducting a mixed-methods

study will benefit the research in the area of special education. Greenwood and Abbot (2001) argue that there is significance to the research in the area of special education. They assert that educational research has aided developments in interventions to support students with needs.

Educational research in the area of special education has also helped to improve the outcomes of all students; that is, those with and without disabilities (Greenwood & Abbott, 2001). They contend that research on teaching, especially teaching students with needs, helps provide information that enables staff members find solutions to problems within the practice. This researcher agrees that studies are needed to help teachers who support students with needs. By utilizing data from specific studies, and implementing strategies as a whole school community, then true student achievement can be attained.

Theoretical Framework

Senge's (2012) theory of the creative tension model (see Figure 1) was used as the theoretical framework in the current study as it illustrates the difficulties that the TOR case managers in District ION are currently experiencing. The gap between vision that is, what should be, and current reality is a source of tension. The vision is that TOR case managers are allowed to focus solely on special needs students, particularly those who are most vulnerable, such as our English language learners (ELLs) and special education students (SPED). The researcher believes that District ION's inappropriate budget, combined with its litigious need to remain in compliance, has created a situation of tension in its schools. This is due to an over-emphasis on compliance and decreased pedagogy and happening reluctance to address the underlying issue of meeting the needs of diverse students.

The Ideal: What Should Be

English Language Learners

Special Education Students

District Budget

State and Federal Laws
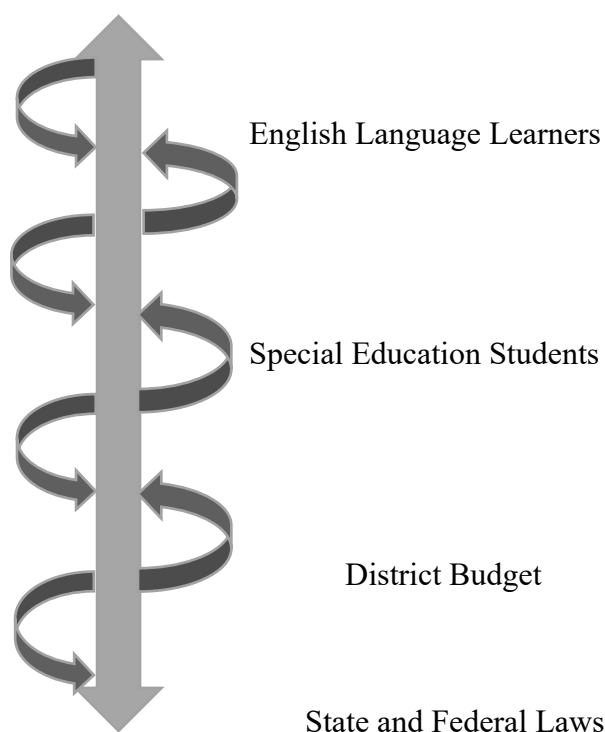
Current Reality: Students not being served by TOR

The Current Reality: What is

Figure 1. The Creative Tension Model 1. Adapted from "Schools that learn: A fifth discipline fieldbook for educators, parents, and everyone who cares about education," by P. Senge, 2012, p. 5.

Delimitations

According to Lunenburg & Irby (2008), boundaries and qualifications are inherent to every study. The delimitations defined by the researcher were shaped by the focus she placed on creating a better understanding of how to support students with disabilities and enable them to improve their academic performance. The first delimitation was the scope of the research. The researcher focused her research on providing research-evidence that would inform the design of better strategies to support students with disabilities; hence the study was limited to the current staff working within the school sites in a specific district in Southern California. A second delimitation was the use of only three school sites and three categories of local school actors

including high school teachers, para-educators, and administrators. Third, the researcher worked within the parameters set forth by District ION policy; that is, District ION board policy did not allow the researcher to gain access to any other staff members and schools within the district. The policy only permitted the research to be conducted at the approved sites and with the approved staff members.

Limitations

The current study has the following limitations:

1. A small group of individuals was recruited at each school site; thus, the findings of the study may not be generalizable to the entire district or other local districts. They may also not be generalizable to other states.

2. There are many variables outside of the control of the researcher that could impact student achievement. These variables include cognitive ability (CI) or intellectual ability (ID) of the student, over-identification of students as special needs (SPED) due to teacher biases, quality and type of the instructional programs offered by the district, ancillary support services offered by the district and parental involvement (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). However, considering that schools within the same district were selected for this study, the researcher assumed that some of these variables such as the instructional programs were constant.

3. There are inherent design and statistical problems when carrying out correlational studies (Lunenburg & Irby, 2018). The current study used correlational analyses thus found the relationship between variables; however, a cause-and-effect relationship was not established.

Assumptions

This research included the following assumptions: (a) the selected staff responded to the survey and indicated their perceptions truthfully and accurately; (b) the data collected accurately reflected the perceptions of those individuals who responded; (c) the same instructional programs and services were provided to students across the district.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are used in the document and defined for the reader:

*Academic Performance Index (API)***:** It is an accountability measurement used to measure a school's academic performance and growth in specific academic areas. (California Department of Education, 2011).

Case Management Duties: They are also known as Teacher of Record duties (TOR). Case Management duties refer to the managerial and organizational duties needed to coordinate, update, and maintain Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for students with needs (District ION, 2013).

Collaborative Classes: Academic classes that utilize both a special education teacher and a general education teacher to support both general education students and special education students within the same classroom (Curry, DeGregorio, Foster, & Michael, 2014).

Local Control Funding Formula: Enacted in 2013, The Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) changed the way local educational agencies (LEAs) are funded. The funds are allocated to LEAs based on state measured results, such as student test scores and graduation rates. LCFF is also provided to schools for financing the services and supports they need to support students in reaching their greatest potential" (California Department of Education, 2019).

Inclusion: It refers to the integration of children with disabilities in general education classes for the majority of the day.

Individual Education Plan (IEP): The term individual education program defines a written statement about each child with a disability that is developed, reviewed, and revised in accordance with special education law; section 614(d). An individualized education program, or an individualized family service plan that meets the requirements of section 636(d), is developed, reviewed, and revised for each child with a disability in accordance with section 614(d) (Kemerer & Sansom, 2009).

Intellectual Disability (ID): Intellectual disability refers to the impairment of general abilities, which impacts adaptive functioning in three domains, or areas, the conceptual, social, and practical domains. These domains determine how well an individual copes with everyday tasks: The conceptual domain includes skills in language, reading, writing, math reasoning, knowledge, and memory. The social domain refers to empathy, social judgment, interpersonal communication skills, the ability to make and retain friendships, and similar capacities. The practical domain refers to self-management such as personal care and organizational tasks (American Psychiatric Association [APA], 2013).

Para-educators: Para-educators are school employees who work under the supervision of a teacher or a professional practitioner such as a speech pathologist or behavioral interventionist. The para-educators' role is predominantly educational, but this role may include auxiliary tasks such as assisting with adaptive daily living skills (ADLs) or transitioning skills (National Education Association (NEA), 2017).

Professional Condition: The professional condition is the positive or negative environment of an employee that is created by the leader's leadership style, the demands of the

job, and the supports provided for the employee that affects overall performance and attitude (Personal communication, Dr. Lampe, April 15, 2018).

School Climate: It is the product of a school system's larger plan to foster student achievement that utilizes the following strategies: (a) systemic and fiscal attention towards creating an emotionally and physically safe environment; and (b) administrative focus and attention that establishes and maintains behavioral and pedagogical norms that lead to the development of a nurturing and supportive environment (Senge**,** 2012).

Socioeconomic Status (SES): It is not just the income level of a particular student, but also the educational attainment, and occupational experience of the students' parents. SES is a key factor that influences the quality of life of a student (American Psychological Association, 2019).

Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Student (SDS): The socioeconomically disadvantaged student is an individual who has difficulty making academic improvements due to a lack of access to educational supports, tutoring, and supplemental materials that would enhance his learning. This lack of access results in SDS achieving lower academic performances compared to their peers (Curry et al., 2014).

Special Academic Instruction (SAI): It is the offer of a free appropriate public education that services students with disabilities in a separate classroom or within a general education classroom. The services offered provide the necessary accommodations and modifications that allow students with disabilities to access the general education curriculum (Curry et al., 2014).

Students with Disabilities (SWD): They are students, having a suspected disability, who have been determined to be eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

(IDEA) to have additional educational services to help them access the general education curriculum (Curry et al., 2014).

Teacher of Record (TOR): It is the title of a teacher within the special education department within a district. The Teacher of Record manages the physical files of students with disabilities with whom they have direct contact with. The TOR updates annual and triennial IEP information writing and updating present levels, IEP goals, accommodations and modifications, contact information, and transitional information. Other duties include assessing individuals for upcoming triennial IEPs and initial IEPs to determine eligibility for special education services, coordinating IEP meetings with all stakeholders, and providing classroom and academic strategies to staff (Nance & Calabrese, 2009).

Organization of the Study

This research study is presented in five chapters. Chapter 1 included the following: the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the research purpose, research questions, theoretical framework, delimitations, limitations, assumptions of the researcher, and definition of key terms. Chapter 2 contains the literature review focused on the key constructs in the research questions and how previous research supports the theoretical framework used in the study. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used by the researcher. It includes four main sections which cover the selection of participants, the instrumentation, data collection, and data analyses. Chapter 4 presented the findings of the research and includes several sections: the demographic information of participants, factor analysis, and the results of the data analyses for the two research questions (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008). Chapter 5 provided a summary of the entire research, a discussion of the findings, the implications of the findings for theory and practice, recommendations for future research, and conclusions reached by the researcher.

CHAPTER 2: THE LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the Academic Performance Index data gleaned from Dr. Pedro Noguera's research report (2016) for District ION, the overall performance index of special education students was 512, which falls far below other subgroups. The score for socioeconomically disadvantaged students was 736. The current site leadership's approach of authority-compliance is believed to be at the core of this lack of achievement and one of the reasons for which the disparities have not reduced over the years (Senge, 2010). The Teacher of Record is often pulled out of the classroom to address litigious issues related to Individual Education Plan (IEP) documentation and implementation, which may also have contributed to the special education students' lack of achievement. The rigorous legal requirements associated with special education have increased teachers' workloads and the amount of time they feel can be dedicated to student services (Nance & Calabrese, 2009). There is little to no focus on the pedagogical direction that staff needs to take in order to help our most vulnerable students and close the achievement gap. There are small goals and a clear strategy for compliance with Individual Education Plans or IEPs. Still, until recently, there has not been a clear strategy to guide student improvement and achievement (Feustel, 2015).

This study focused on a primary and secondary research question:

1. How do schools manage the roles of personnel to increase the effectiveness of special education?

2. What are the beliefs held by school staff about the supports needed, so the ideal roles of teachers in special education can be upheld?

Issues in Special Education

Dr. Pedro Noguera was hired by District ION to find out why the students were not achieving what the community believed to be acceptable results. After reviewing the Academic Performance Index (API) scores, Dr. Noguera showed that the overall performance of students with disabilities was 512, which is considerably lower than that of any other subgroups in the district (Noguera, 2016). Many variables affect the performance of students with needs such as the physical presence of teachers in the classroom and school leadership; these have been discussed in the current review of the literature.

McDonald (2011) provides an explanation as to why many schools, such as many in District ION, do not achieve. He believes that educational leaders need to create conditions "that encourage teachers to find innovative ways to nurture staff and student growth" (p. 1). Existing school structures that were created to promote achievement are, in fact, stifling the vision of teachers who fulfill the roles of effective educators and learners (McDonald, 2011, p. 46). The current purpose of the TOR position in district ION is to maintain legal documents about students with IEPs, which minimizes their instructional role. McDonald believes that all too often, teachers wind up working for leadership instead of leadership working for and with teachers (p.102). McDonald shows how the scenario of leadership working with teachers creates an effective, positive change that directly affects student results.

Fullan (1993) explains that effective education must encompass a pedagogy that goes beyond mere teaching. Education must combine the general principles of teaching with subject-specific instruction. If our teachers are pulled out of the classroom merely to meet special education compliance issues such as coordinating IEPs, maintaining student records, and assessing and writing exhaustive reports, then they cannot be active participants in the pedagogical

process. TOR case management duties should be modified as they not only take attention away from the pedagogical mission of teachers but may also interfere with vital professional collaboration. When teachers are pulled away from the classroom, they cannot hone their craft through collaboration. Addressing these various interrelated issues, including the problems of overburdened teachers, absence of effective leadership, and lack of teacher presence in the classroom and teacher collaboration requires a concerted effort; all stakeholders should fulfill their roles effectively (Feustel, 2015).

Roles of Policymakers

Zwaagstra, Clifton, and Long (2010) emphasize the ineffectiveness of some of the current existing educational policies and the way many practices have departed from common sense. Zwaagstra et al. (2010) are emphatic about transforming public schools and reorganizing leadership to focus on the primary objective of educating students. They placed stress on the significant correlation between effective teaching and student performance (Zwaagstra et al., 2010). "If basic skills are not taught and practiced, then students will have difficulties in school and in society" (Zwaagstra et al., 2010, p. 122). There is more than one aspect that policy-makers should consider when creating an effective solution to poor student performance. However, one constant is the focus on student learning.

Federal and state policymakers play various roles in promoting student learning. For example, they build comprehensive plans that communicate vision and guidelines about various issues. Alexander (2013) explains the basic policy principles and connects them to what people do in organizations. The essence of policy analysis is to "search for an appropriate solution of a policy issue that's identified and defined" (Alexander, 2013, p. 32). The process of creating an action plan for an organization starts with the identification of the problems followed

by step-by-step actions to address them. Alexander calls these procedures the policy-making process; it details the phases that a leader works through when providing alternative solutions. Alexander (2013) emphasizes the need for writing a working definition of the problem and calls for clear evidence to support each potential solution as it is drafted. This process encourages support from stakeholders.

Teacher Roles

An important idea proposed by Dufour, Dufour, Many, and Mattos (2016) is the need to focus on learning as "the fundamental purpose of the school is to ensure that all students learn at high levels" (p. 11). Dufour et al. (2016) continue to explain that the essence of a school's focus should be on students' learning. They believe that educators need to stay committed to that focus. The primary role of teachers is thus instructional.

Instruction

Parks Le Tellier (2007) believes that as educators, the goal is for teachers to become positively engaged with students. Ongoing interactions with students enable them to be more interested in the materials that they learn. Since students are more interested, they become more responsible for assimilating what they have learned. Parks Le Tellier (2007) maintains that strong teacher relationships with students help to "keep students resourceful and engaged…participative, interested, and responsible" (p. 67). Educators need to have a deep commitment to real learning; however, when teachers are not in the classroom, it becomes very difficult to keep this commitment. At the core of teaching lie teacher relationships with students. Mullens and Gayler's (1999) research indicates that the extent of teacher interactions with students has a direct effect on the quality of students' experiences in the classroom and school. If more time is spent fostering these relationships, then the net effect will be more positive

interactions between students and teachers, thus promoting greater learning and development within the classroom. Teachers should adopt a results orientation, which is the actual evidence of student learning (Dufour et al., 2016).

Although the primary role of the teacher is instructional, the nature of the teaching profession has evolved over the years. This has given rise to new roles for teachers that include leadership responsibilities. The roles of teachers and teacher leaders are diverse and usually include some managerial duties (Harrison & Killion, 2007*).* Fullan (2011) captures the essential function of a passionate teacher. He states that the teacher's morality can be a driving force in creating strategies and galvanizing schools to achieve their original purpose of teaching students. He claims that the collective passion and purpose of teachers is the key to providing effective services to students. Fullan (2016) asserts that districts too often direct teachers to focus on 'ad hoc' tasks such as test preparation. According to Fullan (2016), teachers want to focus on improving all students' experiences. It is this drive; this desire, that is the impetus for all systems to change the status quo and build capacity as a means to improve student performance, especially in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

In her qualitative case study, McAninch (2015) discusses the importance of teacher contributions to student academic growth in the classroom. Glick (2011) also emphasizes the importance of teachers' instruction; she asserts that there is a direct link between effective, engaging practices in the classroom and student achievement. Teachers' knowledge of substance and subject matter play an important role in student learning (Fink, 2010). She believes that there needs to be a specific identification of "teacher qualifications, characteristics, and classroom practices" (p.1) that promotes positive student learning experiences. The purpose of McAninch's study was to showcase the impact of teacher patterns of "in-class questioning and

responses" (p. 6) to the successful facilitation of classroom discussions, especially in the area of mathematics. McAninch's (2015) study provides a better understanding of how teacher discussions and overall quality affect classroom performance during pivotal teaching moments (McAninch's, 2015, p.4).

Teacher quality and effectiveness can also impact student achievement positively in the classroom (Hindman, Grant, & Stronge, 2010). Teachers need to invest time and energy proactively into "creating a learning situation where students understand both what is expected of them as well as how to meet or exceed expectations" (p. 50). Educators should also invest time in building collective capacity by focusing on student learning and the results of that learning to promote authentic student learning (Dufour et al., 2016). Gablinske (2014) states that a teacher's acumen has a direct relationship to his effectiveness in the classroom. She uses Hallinan's (2008) research to show that teacher relationships with students play a vital role in academic and social-emotional growth (Gablinske, 2014). The author's ethnography uses a variety of evidence, such as "documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations" (p. 37) to identify factors that are associated with teacher-student interactions. It is of utmost importance that educational leaders understand the value of positive teacher-student relationships and the effect that these have on overall student achievement. When teachers are pulled away from the classroom, and essentially pulled away from these relationships, the academic and social-emotional growth of students weakens over time.

Schmoker (2011) places a heavy emphasis on the educator's presence in the classroom. He believes that a "decent, coherent curriculum, collectively-selected by a team of teachers that are actually taught" (Schmoker, 2011, p. 10) is the key to unlocking student potential. This, in turn, could lead to the academic success of students. Schmoker (2011) states that teachers

cannot waste time; instead, they must support students in remaining on task for the duration of the class to promote authentic learning. If teachers are not spending enough time in the classroom due to other tasks such as TOR case management duties, student success can be adversely affected. Teachers should also create opportunities for students to link content knowledge to critical thinking in the classroom. Educators should build lessons that emphasize strategies to create these links, which could eventually lead to improved student outcomes (Schmoker, 2011). However, the time that is needed to build the links between content knowledge and critical thinking is lost when educators have to focus on tasks outside of the pedagogical frame such as drafting Individual Education Plans (IEPs), and assessing and reporting on those assessments, which could affect student achievement negatively.

There is an absence of language specifying the need for special education teachers to provide direct instruction in the classroom in the list of responsibilities defined for special education teachers in the district. The role of the Teacher of Record (TOR) and the case management duties that come with it are more managerial than instructional in nature. As Fullan and Quinn (2016) explain in their book *Coherence: The Right Drivers in Action for Schools, Districts, and Systems*, teachers need to focus on student achievement in the areas of literacy and numeracy. Fink (2010) stresses the significance of pedagogy in his discussions as the innermost layer of education.

Teacher's Non-Pedagogical Responsibilities

Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) claim that there is a need for teachers to be treated with dignity. Hargreaves & Fullan (2012) believe that leaders need to provide teachers time to sharpen their capabilities for real teaching and learning to take place. However, based on this researcher and her colleagues' experiences, informal meetings, and informal interviews over 13

years, there is a belief that District ION has not invested in *the professional condition,* a term that the researcher uses to refer to the overall working conditions of teachers. After reviewing low student achievement data from the CAASPP (2016) and the Noguera (2016) report, district leaders have recognized a need for change. Attempts have been made to create new programs to boost our students' academic performance. However, resources should also be more adequately channeled. The current TOR position is a professional condition that does not allow staff to remain in the classroom to instruct the special needs student. Better working conditions for teachers would, in turn, lead to improvements in student learning conditions (Hirsch & Scott, 2007).

Better working conditions can also decrease the problem of teacher attrition. Samuels (2018) believes that one of the core reasons special education teachers leave the classroom is the copious amounts of paperwork that "takes special educators away from what they really want to do: teach children" (p. 1). Hale (2015) reported that schools nationwide are facing a shortage of special education teachers because the job that they were hired for "is not what they thought it was going to be" (p. 3). According to interviews that were conducted with various principals, the hours of "filling out forms and writing reports, it's like having two full-time jobs" (Hale, 2015, p. 3). In subsequent interviews, administrators advocated for aggressive recruitment as a way to solve the shortage of special education teaching positions.

There is, however, more that administrators could do to alleviate the extraneous work that special education teachers are forced to complete; they were initially hired for supporting the students in the classroom rather than for paperwork. She asserts that school and district leaders have the ability to change the current conditions under which many special education teachers are forced to work (Samuels, 2018). Surveys and interviews conducted by Samuels (2018) show

that many principals and general education teachers do not provide the necessary supports for special education teachers simply because they 'just didn't understand what we did' (p. 2). Case manager duties have required teachers to meet the increasing demands of state and federal compliance requirements and also take on more administrative responsibilities, all of which end up consuming time specifically intended for direct interaction with students (Samuels, 2018). School districts should focus on student achievement and "reduce, reframe, and remove those distractors" (Fullan, 2001, p. 5).

Although the TOR position tangentially helps our students access the curriculum by providing accommodations and modifications, it does not provide time to the teacher for the explicit purpose of becoming better at teaching and in providing the best instruction to the students. This researcher uses the creative tension model (Senge, 2012) to illustrate the dilemma that the 'current reality' creates for some teachers such as the Teacher of Record (TOR) case managers: greater pressure from district administrators, combined with state and federal mandates that encroach on the amount of time set aside for students with disabilities within District ION classrooms. The 'what should be' would be that staff believes that educational leaders need to be more supportive in providing the time that is needed to focus on pedagogical supports for our most vulnerable students such as those individuals who are English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities (see Figure 2).

Parks Le Tellier (2007) suggests that educators need to invest time in creating a classroom with a strong educational context that enables students to feel safe, comfortable, interesting, and motivated to learn. He also claims that the key to student improvement begins in the classroom (Parks Le Tellier, 2007). The school administration should put in place structures that will allow teachers to spend quality time with students in educational settings. Fullan (2012)

asserts that a concerted effort is also needed from both teachers and administrators to disrupt classroom boundaries and convert teaching into a more collaborative and collegial profession. School leadership needs to shift some investments from programs for children to investments in the working conditions of the teacher to promote collaboration, decrease teacher burnout, and promote student learning.

The Ideal: What Should Be

English Language Learners

Special Education Students

District Budget

State and Federal Laws

What is: The Current Reality
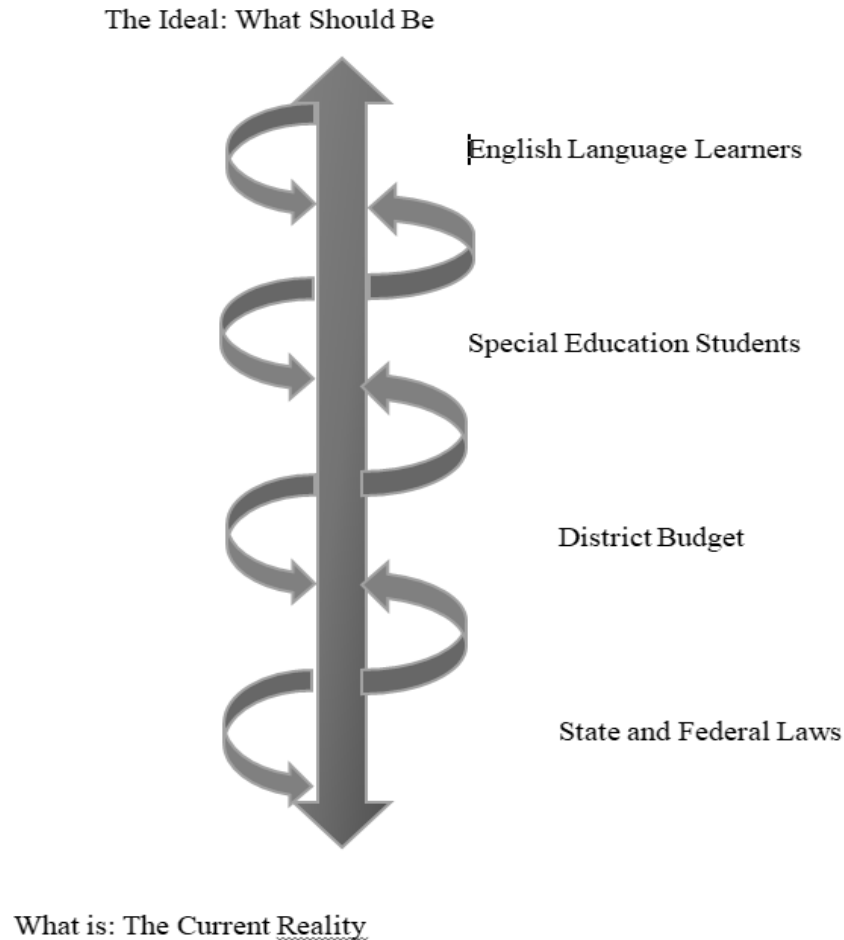
Figure 2. The Creative Tension Model. 1. Adapted from "Schools that learn: A fifth discipline fieldbook for educators, parents, and everyone who cares about education," by P. Senge, 2012, p. 5.

Professional Development

Hattie (2015) suggests that educators need to focus on improving teacher and school leader expertise. He believes that for educators to raise their educational standards and develop their expertise, they need the support of their leaders (Hattie, 2015). In *Educational Leadership in an Age of Accountability: The Virginia Experience* (Duke, Grogan, Heinecke, Tucker, 2003), the authors emphasize the importance of rising to the challenge posed by increasing accountability and by providing training to staff.

A teacher's presence is fundamental to teaching and learning (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006). There is a need for teachers to remain with their students to "understand reading problems, learning disorders, and provide supports for struggling students" (Duke, Grogan, Heinecke, Tucker, 2003, p. 210). The presence of qualified, seasoned teachers in the classroom creates invaluable opportunities for true communication (Hassed & Chambers, 2015, p. 153) or the fully connected exchange from person to person within the classroom. The teachers' influence goes beyond the precincts of the classroom. The school district policies should promote appropriate educational behaviors and processes otherwise, the school may incur the risk of distraction from the overall goal of improving student achievement (Hattie, 2015). Student and overall school success are dependent upon the 'in-school effects of classroom teachers' (Fink, 2010, p. 3).

Legal Roles and Accountability

Kemerer and Sansom (2009) discuss the legal requirements that teachers are expected to adhere to in the classroom. Teachers are mandated to provide instruction and maintain curricular content standards for the following areas: reading, writing, mathematics, history-social science and science (Kemerer & Sansom, 2009). According to the text, the duties of the school districts,

administrators, and teachers are to design instructional strategies "to bring about the mastery of the subject matter" (Kemerer & Sansom, 2009, p. 67). The text highlights the legal importance of having teachers in the classroom. However, as Fullan (2016) stated, "you don't get coherence by imposing *diktats*" (p. 4). Teachers are mandated to fulfill "…some tasks that may not necessarily promote student success…" (Fullan, 2016, p. 5). The district can begin to devise "…meaningful and impactful strategies that can close the achievement gap…" (Fullan, 2016, p. 91).

There are other legal requirements that are more administrative. In particular, the demands associated with special education have raised teachers' workloads and decreased the amount of time they feel they can dedicate to student services (Nance & Calabrese, 2009). These increasing administrative tasks can direct attention away from the primary role of the teacher, which is to teach. According to Hassed & Chambers (2015), education comes from the Latin *educare,* which means to "...bring out, elicit, develop…" (p. 1). They believe that the teacher is there; present, to "facilitate or draw out insight by engaging attention and encouraging inquiry and questioning" (p. 1). Hassed & Chambers (2015) point out the importance of mindfulness in education. It is defined as a process that allows individuals to train their attention and engage their minds in the present moment (Hassed & Chambers, 2015). Educators need to be able to focus on the pedagogical processes in the classroom for students to develop the knowledge needed for achievement. Mindfulness also supports the students' learning by facilitating the retention of new knowledge and training students to engage their minds in the present moment and future moments (Hassed & Chambers, 2015).

This researcher believes that focusing on Teacher of Record (TOR) case management duties does not allow educators to remain in the classroom, and, in turn, does not foster the

educational and mindfulness processes. For any learning and facilitating to take place, the teacher must consistently remain in the classroom. When TORs are provided substitute time by staff in an effort to 'cover the workload,' the substitute teacher may not know the subject adequately and thus fail to provide the educational continuum that supports effective student learning. Due to this simple lack of teaching experience, the educational support process needed in the classroom and the opportunities to raise student engagement is halted.

One of the core groups of researchers within this chart, Walker & Greene (2009), stated that the classroom learning environment was directly linked to better student engagement, learning, and motivation within the school. If teachers are pulled away from the classroom to attend to IEP related duties, then they are not focused on maximizing student engagement and, ultimately student performance. This researcher believes educators in District ION are actively focused on completing paperwork for IEPs. Based on the overwhelming amount of litigation and paperwork that educators face on a daily basis, teachers cannot focus solely on academic and behavioral strategies as the research by Hindman (2010) recommends. This researcher believes that administrators or other staff personnel should shoulder some of the IEP duties. If this is accomplished, teachers will be able to focus on the pedagogical methods necessary to help students with needs.

District ION does not provide the supports necessary for Teachers of Record (TORs) to experience these pivotal teaching moments that would positively impact student learning. This is due to the need for teachers to focus on extraneous tasks, which forces the TORs to remain outside of the classroom and perform tasks that litigious IEP compliance demands.

School Leaders: Styles and Roles

Lasky & Karge (2009) contend that the school principal is a major player in the change process and that additional organizational and instructional changes must fall into place (p. 2) in order for students with disabilities (SWD) to become more successful in the classroom. There is compelling research that shows that leaders can have a "dramatic influence" (p. 10) on the overall academic achievement of students within a school site (Marzano, 2003). Leadership is thus an important factor in the effective functioning of the organization. On the other hand, poor leadership can "seriously undermine" (p. 65) the capacity of a successful school. Fullan (2001) asserts that quality leadership enhances the skills and knowledge of the educational organization by fostering a culture that encourages positive relationships between members. These positive relationships allow members to contribute to the overall functioning and achievement of the organization (Fullan, 2001).

Gimbel, Greer, and Lopes (2011) state that principals play an important role in fostering teacher growth in schools. They assert that for teachers to grow and to lessen attrition rates in schools, principals need to build relationships with their staff members. Principals must be willing to build and maintain relationships that foster positive professional and emotional growth. Gimbel et al., (2011) found through their research that there was "dissonance of perceptions" (p. 23) between what principals believed they did as opposed to what teachers believed principals did to promote professional growth in their schools. Gimbel et al., (2011) assert that strong, ongoing principal-teacher relationships are an integral part of promoting positive teacher growth and, thus and integral part of maintaining the longevity of teacher positions in their schools.

School principals' knowledge can affect the amount of support provided to teachers. In their qualitative study, Lasky & Karge (2009) discuss the significance of the principal's knowledge of special education and the impact on the degree of support the principal can impart to SPED teachers. Lasky & Karge (2009) also state that it is vital for leaders to have a "deep understanding of the core special education legal foundations and regulations" (p. 4) that support those individuals with needs. Besides school principal knowledge, principals' leadership style can also affect the number of support teachers receive and impact school sites, at large. Northouse (2016), in his book, *Leadership Theory and Practice,* discusses the type of leader that is required to create the greatest positive impacts on organizations. He stresses the behavioral principles, in particular, the listening skills that are needed for transformational and servant leadership to develop.

Transformational leadership is particularly suitable in schools faced with challenging changes (Carter, Armenakis, Feild, & Mossholder, 2013; Leithwood et al., 1999). Teachers in schools with principals who adopt transformational leadership approaches are more likely to be satisfied with their principals and demonstrate additional effort and increased commitment to the organization and its reform initiatives (Leithwood et al., 1999; Nguni, Sleegers, & Denessen, 2006; Yu, Leithwood, & Jantzi, 2002). Hooper and Bernhardt's (2016) core premise of adaptive leadership is also relevant to the current research. The authors (Hooper & Bernhardt, 2016) explain the importance of having leaders that "mobilize others to fully engage in the work and experiment with new approaches while maintaining the core values that define the organization's purpose" (p. 65). Hooper and Bernard (2016) stress the need for the leader to go beyond mere compliance to building capacity to engage all members to collaborate and strive for improvement, especially in student achievement. Administrators need to be the energy that

drives instructional development in the classroom. They must retain quality staff members since they constitute a vital part of student achievement (Fink, 2010). Leaders can fulfill these goals by monitoring student achievement and coordinating student assistance.

Research conducted by Betty Flad (1989) nearly 30 years ago addressed much of the same concerns that the author is raising in her current research: Teachers, and in the present case, teachers of record (TOR) case managers, would benefit from having leaders that recognize the amount of time required for teachers to support students in the classroom properly as compared to the amount of time currently being used up in extraneous tasks, i.e., clerical and administrative duties (Flad, 1989). Flad (1989) contends that these "competing claims for time and attention are what have negatively impacted teachers from maximizing learning time in the classroom" (p.12). Based on Senge's creative tension model (2012), the following diagram (see Figure 3) was devised by the researcher to illustrate the current professional conditions suggested by Kim (2018) that could impact the overall performance of students with disabilities, of which time is an integral component.

| Beliefs/Behaviors Instructional Planning and Time | → | School Climate Case Management Duties | → | Measurement of Current Conditions Student Achievement |
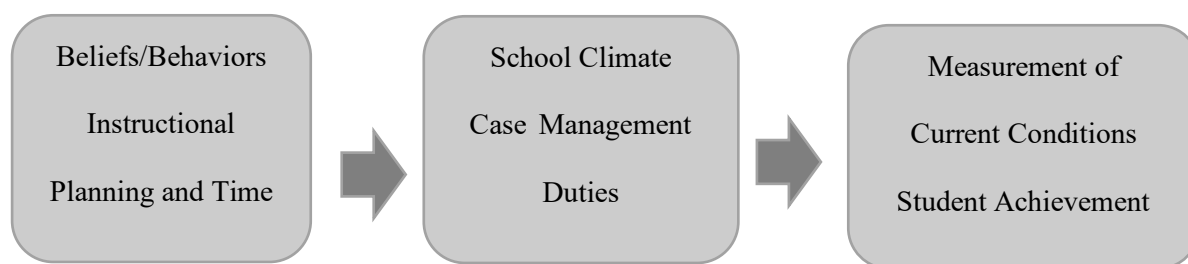
Figure 3. Professional conditions.

Klein (2004) echoes early research by Betty Flad (1989). He argues that administrators need to recognize the importance of "providing a work environment where teachers had manageable caseloads, enough time, support, and resources to complete their work" (p. 60). If administrators provide the necessary resources and time for TORs to complete IEP paperwork,

then there is "a lower likelihood that paperwork and duties will affect the quality of their teaching" (p. 60). Klein (2004) maintains that when resources and time for TORs are increased, teacher and student performance also increases.

Flad's (1989) research also indicates that when administrators support the teacher in maintaining the pedagogical frame, it is less likely to cause teacher demotivation, impacting student and teacher relationships positively, and shaping better student achievement. Leaders can also support teachers in their goal of nurturing a student mindset and promoting meaningful dynamic learning by creating an environment that stimulates student motivation and engagement, thereby promoting more positive involvement and participation within the classroom. Leaders also have a fundamental role to play in cultivating collective relationships among staff bodies (Walker & Riordan, 2011). Every member of the school should take a collective part in generating and learning new ideas for schools to make improvements and change for the better (Fullan, 1999). It is of utmost importance for organizational leaders to recognize that improvements require "embedded interaction inside and outside that converts tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge" (Fullan, 1999, p. 15). Teachers who are not a part of the collaborative process find themselves isolated because they are pulled outside of the processes that support student learning and, in effect, student performance. If our leaders fail to recognize the value of collaborative professional communities and continue to isolate TORs to perform more clerical duties, then the core vision of improving student performance, especially for students with needs, will not be realized.

People in the education system need to be on the same page and embrace a common purpose to encourage better student performance (Fullan, 2010, p. 7). As a team, everyone should be helping to improve classrooms, schools, and communities (Senge, 2012). In his book

Schools that Learn, Senge (2012) states that there needs to be a push for organizational

movement on all levels. There needs to be a shared vision about what student achievement looks

like. Fullan (2011) suggests that there must be 'collective capacity' to raise student achievement,

hence various stakeholders have a role to fulfill to reach the educational goals set. If educators

want students to be actively engaged in hands-on learning exercises (p. 9), then we need to

develop the collective capacity to do so (Dufour, Dufour, Many, & Mattos, 2016). Dufour et al.,

(2016) maintain that there should be no other option for educators but to work collaboratively

with one another and to collectively take responsibility for the success of every student. By

including all school employees, teachers are better empowered to focus on student learning

processes inside the classroom. According to Hattie (2015), teachers and leaders need to work

collaboratively and focus on developing pedagogical systems that will enable students to learn

the necessary skills for them to become their teachers.

The author of this study states that current leadership within District ION requires

teachers of record (TORs) of students with disabilities to focus their energies on these legal

foundations and regulations and not on the pedagogical strategies that are necessary to support

students in the classroom, thus minimizing academic successes for all.

Teacher Beliefs about Supports

The authors, Hooper and Bernhart (2016), state that for everyone to move forward, it is

important "to have a shared belief as to what we do and why we do it" (p. 66). In District ION,

the core belief is that teachers are here to instruct our students with needs to help them learn and

achieve the skills that would enable them to achieve well beyond the classroom. Nobles (2009)

used a phenomenological qualitative research that included interviews, document collection, and

observations to clarify the values and beliefs of participants and to determine how the school

site's leaders "supported or failed to support teachers in various situations" (p. 60). She asserts that if leaders are not supportive and respectful towards staff, there is a likelihood of increased teacher attrition, leading to a negative impact on overall school performance (Nobles, 2009). Nobles (2009) also believed that if leaders show increased support and respect for staff, then the teachers would "believe the working environment is improved" (p. 2) and, thus the classroom experiences would be more positive.

Leaders should provide support to teachers in their huge role of instructing students with special needs; research has shown that appropriate leadership is highly beneficial to all students. According to Cummins, Harvey, and Holland (2013), the authors of *The School Principal as Leader: Guiding Schools to Better Teaching and Learning*, there is a direct link between school leadership and the improvement of student achievement. Cummins et al. (2013) suggest that principals need to cultivate positive and hospitable school climates that encourage genuine relationships to develop and flourish between all staff members and students. It is essential for principals of any school to exhibit supportive and responsive attitudes towards both students and staff. Principals who create strong, supportive climates for instruction are the administrators who have received the most support from their teachers in their schools. Positive ongoing relationships help foster greater teacher motivation. Teachers who believe they are a part of the decision-making process are more likely to feel valued as a member of the school community (Cummins et al., 2013).

Summary

According to Alexander (2013), it is of utmost importance that educational leaders recognize the vital connection between educational policy and school achievement. Glick (2011) believes educational leaders need to create an environment that fosters teacher and student

engagement. Senge (2012) states that great systems begin with leaders that create a clear, focused understanding of taking collective responsibility for success or failure. District ION leadership needs to understand not only how to build capacity for all staff members, but also how to create an environment that maintains it.

Researchers such as Fullan (2010) and Fink (2010) claim that educators need to focus on classroom strategies and improving instruction to create student engagement and motivation. When students are more engaged and motivated in the classroom, more effective learning occurs, and thus student performance increases. However, in cases of mandated auxiliary tasks outside of the classroom, the TOR cannot remain focused on creating a classroom with a strong educational context (Parks Le Tellier, 2007). Thus, the achievement of students within the classroom is impeded. This is especially true for students with disabilities (SWD).

It is imperative that educators analyze the current duties required of them and truly examine how these duties create an impact on the very population that they were hired to support. If these Teacher of Record (TOR) duties negatively impact student achievement, then we need to examine what leaders and educators need to do differently in order to fulfill these administrative obligations without impeding the educative ones.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The primary goal of this study was to address two research questions that focused on the roles of school personnel in special education and on the beliefs of school staff about the supports needed for teachers to serve in special education the best way possible. The current study provides information that could potentially transform leadership and help educators develop better strategies that support students with disabilities. Four separate instruments were administered to participants depending on the specific job of the educators: the para-educators, the administrators, special educators, and general educators. The methodology employed to test the research questions is presented in the present chapter. Chapter 3 is organized into four sections which include: (a) city, district and school demographics; (b) sampling procedure, (c) participant recruitment, (d) instrumentation (e) data collection; and (f) data analysis. The researcher used a mixed methodology by using both quantitative and qualitative data to answer the research questions.

City, District, School Demographics

District ION high schools serve a predominantly Caucasian student population within a suburban city in Southern California. The city population census of 2016 totaled 92,478 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). The population consists of approximately 78.0% White, 4.1% African-American, 16.1% Hispanic, and 10% Asian people. Less than 24% of the city's population were immigrants, and there were nearly 29.2% of the population speaking a language other than English within the home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). The average income was approximately 18% higher than the state average income. The estimated home value is 158% higher than the state average. Nearly 11.3% of the population is living below poverty level (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016).

Currently, 9.4% of the District ION's high school student population is Black/African-American, 36.3% of the student population is Hispanic or Latino, 38.3% are White, and 6.8% are Asian. 29.8 % of the student population is considered to be socioeconomically disadvantaged (SED). Black/African American students represent 57% of SED, Latino students comprise of nearly 60%, White students are identified as representing 8%, and Asian students represent 10% of the those students classified as socioeconomically disadvantaged students (Noguera, 2016).

High School A in District ION consisted of a total of 161 staff members, including seven administrators, ten support advisors, three college counselors, and three psychologists. In 2016, the student enrollment was approximately 3000 students; the majority of the student body was White (Non-Latino) at 45%. The rest of the population of School A was identified as follows: 11% African-American, 34% Latino, 0.2% Alaska Native or American Indian, and 8% Asian. The staff was primarily made up of female educators, however, there were more male special education teachers than female special education teachers. The majority of educators, 54%, at School A, had a master's degree. The two administrators were doctors, and 50% or eight para-educators had a bachelor's degree. There were approximately 32% of the student population who participated in the federal National School Lunch Program.

The second high school site, School B, in District ION, consisted of a total of nine staff members. Six out of the 12 staff members had master's degrees. For the para-educators, one had an Associate's degree, and one had a Bachelor's degree. The student enrollment was approximately 140 students, identified as follows: 61% Hispanic, 23% Caucasian, 10% African American, 3% Asian, and 1% Pacific Islander (U.S. Census, 2018). In 2018, the percentage of students participating in the Free and Reduced Lunch program in School B was 51% (US News & World Report, 2018).

High School C in District ION was comprised of 651 students in Grades 9-12 for the 2014-2015 academic school year. There were a total of 66 staff members, including 55 teachers, three administrators, four counselors, one school psychologist, one librarian and one school nurse. One of the three administrators had a doctorate. Eighty-four percent of the students in School C were Caucasian, 10% Latino, 4% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 2% African-American. Approximately 14% of the student population participated in the Free and Reduced Lunch program.

Sampling Procedure

Convenience sampling was used by the researcher to choose the district from which the pool of participants was recruited for the current study. The researcher chose District ION, the district in which she worked, after having witnessed the difficulties of special education teachers working in the district. The researcher sought out expert advice from eight Concordia University Irvine faculty, who had years of experience in the field of special education. Faculty from Concordia University Irvine provided guidance in choosing specific schools. She also sought out recommendations from district program directors, coordinators, and administrators to help identify potential participants. Due to the convenience of the schools sites and participants, the researcher also contacted district staff to confirm dates and times that staff members were pulled from classes to attend to teacher of record- and IEP-related duties. The researcher recruited participants from a sample of 112, which included 32 certificated special education teachers, 42 certified general education teachers, 26 para-educators, and 12 administrators who were employed in District ION. Convenience sampling was used as it was convenient (Creswell, 2013) for the author to conduct surveys using participants from the school where she was employed and the two other sites where she participates in ongoing meetings.

Participants' Recruitment

The study took place within the three high schools in District ION. The participants of this particular study were para-educators, administrators, and highly qualified public school teachers in the general and special education settings. The current researcher first received permission from the superintendent of District ION. She then went to each School site; A, B, and C, and received permission from all three administrators to conduct research at their sites. The author of this study sent out emails to all general education, special education, para-professionals, and administrators. The email contained what the study was about and consent to opt-in or opt-out at any given time. After the initial email was sent, another email containing the survey was attached so that staff could print out and fill in the surveys. This researcher also went to all three school sites, A, B, and C, and personally gave each staff member a physical copy of the survey in each staff member's mailbox. There was a return envelope that was given to the principal's secretary to then be collected by the author by the end of the given week.

Instrumentation

The instruments used in the study were researcher-designed surveys for four different groups of participants: para-educators (see Appendix D), general education teachers (see Appendix E), and special education teachers (see Appendix F). The para-educators, general education teachers, and special education teachers received the same survey, while administrators (see Appendix G), received a different survey designed to reflect their leadership, rather than their teaching in a classroom. The researcher used research instruments from the American Federation of Teachers ([AFT], 2017), principles from Northouse's (2015) transformational leadership theoretical framework, and Peter Senge's creative tension model as guides in devising the survey used in the current study. The survey included instructions on the

first page, followed by 26 questions. Different types of questions were included, ranging from Likert scale questions to open-ended questions. The first eight questions requested demographic information, such as participants' years of professional experience. A couple of questions about the amount of time that participants spent on various tasks were also included. Examples include the number of special academic instruction class periods per day, the number of hours spent on instructional planning for students with needs, and the number of hours spent on meetings, and training sessions per week. There were five Likert scale questions on teacher beliefs and five Likert scale questions on support from school leadership with anchors of scale ranging from 1 (*completely disagree*) to 5 (*completely agree*). Questions on beliefs focused on what teachers and other practitioners in education perceived as being part of their job. The survey took an average of 15 minutes for respondents to complete. There were two open-ended questions included at the end of the survey focused on the challenges special education teachers and school principals face.

Participants

The study focused on three school sites: School A, within District ION that served as the main site for understanding the impact of special education teachers of record (TOR) case management duties on strategies that supported students with disabilities. In this study, there were four groups of participants: high school para-educators, general education teachers, special education teachers, and administrators. In School A, there were 20 special education teachers identified as Teachers of Record (TORs) serving students with needs, 24 general education teachers serving students with needs, 17 para-educators, and three administrators.

The researcher collected test scores from special education high school students who were falling below the proficiency level in the high school standardized testing. This group

included a diverse sampling of specific needs. Some students' disabilities and IEP needs were

mild, with those who needed extended time to complete the standardized tests. Other students'

needs were more moderate to severe and needed additional support such as alternative

assessments to measure the students' progress in school. The subjects were from four primary

ethnic groups of approximately 3,000 enrolled students. This gave the researcher an idea about

the severity of special needs in the district.

Data Collection Procedures

The time frame to complete data collection and analysis of the data did not exceed three

months. It was carried out between June and August in 2018. After receiving International

Review Board (IRB) approval to conduct the study, the researcher gained permission from the

District ION superintendent and District ION administrators from High Schools A, B, and C to

conduct surveys as a means to find out what beliefs the staff held about their roles and the

support they received to assist their students with special needs (see Appendix B). In addition,

the researcher drew on student data from state tests to show the concerns related to TOR case

management duties and the overall impact these duties may have on student achievement. All of

the data within the study sought to answer the following two questions.

Orange paper was used for the survey for special education teachers, pink paper was used

for para-educators, green paper was given to general education teachers, and blue paper was used

for the administrator surveys. The researcher personally distributed the surveys at each school

site. The surveys for Schools A, B, and C within District ION were given in sealed envelopes to

the prospective participants in each group.

After the researcher handed out the surveys, some participants filled in and handed back

the completed surveys on the spot. Others chose to print out the survey attached to their emails,

which were placed in the author's school mailbox or mailed to the author via inter-district mail. Other staff members chose to take the surveys and take their time to complete them. While most participants, on average, completed the surveys in 15 minutes, some staff members took about a week to return the completed surveys to the researcher.

Validity

According to Lunenburg and Irby (2008), validity is the degree to which an instrument measures what it purports to measure (p. 181). The evaluation of the staff surveys was carried out using construct validity. Through piloting the instruments in the research, construct validity of the surveys provided the "justification of the instrument being used and the appropriateness of the intended instrument" (p. 182). The researcher used several strategies to increase the validity of the current study, including clarification of researcher roles and bias, use of multiple sources from which to collect information, peer review, expert advice, and a pilot study.

According to Creswell (2012), it is important to clarify researcher bias from the outset of the study. By commenting on "past experiences, biases, prejudices, and orientations" (p. 251) that may have shaped the approach and interpretation of the study, the reader is able to understand the parameters of the study and the position of the researcher fully. The researcher disclosed her concerns in the background of the study within Chapter 1 and described her experiences as a special education teacher in a section of the current chapter.

Hendricks (2013) states that researchers need to use multiple sources to corroborate findings. The researcher conducted a mixed-methods study so utilized both types of data; quantitative and qualitative. The researcher also collected information from various stakeholders in education. The 26-question surveys were distributed to approximately 100 educators in the

three targeted schools, which included administrators, general education teachers, special education teachers, and para-educators.

An informal pilot study was carried out to refine the survey. Participants in the pilot study provided feedback about the relevance of the questions to the study, and the clarity of questions, amongst others. Feedback provided by para-educators and the special education teachers proved invaluable as they allowed the researcher to make some modifications to the survey instruments, which improved its structure and clarity. According to Creswell (2012), it is of utmost importance for the researcher to seek out professional advice and recommendations. These recommendations help the researcher create instruments that measure what the study actually intends to measure. Feedback from professionals also supports the validity and reliability of the instruments that were used in the research (Creswell, 2012).

Reliability

Lunenberg and Irby (2008) state that reliability is the "degree to which an instrument consistently measures whatever it is measuring" (p. 182). According to Leung (2015), consistency is a critical component of reliability. A pilot test was conducted with six peers from Concordia University Irvine, and five staff members from District ION who did not participate in the actual research. The test-retest reliability can help establish how consistent or repeatable results would be when applied to the actual study (Bryman, 2016). Conferring with professionals within District ION, expert professionals from Concordia University Irvine and doctoral peers at Concordia University Irvine, the researcher refined her research instruments until they were error-free, and clear, thus promoting reliability and validity.

Data Analysis

The researcher utilized the following measures to collect, categorize, and analyze the data that supported this study. Quantitative data collected using the survey was analyzed using descriptive statistics to discuss the roles of teachers, with particular emphasis on the amount of time they spent in various tasks. The quantitative data were also analyzed using Analysis of Variances (ANOVAs) to find the strength of the relationship between participant demographic variables such as ethnicity and gender and teacher beliefs. Qualitative data collected through open-ended questions included in the surveys from four subgroups, including para-educators, general education teachers, special education teachers, and administrators (see Appendices D, E. F, G), was coded to find common themes (see Figure 4).

Data Analysis Progression

1. Researcher collects data (i.e. a text file, such as field notes, transcriptions, optically scanned materials)

2. The researcher prepares data for analysis (e.g. transcribes field notes) and reads through data to obtain a general sense of material.

3. The researcher codes the data (i.e. locates text segments and assigns a code to label them) for description and themes to be used in research report

Figure 4. Data analysis progression chart. Adapted from "Data Analysis Progression," by B. Karge, 2015, *Concordia University Irvine*.

Ethics of the Study

All public school employees who participated in this particular study were requested to provide verbal and written consent. The superintendent of District ION signed the district consent form (see Appendix A) to allow the research to occur at the designated sites. School administrators from the three schools signed consent forms for their schools to participate in the study (see Appendix B).

Confidentiality was maintained at all times by ensuring that participants were not apprised of each other's answers, no personal identifier was included and the participating district, and school names were not disclosed. Participants were assigned numbers from one to 64 as pseudonyms to protect each teacher's and administrator's confidentiality. All participants were informed of the purpose of this study, the potential risks as well as the expected benefits from providing their contribution to this study. Participants completed the surveys and open-ended questions out of their free will without coercion. No incentives were given for participation; however, the researcher expressed her deepest gratitude for participants' contributions. All data and records were maintained on a password-protected computer in a locked office. At the conclusion of this study, all confidential records were destroyed to ensure teacher and administrator information was protected.

Role of the Researcher

The primary role of the researcher in this study was to examine how the case management duties for the special education Teachers of Record (TOR) impacted the special education and general education classroom and to find better strategies to support teachers teaching students with needs. The researcher submitted the documents related to her study to the Internal Review Board (IRB) at Concordia University Irvine and received approval in July 2018.

(see Appendix C). The researcher collaborated continuously with administrators, colleagues, and professional experts in the field throughout the data collection process.

The researcher believes that her duties as a special education teacher differ dramatically from the duties of her colleagues who work solely in general education. There are everyday duties that she is mandated to perform that do not enhance student achievement. The researcher believes that other staff members within the special education team besides herself are not spending enough time with students to effectively address their Individual Education Plan (IEP) requirements. This is a direct effect of being bogged down with additional tasks associated with the current litigious nature of special education.

Pilot Study

The informal interviews carried out in the pilot study revealed the concerns of six special education and six general education teachers about how special education duties such as Teacher of Record (TOR) case management duties often disrupted the flow of the lessons. In addition there was concern that frequent absences of teachers have unfairly impacted the performance of students with needs. During the pilot study, participants stated that for student and staff achievement to improve, special education teachers need to be present in the classroom. The findings from the pilot study indicated that the principal's roles were not very clearly defined with respect to the support teachers and para-professionals needed to help students with disabilities. The pilot study also indicated that teachers believed their workload affected their ability to be effective teachers in the classroom.

Summary

This mixed-methods study was conducted to examine the roles of school personnel in special education, with particular emphasis on the amount of time spent on case management

duties and the amount of time special education teachers have to prepare for instruction and be present in the classroom. The researcher aimed to investigate teachers' current perceptions of their roles and the supports they receive in fulfilling these roles. Using convenience sampling, three schools within the district in which the researcher works, District ION, were selected for this study. A researcher-constructed survey made up of 26 questions was distributed to each subgroup: general education teachers, special education teachers, para-educators, and administrators. There were a total of 100 participants from the three secondary high schools within District ION. The data was collected over three months. The researcher used several strategies to boost the robustness of the study, including the clarification of researcher bias, an informal pilot study, peer review, and expert consultation. The data collected was analyzed during the 2018-19 school year. The researcher analyzed the quantitative data using descriptive statistics and ANOVAs. The qualitative data: which included responses from open-ended questions in the survey, were analyzed using qualitative coding.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The intent of this mixed-methods research was primarily to investigate the attitudes of special education teachers, general education teachers, para-educators, and administrators about the way the roles of personnel are managed by schools. Particular emphasis was placed on examining the amount of time that teachers need to support students with special needs in their classrooms as compared to the time currently spent completing other tasks. The purpose of the study was also to determine the beliefs held by school staff about the supports needed for the teachers in special education to carry out their roles effectively. The final aim of this research was to provide recommendations to administrators and policymakers about how to support Teachers of Record (TOR) in fulfilling their instructional role effectively and thus improve the achievement of students with needs.

Data was collected from 64 participants that included para-professionals, general education teachers, special education teachers, and administrators from three different school sites within District ION. The special education teachers who participated in this study were also Teachers of Record. The results of the data analysis are presented in this chapter, including the quantitative results and qualitative results, and organized by the research questions. Analysis of Variances (ANOVAs) were performed to determine the strength of the relationship between demographic variables such as ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status (SES), years of experience, years at current school, and professional degree and teacher beliefs. Qualitative data from responses to open-ended questions were analyzed for themes.

Descriptive Analysis: Participant Demographics

There were 64 participants from three schools, Schools A, B, and C, within district ION. The sample of participants consisted of three administrators, 24 general education teachers, 17

para-educators, 20 special education teachers and three administrators. Although the study

included three school sites, School A, within District ION, served as the main site of research. In

School A, there were 16 special education teachers also identified as Teachers of Record, 18

staff members identified as general education teachers serving students with needs, 12 para-

educators, and one administrator. The number of participants from each school is shown in

Table 1. It should be noted that all special education teachers are assigned as Teachers of Record

in District ION.

Table 1 1

Number of Participants from Each Group from Schools A, B, and C.

	Number of Participants		
	School A	School B	School C
Para-educators	12	3	2
Special education teachers	16	2	2
General education teachers	18	3	3
Administrators	1	1	1

There were more males, 58% ($n = 22$), than females, 42% ($n = 41$) in special education

(see Figure 5). Conversely, the percentage of females in general education was 85% ($n = 21$),

and the percentage of males was considerably lower at 16% ($n = 4$).
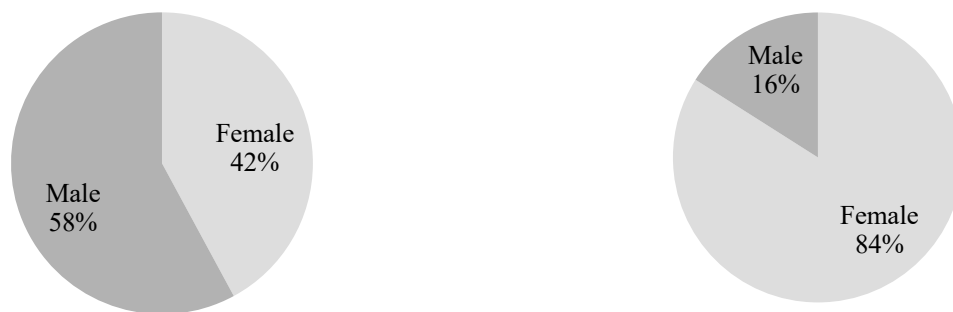
Figure 5. 1 Gender in District ION for Participants in (a) special education (left)
and (b) general education (right).

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics for the sample population. Of the sample population from District ION, 64% ($n = 41$) were female and 36% ($n = 23$) were male. The average income was $78,789. According to the data, there were more teachers in general education ($n = 20$) who fell in the lower middle-income range than any other subgroup. The average number of years of work experience of all staff was 15-16 years, which was roughly the same as the mean experience of staff within their school site. The majority of participants were Caucasian staff members at 54%* ($n = 34$).

Table 2. 1. Demographics of Sample Population of District ION

Demographics of Sample Population of District ION

Description of Participants	Categories	Percentages
Gender of Participants		
	Male	36%
	Female	64%
Ethnicity		
	African-American	11%
	Asian	11%
	Caucasian	54%
	Latino	24%
Years of Experience		
		$M = 15$ years
		$SD = 9.88$
		$M = 16$ years
Years at Current School		$SD = 8.54$
Highest Degree		
	School A: Doctorate	9%
	School B: Masters	60%
	School C: Doctorate	13%
SES (% of students on free and reduced lunch)		
	School A	32%
	School B	48%
	School C	13%

Note. SES = Socioeconomic status

A closer examination of the demographics of groups of participants shows that the majority of special education teachers had more than five years of experience altogether ($n = 19$). However, the majority (see Table 3) had only spent from one to three years in their current school ($n = 14$), so they were fairly new. This implies some teacher attrition in the area of special education. In District ION, there were fewer females ($n = 1$) than males ($n = 2$) in the administrator position.

Table 3 1.

Demographics of Groups of Participants from District ION

		Counts				
		ADMIN	GENED	SPED	PARA	Total
Gender	Male	2	4	11	7	24
	Female	1	20	9	10	40
Ethnicity						
	African-American	0	1	2	4	7
	Asian	0	4	0	3	7
	Caucasian	2	13	16	4	35
	Latino	1	6	2	6	15
Years of Experience	1 to 2 years	1	1	0	0	1
	2 to 3 years	0	2	0	3	5
	4 to 5 years	1	1	1	1	4
	More than 5 years	2	20	19	13	54
Years at Current School	1 to 2 years	0	8	6	1	15
	2 to 3 years	1	4	8	2	15
	4 to 5 years	0	2	0	2	4
	More than 5 years	2	10	6	11	30
Highest Degree	Undergraduate	0	4	4	17	25
	Masters	1	17	16	0	34
	Postgraduate	2	3	0	0	5

Note. GENED = general education teachers; SPED = special education teachers; ADMIN = administrators; PARA = para-educators working in a supporting role to the credentialed teacher.

Quantitative Results

There were two types of surveys that were administered based on the specific group of participants, that is, teachers and administrators. The two types of surveys were mostly similar, with slight differences in wording. Seventeen para-professionals, 24 general education teachers, 20 special education teachers who were all teachers of record (TORs), and three school administrators completed the survey altogether at the three school sites; Schools A, B, and C, within District ION.

This research study focused on answering the following two research questions:

1. How do schools manage the roles of personnel to increase the effectiveness of special education?

2. What are the beliefs held by school staff about the supports needed so the ideal roles of teachers in special education can be upheld?

The researcher addresses the first research question by carrying out detailed descriptive statistics on the responses of the survey. Creswell (2012) argues that for research to have meaning and purpose, focus must be maintained on addressing the core research questions by being reflexive in nature and providing detailed statistics. This approach helps bolster the validity and reliability of the research.

The data from the 26-question surveys were analyzed. While most of the questions, 24 questions, were closed-ended, two questions were open-ended in nature. The two research questions were addressed in the study using specific survey items as described below:

1. Research Question 1: Responses to the Survey Questions 1-24.

2. Research Question 2: Responses to the two open-ended Questions 25 and 26 in the surveys.

Research Question 1

The first research question of this study was: How do schools manage the roles of personnel to increase the effectiveness of special education?

The survey questions used to answer the research questions were drawn from an existing survey by the American Federation of Teachers. The quantitative survey questions that were directly related to Research Question 1 were survey items 1 to 24. Table 4 shows that administrators spent on average one hour per day on the following: Special education (SPED) classes, grading, and communication per day. In addition, they spent two hours per day on instructional planning.

Table 4 1

Current Allocation of Average Work Day Time (Hours) by Groups of Participants to Various Duties (Questions 9-14)

Position	SPED Class	Instructional Plan	Grading	IEP	Communication	Meeting
ADMIN	1	2	1	0	1	0
GENED	1	2	2	0.5	2	0
SPED	4	2	1	2	1	0
PARA	4	2	0	0	4	0
Total	10	8	3	2.5	8	0

Note. GENED = general education teachers; SPED = special education teachers; ADMIN = administrators, PARA = para-educators working in a supporting role to the credentialed teacher.

General education teachers spent, on average, one hour per day on special education classes and half an hour on IEP-related duties (see Table 4). In addition, they spent approximately two hours per day on each of these instructional activities: instructional planning, grading, and communication. Para-educators, working in a supporting role with credentialed special education teachers spent approximately four hours on the special education (SPED) classes and communication. They also spent two hours on IEP-related duties. Special education

teachers spent, on average, four hours on SPED classes. They spent approximately two hours on

instructional planning and IEP-related duties. They also spent an average of an hour per day on

communication. However, administrators spent no time on IEP duties.

Table 5 ($N = 64$) shows the level of agreement of the four groups of participants about the

tasks that should form part of their duties. Administrators generally completely agreed that

communication and meeting should be part of their job. In addition, they were neutral towards

grading as a part of their job. General education teachers, on average, completely agreed that

instructional planning, communication, and meeting should be part of their job.

Table 5. 1.

Beliefs of Groups of Participants about the Tasks that Should Form Part of Their Duties (Questions 15-19)

	Instructional Planning	IEP	Grading	Communication	Meeting
ADMIN	4	4	3	5	5
GENED	5	4	5	5	5
SPED	4	4	4	5	4
PARA	3	4	3	4	4

Note. GENED = general education teachers; SPED = special education teachers; ADMIN = administrators, PARA = para-educators working in a supporting role to the credentialed teacher. 1 = *Completely disagree*; 3 = *Neutral*, 5 = *Completely agree*.

Special education teachers completely agreed that communication should be part of their

job. Although para-educators who worked in a supporting role to the credentialed special

education teachers agreed, on average, that the IEP, communication, and meeting should be part

of their job, they were neutral about instructional planning and grading forming part of their

duties.

According to Table 6 ($N = 64$), administrators agreed that communication and providing

resources are part of their roles in school. However, the same administrators disagreed that they

play a role in providing clear policy and in participating in IEPs. General education teachers

were neutral to the following: scheduling, IEPs, providing clear policy, communication, and resources regarding the principal's role in school. Special education teachers, also identified as teachers of record, disagreed that the principal plays a role in the following: scheduling and the IEP. In the same line, para-educators working in a supporting role to the credentialed teacher disagreed that the principal plays a role in the IEP.

Table 6 1

Beliefs of Groups of Participants about Principals' Roles

Group of Participants	Schedule	IEP	Policy	Communication	Resources
ADMIN	3	2	2	4	4
GENED	3	3	3	3	3
SPED	2	2	3	3	3
PARA	3	2	3	3	3

Note. GENED = general education teachers; SPED = special education teachers; ADMIN = administrators; PARA = para-educators working in a supporting role to the credentialed teacher. 1 = Completely disagree; 3 = Neutral; 5 = Completely agree.

Tables 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3 show data for the sample population from District ION ($N = 64$). A one-way between-subjects ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of the independent demographic variables (IV) on the dependent variables (DV), which include work duty hours, work duty beliefs, and beliefs about principals' SPED roles (see Tables 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3).

Table 7 1

ANOVA Position, Work Duty Hours, Work Duty Beliefs, and Beliefs about Principals' SPED Roles

Demographics	Categories	*M*
Position		
HIEP: hours spent on IEPS	ADMIN	0.33
	GENED	0.47
	SPED	1.88
	PARA	0.21
HGrade: hours spent on grading	ADMIN	0.67
	GENED	1.72
	SPED	1.03
	PARA	0.26
HComm: hours spent on talking w/parents/staff	ADMIN	1.67
	GENED	1.35
	SPED	1.21
	PARA	2.56
HMeet: hours spent on meeting w/parents/staff	ADMIN	1.33
	GENED	0.94
	SPED	0.38
	PARA	0.41
BIEP: belief IEP plays work role	ADMIN	3.67
	GENED	3.64
	SPED	4.63
	PARA	3.47
BInstr: belief instruction plays work role	ADMIN	4.33
	GENED	4.84
	SPED	4.58
	PARA	2.94
BGrade: belief grading plays work role	ADMIN	3.00
	GENED	4.72
	SPED	4.58
	PARA	2.53
BMeet: belief meeting w/parents/staff plays work role	ADMIN	4.67
	GENED	4.76
	SPED	4.37
	PARA	4.06
BComm: belief talking w/parents/staff plays work role	ADMIN	5.00
	GENED	4.84
	SPED	4.84
	PARA	3.88

Note. All reported statistics are significant, $p < .05$.

Table 7.2 1

ANOVA Degree, Work Duty Hours, Work Duty Beliefs, and Beliefs about Principals' SPED Roles

Demographics	Categories	*M*
Degree		
HIEP: hours spent on IEPS	Doctorate	0.6
	Masters	1.18
	Bachelors	0.47
	Associate	0.00
HGrade: hours spent on grading	Doctorate	1.8
	Masters	1.38
	Bachelors	0.69
	Associate	0.33
HComm: hours spent on talking w/parents/staff	Doctorate	1.90
	Masters	1.30
	Bachelors	2.02
	Associate	3.17
HMeet: hours spent on meeting w/parents/staff	Doctorate	0.88
	Masters	0.24
	Bachelors	0.09
	Associate	0.00
BInstr: belief instruction plays work role	Doctorate	4.60
	Masters	4.71
	Bachelors	3.75
	Associate	3.17
BGrade: belief grading plays work role	Doctorate	4.20
	Masters	4.56
	Bachelors	3.56
	Associate	2.17
BComm: belief talking w/parents/staff plays work role	Doctorate	5.00
	Masters	4.85
	Bachelors	4.44
	Associate	4.00

Note. All reported statistics are significant, p<.05.

Table 7.3 1

ANOVA Ethnicity, Gender, Principal's Gender, SES, School, Work Duty Hours, Work Duty Beliefs, and Beliefs about Principals' SPED Roles

Demographics	Categories	*M*
Ethnicity		
HPrep: hours spent on prep for class	Latino	1.14
	Asian	2.51
	African-American	2.86
	Caucasian	1.48
Gender		
HIEP: hours spent on IEPS	Male	1.20
	Female	0.60
HMeet: hours spent on meeting w/parent/staff	Male	0.40
	Female	0.12
PGender: principal's gender		
HPrep	Male	1.78
	Female	0.54
SES		
BGrade : belief grading plays work role	UM	5.00
	LM	4.19
	L	3.29
School		
HPrep: hours spent on prep for class	School A	1.97
	School B	0.90
	School C	0.54

Note. All reported statistics are significant, $p < .05$, SES (Socio-economic status).

In Tables 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3, there was a significant effect between the independent variable, position, and ten dependent variables. These were: HIEP, the average number of hours spent on IEPS; HPrep, the average number of hours spent on prepping for classes; HGrade, the average number of hours spent on grading student work; HComm, the average number of hours spent on communicating with parents and staff regarding students with needs; HMeet, the average number of hours spent on meeting with parents and staff regarding students with needs; BIEP, the average number of staff who believe that IEP plays a role in their work; BInstruc, the average number of staff who believe instruction plays a role in their work; BGrade, the average number of staff who believe that grading plays a role in their work; BMeet, the average number

of staff who believe meeting with parents and staff regarding students with needs as it relates to their work; BComm, the average number of staff who believe in communicating with parents and staff regarding students with needs as it relates to their work at the .05 alpha level for the nine conditions, $p < .05$.

There was a significant effect of participants' degree on seven dependent variables, including HIEP, HGrade, HComm, HMeet, BInstruc, BGrade, and BComm at the $p < .05$ level. In addition, the independent variables, ethnicity, principal gender, and school had a significant effect on HPrep at the $p < .05$ level. Gender had a significant effect on HIEP and HMeet at the $p < .05$ alpha level. The socioeconomic status had a significant effect on only one variable, BGrade, at the $p < .05$ alpha level.

Qualitative Results for Research Question 2

Research Question 2 was: What are the beliefs held by school staff about the supports needed so the ideal roles of teachers in special education can be upheld?

The participants were asked two open-ended questions in the surveys they completed. The participants included para-professionals, general education teachers, special education teachers (also TORs), and administrators from all three school sites; School A, B, and C, within District ION. Each participant was given a unique code, which was used to represent each participant instead of using personal identifiers. The open-ended questions were:

1. What are your greatest challenges in relation to your role as a teacher, paraprofessional working with students with special needs?

2. What are the greatest challenges facing administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals working with special needs?

Each participant's responses were coded, categorized, and analyzed to allow for the creation of emerging themes within the textual responses (see Tables 8 and 9).

Table 8 1

Frequency of Greatest Challenges in Relation to Role as a Teacher or Paraprofessional Working with Students Having Special Needs

	Frequencies			
Themes from Responses	School A	School B	School C	Total
Lack of Administrative Support	4	1	1	6
Lack of Curriculum Support	4	1	1	6
Lack of Resources	2	1	1	4
Special Education Litigation	0	0	0	0
Class Size	1	0	0	1
Accommodating Students with Special Needs	3	2	2	7
Lack of Parental Involvement	1	1	0	2
Limited Time with Students with Special Needs	3	2	3	8
Lack of Consistent Procedures	3	2	2	7
IEP Paperwork and Planning	3	1	1	5
Lack of Staff Training	4	1	1	6
No Feedback	2	0	1	3
Student Behavior	0	0	2	2
Staff Time to Meet	3	2	2	7

There were four top critical issues facing teachers and para-professionals at the three schools in District ION in their roles that involve working with special needs students. The first one was staff time for meetings, with seven respondents noting this issue. The second concern, expressed by six respondents, was the lack of staff training. The third concern was the limited time spent with students with special needs, and the difficulty in accommodating these students in the classroom, as noted in eight responses. The fourth concern was the lack of consistent procedures, which was reported by seven respondents. The researcher had predicted that the IEP paperwork and planning, which appeared in five responses, would account for concerns from

more participants. However, the study revealed that the IEP's represented only 5 out of 64

responses to Question 25.

Table 9 1

Frequency of Greatest Challenges Faced by Teacher, Para-professional and Administrators
Working with Students Having Special Needs

Themes from Responses	School A	School B	School C	Total
Lack of Administrative Support	4	1	1	6
Lack of Curriculum Support	2	1	1	4
Lack of Resources	2	1	1	4
Special Education Litigation	2	1	1	4
Class Size	2	1	0	3
Accommodating Students with Special Needs	3	1	1	5
Lack of Parental Involvement	1	1	1	3
Limited Time with Students with Special Needs	3	3	1	7
Lack of Consistent Procedures	5	1	1	7
IEP Paperwork and Planning	4	1	2	7
Lack of Staff Training	4	1	2	7
No Feedback	4	0	1	5
Student Behavior	0	0	2	2

In conclusion, responses to Question 26 on the survey revealed that the majority of

responses, six responses all together, from the three schools in District ION mentioned the lack

of administrative support and the limited time with students with special needs. The next two

concerns, each mentioned in nine responses, were IEP paperwork and planning and staff time to

meet. The three schools comprise of different high school populations and settings, so it is

reasonable to assume that staff expectations vary from school to school. Comparison of the three

schools showed that School B, which had continuation students, had participants with fewer

expectations regarding administrator support, and less time to support students. This may likely

be due to their lighter schedules, which are half-day and a workload which varies from student to student.

Administrators all mentioned eight out of the 13 challenges, including the lack of resources, special education litigation, accommodating students with special needs, lack of consistent procedures, IEP paperwork and planning, lack of staff training, and student behavior. However, none of them perceived that a lack of administrator support (district), class size, and the lack of feedback was a problem.

Table 10 1

Frequency of Greatest Challenges Faced by Administrators Working with Students Having Special Needs

Themes from Responses	School A	School B	School C	Total
Lack of Administrative Support	0	0	0	3
Lack of Curriculum Support	0	0	1	3
Lack of Resources	1	1	1	3
Special Education Litigation	1	1	1	3
Class Size	0	0	0	
Accommodating Students with Special Needs	1	1	1	3
Lack of Parental Involvement	1	1	0	3
Limited Time with Students with Special Needs	1	1	1	3
Lack of Consistent Procedures	1	1	1	3
IEP Paperwork and Planning	1	1	1	3
Lack of Staff Training	1	1	1	3
No Feedback	0	0	0	3
Student Behavior	1	1	1	3

Summary and Conclusion

The data gathered from the Likert-style surveys were analyzed and presented in Chapter 4. Specific participant groups, the teachers, and para-professionals all pointed out the lack of time available to meet with other staff, the lack of staff training, the lack of time with special

education students, and the difficulty in accommodating special education students, which are arguably challenges that the school leaders can help address. The data analyzed across all participants, including para-professionals, teachers, and administrators, indicated that there was a high number of participants at all three school sites who believed that there was a lack of administrator support and that these principals didn't spend enough time with special needs students. School B participants, however, did not mention the lack of administrator support, possibly due to a lighter schedule. The quantitative analysis of this study, the ANOVA, showed that the work duty hours, work duty beliefs, and beliefs about principals' roles in special education varied based on specific participant demographic variables. The factor of position had significant effects on the greatest number of dependent variables, which included the average number of hours on IEPs, on prepping for class, and grading homework.

These findings lead to the conclusion that the professional condition is operating below capacity due to the lack of administrative support, which is a barrier that had previously been identified in scholarly research (Senge & Fullan, 2008, 2010). There is a distinct difference between the staff expectations or "the ideal condition" and what is really happening or "the current reality" which forms the basis of the creative tension model by Senge (2012). Principals and teachers generally do not want to participate in the IEP process; it is the school counselor who represents the local education agency (LEA) and not the principal. Collaborative classes are often loaded with 43-47% of the students in the special education program. One respondent who worked with the researcher in a collaborative setting reported having nearly 60% special education students in his/her class.

There is a growing concern that there should be a team approach to working with special needs students. All members of the school community, administrators, general education

teachers, special education teachers, and para-educators need to collaborate in order to determine the child's eligibility, placement, accommodations, and modifications. Currently, only a few school community members, such as the principal and counselor, make the executive decisions for the student with needs in District ION. Very little input is provided by the general education teacher, the special education teacher, and the para-educator.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The 64 participants who included administrators, para-educators, general education teachers, and special education teachers were asked to fill out a survey about their experience working in special education. The two research questions were addressed through a questionnaire that included both closed-ended quantitative questions and open-ended qualitative questions. These questionnaires were distributed to three high schools (A, B, and C) in a small Southern California district referred to as District ION as part of this study. The two research questions were:

1. How do schools manage the roles of personnel to increase the effectiveness of special education?

2. What are the beliefs held by school staff about the supports needed, so the ideal roles of teachers in special education can be upheld?

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to show how schools managed roles of the personnel. The intent was to make recommendations for increasing the effectiveness of special education by examining special education teacher of record (TOR) case management duties. This chapter presents the results of the data analysis for the two stated research questions: There were three key findings revealed in the current study:

1. The quantitative analysis of this study revealed that the factor, position, had significant effects on the greatest number of dependent variables related to the average time (in hours) participants spent on various tasks. These variables included the average number of hours on IEPs, prepping for class, and grading homework.

2. The schools are not managing the roles of school personnel effectively. The average time spent on IEPs by special education teachers was 2 hours, which was greater than

the amount of time that other participant groups spent on IEPs. Initially, the

researcher believed that teachers of record (TORs), which were also special education

teachers in the current study, spent more time on duties related to IEPs than they did

on duties related to pedagogy. However, they spent an equal amount of time on IEPs

and instructional planning.

3. The three administrators spent no time on IEP duties and disagreed that IEPs formed

   part of their roles (see Tables 5 and 6). Teachers perceived many challenges, such as

   the lack of time to meet and lack of training, which may be attributed to the lack of

   administrator support.

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Research Findings

</div>

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was: How do schools manage the roles of personnel to increase the

effectiveness of special education?

The quantitative analysis of this study provided evidence of the influence of participants'

position on the average number of hours spent on various tasks. Furthermore, the data showed

that special education teachers also have no time in their schedule to meet other teachers and

discuss instructional matters. This is cause for concern as the students that have special needs in

the district require more instructional attention considering their low academic performance.

Their academic performance lags behind that of other students, as highlighted by Dr. Pedro

Noguera's (2016) research in District ION. His study focused on the same three Southern

California high schools in the district as those that were chosen for this research. He analyzed

the data from the 2015 CAASPP to identify key areas of concern in serving the two groups of

underperforming students, English language learners, and special education students, in District

ION. He found that students with special needs performed 79% below standards in mathematics as compared to general education students with 20% not meeting the mathematics standards. For English-language arts standards, 39% of the special education students fell below minimum standards. The general education students that fell below the minimum English language arts standards represented 3% of all the students. This reflects a large percentage difference in students meeting standards between special education and general education students in District ION.

The amount of time special education teachers are spending on IEPs is alarming. The current study reported that special education teachers spent, on average, two hours daily on IEP duties (see Table 2). There is a need for a transformational shift away from time-consuming Individual Education Plan (IEP) paperwork towards more emphasis on the development of educational strategies that improve the literacy and numeracy (Fullan, 2016) of students with needs. As a teacher, it is necessary to follow the IEP to ensure that each child receives appropriate access to the general education curriculum, and access to the supports that ensure all students' participation in public education within the least restrictive environment. However, there also needs to be a change towards a systemic balance of time needed for human resources to provide adequate instruction and the IEP paperwork and processes. The roles of personnel need to be more effectively managed by school leaders.

Although the researcher does not deny the value of appropriate paperwork, she argues that the volume of paperwork should be reviewed for teachers' and students' benefit. Research provides multiple evidence of the importance of focusing on the instructional role of teachers. Researchers, Fullan (2012), Senge (2008), and Hooper and Bernhardt (2016) discussed the idea that school leaders needed to create the time and space that is required for educators to develop

and implement educational strategies to improve student performance. In their research, Fullan (2010) and Senge (2012) believe that leaders need to understand the importance of creating effective educational communities and systems that emphasize pedagogically sound practices that enable all staff members to be actively engaged in the teaching and learning processes.

The effectiveness of special education is hampered by another issue that was noted in this study: the number of years that special education teachers had spent working at their school sites. The majority of special education teachers had only spent 1 to 3 years in their current school, suggesting more mobility and attrition among these participants. Employment data is important to consider in examining the professional condition in the schools and district; if the special education teachers are not staying in their schools for more than a couple of years, this will likely affect the special education program and the learning patterns of students with special needs. This finding aligns with previous research in the area which has documented special education teacher shortages and attrition (Council for Exceptional Children, 2001). Comparatively, the majority of general education teachers are staying from one to five years in their schools.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 was: What are the beliefs held by school staff about the supports needed so the ideal roles of teachers in special education can be upheld?

This research question was addressed by considering the participants' responses to the qualitative questions included in the survey, which focused on the challenges faced in supporting students with special needs. Para-professionals and teachers mentioned four topmost challenges; the lack of time to meet, lack of training, lack of time with special needs students, and difficulty in accommodating students with special needs. This finding implies a need for more active

participation by school administrators in special education so special education teachers can fulfill their pedagogical roles effectively.

When the combined responses of all the participants, including teachers, para-professionals, and administrators were taken into consideration, the lack of administrative support was confirmed as a topmost challenge. This aligns with previous research which reports that most administrators have not been prepared adequately or do not realize what supports are required to promote special education educators' job satisfaction (Council for Exceptional Children, 2001). This lack of knowledge has reduced the likelihood that administrators can effectively provide the supports that the special education teachers need.

The lack of administrator support in special education has been highlighted by previous research in the area (Hale, 2015). McDonald's research (2011) suggested that all too often, teachers were working for leadership instead of leadership working for and with teachers. When administrators work with staff to create effective, positive change, student results are positive. Parks Le Tellier's research (2007), shows how positive teacher-student interactions result in positive student outcomes. The roles of the teacher have changed to a more managerial structure that has pulled the teacher away from the classroom, and thus positive teacher-student interactions have been measurably diminished. Hale's research (2015) has shown that more can be done by the current administration to change the conditions under which many teachers, especially special education teachers are working. As a result of the dissonance between administrators and the duties of special education teachers, schools across the nation are facing teacher shortages (Hale, 2015). As we can infer, the issue of lack of administrator support is not new and can lead to adverse outcomes for students, the teaching profession, and the economy at large.

The current study particularly brings to the forefront the reluctance of the three administrators of the targeted schools in taking responsibility for IEPs. Administrators spared no time for IEP-related duties and did not consider IEPs as forming part of their role. However, research emphasizes the need for the whole school community to be involved in supporting students' learning, which implies that school administrators should also take an active part in various aspects of the school, including IEPs. Hooper and Bernhardt (2016) emphasized that there needs to be collective responsibility for all staff members to be actively engaged with special needs students. Other researchers such as Dufour, Eaker, Many, and Mattos (2016) present similar arguments about the fundamental purpose of schools, which is to ensure that all students learn at high levels of achievement. Educators and administrators need to stay committed to this focus; it should not be optional. Dufour and Eaker (2016) further shared that this process should be results-oriented, as results give evidence of student learning. There is a need for the district under study to place more emphasis on instructional roles in teaching students with special needs. As a team, all staff members should help improve classrooms, schools, and communities (Fullan, 2012). However, all stakeholders must work together to create the strategies and guidelines that allow students to achieve academic success (Senge, 2008).

In summary, the findings of the current research indicate that general education teachers, special education teachers of record (TOR), and para-educators believe that there is a lack of support from administrators when it comes to improving student achievement for students with disabilities in District ION. The professional condition in District ION is in contradiction to the views and evidence provided in the literature, namely that all stakeholders should work together to create strategies and guidelines that allow students to achieve academic success. There is an

urgent need to support students with needs as their performance lags behind other students. Above all, there is a pressing need for all school personnel to rally around the goal for the learning of all students, including special needs students.

Recommendations

The researcher plans to share the results of this research with all three schools in District ION. Next, the researcher will publish the results through the Los Angeles County Office of Education and disseminate them to all special education teachers in California. The hope is that the study's recommendations will reach as many special education teachers as possible in California.

To address the lack of administrative support identified as part of this study, there is a need to focus on bolstering school leadership. Mazano et al. (2003) and Fullan (2003) require school districts to create effective school leadership to encourage a culture of change. Continuous professional development in the area of special education should be provided to school principals, general education teachers, and para-professionals so that special education teachers can be supported in fulfilling their duties the best way possible. Some of the strategies that administrators can use include the provision of off-the-shelf quality pedagogical materials which teachers can adapt, and also the integration into weekly schedules of time for special education teachers and other teachers to meet in order to develop better instructional strategies that would support students with special needs. It would also be beneficial for administrators to provide specific clerical support to schedule and re-schedule IEPS in order to meet state compliance deadlines.

The current research also reveals that special education teachers have more administrative duties, most notably, IEP paperwork, as compared to general education teachers.

The workload needs to be reviewed so that special education teachers can focus on their instructional roles and effectively support students with needs in improving academic performance. There is also a need for special education teachers, general education teachers, para-professionals, and administrators to collaborate on an equal footing towards the goal of student learning. This can be done through professional learning communities (PLCs). Professional learning communities (Fullan, 2010) are essential to creating a change in the culture of the school that will build the capacity for all teachers to be a collective part of student achievement. For the PLCs to work effectively and efficiently, all educators should provide their input on student outcomes.

Another possible strategy that could be used to address the issues brought to the fore in the current study, mainly the special education teachers hefty workloads and the lack of administrator support, is for District ION to create a School Special Education Coordinator of Case Management position at each school site. The School Special Education Coordinator would perform all duties of the IEP, which includes related meetings and paperwork. This position would reduce the amount of time special educators spend out of the classroom and increase the amount of time for the special education students to be in direct instruction. This position would also enable District ION to remain in compliance of the paperwork.

One additional recommendation is the implementation of the Response to Intervention model. In the Federal Special Education Guide (n.d.), the Response to Intervention Model is recommended and mandated in some states to meet the needs of the special needs population in schools. In the response to intervention (RtI) model, a three-tiered school-wide system is used to support all students, including students with disabilities (see Figure 6). Within the RtI model, a pedagogical system of support is created and implemented to teach all students, using targeted

and intensive interventions that utilize school-wide and district-wide curriculum-based
assessments to support students with disabilities.

According to the 2018 RtI website (RtI network, n.d.), when educators use the Response
to Intervention (RtI) model, within Tier I, all students learn the same curriculum-based materials.
Using curriculum-based assessments, assures that if students need more support, then educators
use more targeted instructions and the types of interventions that are usually provided in smaller
groups and smaller settings. This approach forms part of the next level of the RtI model: the Tier
II intervention. If there is still no improvement after the grading period, educators should
implement Tier III interventions. This third tier is used by teachers and support staff to provide
intensive interventions that target a students' "skill deficit" (RtI Action Network, n.d.). Parents
can request formal evaluations for special education services during any phase of the RtI model,
but it is after RtI Tier III that educators come together to determine the "eligibility status of a
student". Academic and psychological evaluations are then administered to confirm that a
student is eligible to receive special education services within the school district (RtI Action
Network, n.d.).
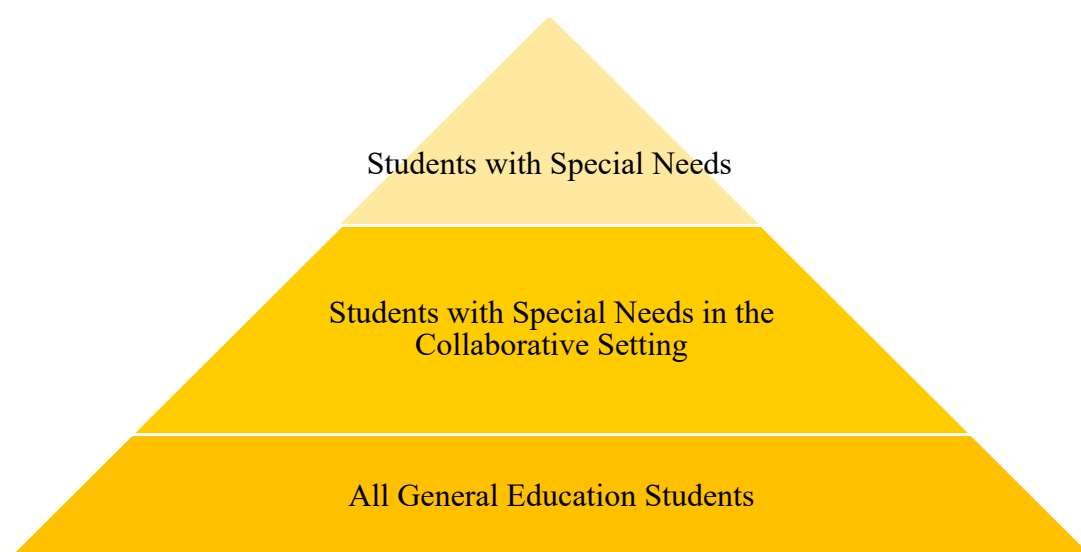
Figure 6. The response to intervention model (Dr. Lampe, personal communication, April 15, 2018).

It is necessary to adopt a Response to Intervention Model (RTI) district-wide program to

improve the student performance on the CAASPP tests. This will provide a uniform

commitment to the philosophy of "no excuses" when it comes to establishing the priorities of the

RtI Model.

Figure 8 provides in-depth information gleaned from the Special Education Guide (n.d.).

This guide suggests particular strategies for general education classes, most effectively applied

before students are screened for eligibility in special education services. The evidence-based RtI

model allows teachers in the general education setting to provide the supports and interventions

first before any student is referred for additional services. If 30, 60, or 90 days of behavioral and

academic RtI supports have not been effective, the student may then be referred for special

education services. The RtI model serves as a working guide for teachers that maximizes

support for all students up front and, in turn, may help to reduce the number of referrals for

special education services. Tier I to Tier III strategies are shown in Figure 7.

Tier III Strategies
Intentional
Teaching
Strategies One to
One,Extended Time
Allotted to Learn and
Master Skill, Teaching Step-by
-Step Modeling to Provide Explicit
and Systematic Instruction,30-60 Minute
Sessions on a Daily Basis for Mastery, then
referral for SPED

Tier II Strategies
Intentional Teaching Strategies to Smaller Group,
Direct Instruction in Shorter Segments, More
Opportunities to Practice Learning, Teach at Slower
Pace, Teach One Topic for Mastery at a Time.
Thirty Minute Sessions Two-Three Times a Week

Tier I Strategies
State the Objectives,Give Direct Instruction

Use Hands-On, Non-Linguistic Representations,Use Grouping,
USe Similarities and Differences, Use Advanced Organizers
(Graphic Organizers), Provide Feedback, Use Summary and Note
Taking, Restate Objective and Reinforce the Lesson

Figure 7. Response to intervention (RtI) strategies (Special Education Guide, n.d.).

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study have far-reaching implications for educational leaders interested in creating positive educational systems that actively support special education teachers and learners. This study offers insight into some of the strategies that may be applied to provide more support to special education teachers suffering from the excessive paperwork. For individuals in the educational community, this study will be a useful tool to help reduce the number of children currently being pulled out of general education and placed in special education, thus minimizing the actual caseloads that each special education teacher manages.

Recommendations for Further Research

In an effort to examine the roles of special education teachers with respect to the amount of time spent on case management and instructional duties, the researcher focused on schedules, roles, and challenges. However, there is more work required in this area in order to provide a more comprehensive picture of the actual time spent on duties related to special education as compared to the time spent on other administrative and pedagogical duties. Additional research in this area would provide teachers and school administrators with valuable information which could lead to more effective management of school personnel time and better scheduling of school activities and meetings. Additional research can be conducted to determine what variables can be attributed to an effective special education program and how the research can measure the effectiveness of special education.

Further research could be focused on educational leadership and the role leaders play in creating more supportive professional conditions that promote achievement for students with disabilities (SWD). Although the current research has shown that school principals avoid taking responsibility for IEPs, the question remains as to whether these same principals are fully equipped to support special needs education. It would be interesting to explore the professional development activities offered to special education, general education teachers, and administrators on special education strategies in order to better understand the professional learning needs of all school personnel. The entire school community, including school leaders, should be fully prepared to take an active part in special education, specifically with respect to creating harmony between all members of the school staff, which includes the roles and responsibilities of the administrators. Administrators should be trained to support special education teachers and students with special needs according to the state and federal education

laws. Training in special education should be incorporated as a part of administrators' graduate studies curricula. Administrators should receive on-going special education training within the school district as a part of their continuing professional development.

Additional research could also focus on the support and challenges experienced by certified special education teachers as well as special education teachers not actually certified in special education; this can help reduce the attrition rate of teachers working with students having special needs. The current study can be expanded to include the evaluation of the impact of IEP duties on special education teachers' well-being and productivity. Pearson correlation could be run between the amount of time teachers spend on IEP-related duties and teacher well-being. To establish a cause-and-effect relationship, a quasi-experimental design could be used with relevant regression analyses.

Conclusions

Throughout this mixed-methods study, it has been the goal of the researcher to answer two fundamental research questions. They were: How do schools manage the roles of personnel to increase the effectiveness of special education? and what are the beliefs held by school staff about the supports needed so that the ideal roles of teachers in special education can be upheld?

The findings of the current research expanded the work of previous researchers such as Fullan (2010), Senge (2013), and Alexander (2013) in the area of special education and educational leadership. The researcher's investigation revealed that administrators in District ION did not take an active part in special education. In particular, administrators do not take responsibility for IEP duties. The general perception among the participants was that there is insufficient administrative support in the area of special education. School administrators must not waver when it comes to providing strategies and support for school personnel, be they special

education educators or others. Teachers' well-being can be translated into many academic benefits for their students.

Leaders must understand the importance of maintaining positive professional conditions for educators; conditions that maximize teaching and minimize ad-hoc responsibilities. Administrators in District ION can focus on lessening bureaucracy by reimagining and steering the parameters of the special education teachers' roles and responsibilities towards a more pedagogical frame. By upholding the basic tenets of transformational leadership, the leader makes change happen for the school community. Leadership emerges from the needs of both the follower and the leader and is expanded by the careful attention given to these needs (Northouse, 2016). Administrators can close the achievement gap and, at the same time, promote a professional environment that fosters pedagogical growth. The missing element in District ION is collective capacity and its sustenance through data-driven decisions that will strengthen instruction. A systemic focus on instruction and capacity-building will allow the entire district – teachers, parents, and students – to work together, building the capacity to focus on student-centered learning and instruction. However, there are practical recommendations that administrators need to consider in promoting collective capacity; time needs to be embedded within teachers' schedules for collaboration, the existing heavy workloads of special education teachers need to be reviewed, and alternative models of support such as the RtI model should be adopted.

The author originally hypothesized that special education teachers in District ION were spending inordinate amounts of time on IEP-related duties rather than on instruction. However, although IEP workload was higher for special education teachers as compared to general education teachers, the current research did not provide enough evidence to support the

hypothesis. The three high schools which were chosen, Schools A, B, and C within District ION, were selected since they were geographically convenient for the researcher. However, the sample was not representative of all the schools within the district. Hence, the findings of the study about the time spent by teachers in District ION on IEP remain inconclusive. The researcher understands and acknowledges the opportunity for continued research by recruiting a larger and more representative sample of participants from elementary, middle, and high schools within District ION.

This researcher believes that students with special needs have been underserved for too many years. The original intention of this study was to shed light on the amount of time that special education teachers spend on paperwork to ensure that students with special needs are receiving the free appropriate public education that is currently guaranteed by law. Although paperwork is necessary, it should never supersede the necessary time that is needed to foster pedagogical strategies and behavioral strategies pertinent to any student's successful education in the classroom. Children can't learn if teachers are not there, or if they are there, there is quasi-learning as a direct result of too many substitute teachers who end up replacing these essential teachers due to time spent on IEP meetings and IEP –related duties. Collectively, we can sound the educational alarm, defend our most vulnerable students, and create environments in which educators are systematically mobilized, supported, and resourced (Personal communications, Dr. Eugene Kim, January 8, 2020).

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

District Permission to Participate in the Study

Appendix J

CONCORDIA
IRVINE

APPENDIX J: SITE AUTHORIZATION

Title of Study	How Case Management Duties Impact Instructional Time to Support Students with Needs
Researcher/s	Diane Toppel (Michael)
Researcher/s' Affiliation with Site	Employee
Researcher/s' Phone Numbers	914.419.5289 (C) (W)
Researcher/s' CUI Email (unless not from CUI)	diane.michael@eagles.cui.edu
Researcher/s' University Supervisor	Dr. Cheryl Lampe
Univ. Supervisor's Phone & Email	cheryl.lampe@cui.edu 949.214.3343
Location/s where Study will Occur	

Purpose of Study (1-2 paragraphs)

The purpose of this study is to examine how case management duties impact instructional time intended for the support of students with needs. The research will examine the negative impact that current Teacher of Record (TOR) professional duties have on the amount of instructional time currently spent helping students with disabilities. The research will explore the need for a transformational shift away from focusing on Individual Education Plan (IEP) paperwork to educational strategies on improving student academic achievement.

Procedures to be Followed

The researcher will conduct Likert-style surveys to administrators, general education teachers, special education teachers, and paraprofessionals. There will be interviews conducted to learn in-depth perceptions of the impact of case management duties on instructional time within the classroom of students with disabilities.
Teacher time charts and substitute teacher records will be used to explore the amount of time that is spent on Teacher of Record (TOR) duties and the amount of time that is spent on instruction.
There are no recruitment materials that will be used during the study. There are no risks to any of the participants during the study. Participants may opt out at any time during the study.

Time and Duration of Study

The time and duration will be six to eight weeks: May 1 - July 1, 2018

Benefits of Study

Participants will benefit from their own self-reflections inherent in the surveys and interviews as they consider their beliefs, their students' needs, and instructional practices. The educational community will benefit from a better understanding of the need to re-focus the pedagogical purpose which is to educate students.

Persons who will have access to the records, data, tapes, or other documentation (see Application Process Step C. 3 of Handbook)
Researcher

Appendix J

CONCORDIA
IRVINE

Date when the records, data, tapes, or other documentation will be destroyed: December 18, 2018

Researcher's Signature _____ Date April 10, 2018

-------------------------------- Authorization --------------------------------

I understand that participation in this study is confidential. Only the researcher, collaborators, and supervising professor will have access to participants' identities and to information that can be associated with their identities. Please check the appropriate box below and sign the form:

☑ **I give permission** for my organization to participate in this project. I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form. I have read this form and understand it.

☐ **I do not give permission** for my organization to participate in this project.

Authorized Signature _____ Date 4.25.18

Printed Name & Title _____

Appendix B

School Permission to Participate in the Study Schools A to C

Appendix J

CONCORDIA
IRVINE

APPENDIX J: SITE AUTHORIZATION

Title of Study	How Case Management Duties Impact Instructional Time to Support Students with Needs
Researcher/s	Diane Toppel (Michael)
Researcher/s' Affiliation with Site	Employee
Researcher/s' Phone Numbers	914.419.5289 (C) _____ (W)
Researcher/s' CUI Email (unless not from CUI)	diane.michael@eagles.cui.edu
Researcher/s' University Supervisor	Dr. Cheryl Lampe
Univ. Supervisor's Phone & Email	cheryl.lampe@cui.edu 949.214.3343
Location/s where Study will Occur	

Purpose of Study (1-2 paragraphs)

The purpose of this study is to examine how case management duties impact instructional time intended for the support of students with needs. The research will examine the negative impact that current Teacher of Record (TOR) professional duties have on the amount of instructional time currently spent helping students with disabilities. The research will explore the need for a transformational shift away from focusing on Individual Education Plan (IEP) paperwork to educational strategies on improving student academic achievement.

Procedures to be Followed

The researcher will conduct Likert-style surveys to administrators, general education teachers, special education teachers, and paraprofessionals. There will be interviews conducted to learn in-depth perceptions of the impact of case management duties on instructional time within the classroom of students with disabilities. Teacher time charts and substitute teacher records will be used to explore the amount of time that is spent on Teacher of Record (TOR) duties and the amount of time that is spent on instruction. There are no recruitment materials that will be used during the study. There are no risks to any of the participants during the study. Participants may opt out at any time during the study.

Time and Duration of Study

The time and duration will be six to eight weeks: May 1 - July 1, 2018

Benefits of Study

Participants will benefit from their own self-reflections inherent in the surveys and interviews as they consider their beliefs, their students' needs, and instructional practices. The educational community will benefit from a better understanding of the need to re-focus the pedagogical purpose which is to educate students.

Persons who will have access to the records, data, tapes, or other documentation (see Application Process Step C.3 of Handbook)
Researcher

Page 1 of 2

Appendix J

CONCORDIA
IRVINE

Date when the records, data, tapes, or other documentation will be destroyed: December 18, 2018

Researcher's Signature _____ Date April 10, 2018

———————————— Authorization ————————————

I understand that participation in this study is confidential. Only the researcher, collaborators, and supervising professor will have access to participants' identities and to information that can be associated with their identities. Please check the appropriate box below and sign the form:

[✓] **I give permission** for my organization to participate in this project. I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form. I have read this form and understand it.

[ ] **I do not give permission** for my organization to participate in this project.

Authorized Signature _____ Date 5/4/18

Printed Name & Title _____

School B

Appendix J

CONCORDIA
IRVINE

APPENDIX J: SITE AUTHORIZATION

Title of Study	How Case Management Duties Impact Instructional Time to Support Students with Needs
Researcher/s	Diane Toppel (Michael)
Researcher/s' Affiliation with Site	Employee
Researcher/s' Phone Numbers	914.419.5289 (C) W)
Researcher/s' CUI Email (unless not from CUI)	diane.michael@eagles.cui.edu
Researcher/s' University Supervisor	Dr. Cheryl Lampe
Univ. Supervisor's Phone & Email	cheryl.lampe@cui.edu 949.214.3343
Location/s where Study will Occur	

Purpose of Study (1-2 paragraphs)

The purpose of this study is to examine how case management duties impact instructional time intended for the support of students with needs. The research will examine the negative impact that current Teacher of Record (TOR) professional duties have on the amount of instructional time currently spent helping students with disabilities. The research will explore the need for a transformational shift away from focusing on Individual Education Plan (IEP) paperwork to educational strategies on improving student academic achievement.

Procedures to be Followed

The researcher will conduct Likert-style surveys to administrators, general education teachers, special education teachers, and paraprofessionals. There will be interviews conducted to learn in-depth perceptions of the impact of case management duties on instructional time within the classroom of students with disabilities. Teacher time charts and substitute teacher records will be used to explore the amount of time that is spent on Teacher of Record (TOR) duties and the amount of time that is spent on instruction. There are no recruitment materials that will be used during the study. There are no risks to any of the participants during the study. Participants may opt out at any time during the study.

Time and Duration of Study

The time and duration will be six to eight weeks: May 1 - July 1, 2018

Benefits of Study

Participants will benefit from their own self-reflections inherent in the surveys and interviews as they consider their beliefs, their students' needs, and instructional practices. The educational community will benefit from a better understanding of the need to re-focus the pedagogical purpose which is to educate students.

Persons who will have access to the records, data, tapes, or other documentation (per Application Process Step C.3 of Handbook)
Researcher

Page 1 of 2

Appendix J

CONCORDIA
IRVINE

Date when the records, data, tapes, or other documentation will be destroyed: December 18, 2018

Researcher's Signature _____ Date April 10, 2018

---------------------------- Authorization ----------------------------

I understand that participation in this study is confidential. Only the researcher, collaborators, and supervising professor will have access to participants' identities and to information that can be associated with their identities. Please check the appropriate box below and sign the form:

☑ **I give permission** for my organization to participate in this project. I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form. I have read this form and understand it.

☐ **I do not give permission** for my organization to participate in this project.

Authorized Signature _____ Date 5/4/18

Printed Name & Title [redacted]

School C

Appendix J

CONCORDIA
IRVINE

APPENDIX J: SITE AUTHORIZATION

Title of Study	How Case Management Duties Impact Instructional Time to Support Students with Needs
Researcher/s	Diane Toppel (Michael)
Researcher/s' Affiliation with Site	Employee
Researcher/s' Phone Numbers	914.419.5289 (C)
Researcher/s' CUI Email (unless not from CUI)	diane.michael@eagles.cui.edu
Researcher/s' University Supervisor	Dr. Cheryl Lampe
Univ. Supervisor's Phone & Email	cheryl.lampe@cui.edu 949.214.3343
Location/s where Study will Occur	

Purpose of Study (1-2 paragraphs)

The purpose of this study is to examine how case management duties impact instructional time intended for the support of students with needs. The research will examine the negative impact that current Teacher of Record (TOR) professional duties have on the amount of instructional time currently spent helping students with disabilities. The research will explore the need for a transformational shift away from focusing on Individual Education Plan (IEP) paperwork to educational strategies on improving student academic achievement.

Procedures to be Followed

The researcher will conduct Likert-style surveys to administrators, general education teachers, special education teachers, and paraprofessionals. There will be interviews conducted to learn in-depth perceptions of the impact of case management duties on instructional time within the classroom of students with disabilities.
Teacher time charts and substitute teacher records will be used to explore the amount of time that is spent on Teacher of Record (TOR) duties and the amount of time that is spent on instruction.
There are no recruitment materials that will be used during the study. There are no risks to any of the participants during the study. Participants may opt out at any time during the study.

Time and Duration of Study

The time and duration will be six to eight weeks: May 1 - July 1, 2018

Benefits of Study

Participants will benefit from their own self-reflections inherent in the surveys and interviews as they consider their beliefs, their students' needs, and instructional practices. The educational community will benefit from a better understanding of the need to re-focus the pedagogical purpose which is to educate students.

Persons who will have access to the records, data, tapes, or other documentation (see Application Process Step C.3 of Handbook)
Researcher

Appendix J

CONCORDIA
IRVINE

Date when the records, data, tapes, or other documentation will be destroyed: December 18, 2018

Researcher's Signature _____ Date April 10, 2018

──────────────── Authorization ────────────────

I understand that participation in this study is confidential. Only the researcher, collaborators, and supervising professor will have access to participants' identities and to information that can be associated with their identities. Please check the appropriate box below and sign the form:

[✓] **I give permission** for my organization to participate in this project. I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form. I have read this form and understand it.

[ ] **I do not give permission** for my organization to participate in this project.

Authorized Signature _____ Date 5.4.18

Printed Name & Title _____ (Assistant Principal)

Appendix C

IRB Approval

Ticket closed: Ticket closed: Approved

CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY IRVINE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD PROTOCOL
REVIEW

IRB Protocol Number: 4492

IRB Approval Date: 07/07/2018

Ms. Michael,
Congratulations! Your research proposal has been approved by Concordia University-
Irvine's IRB.

Work on the research indicated within the initial e-mail may begin. This approval is for a period
of one year from the date of this e-mail correspondence and will require continuation approval if
the research project extends beyond a year.

If you make significant changes to the protocol during the approval period, you must submit a
revised proposal to CUI's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Please write your IRB # and
"EdD IRB Application Addendum in the subject line of any future correspondence.

If you have any questions regarding the IRB's decision, please contact me by replying to this e-
mail or by phone at 949-214-3598.

Kind Regards,
Catherine Webb Ed.D.
EdD IRB Reviewer

Appendix D

Para-Educator's Survey

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Diane Toppel (Michael) IRB Certification of Completion Number: 2451390. The purpose of this study is to determine how case management duties impact instructional time to support students with needs. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Purpose of study: The purpose of this study is to examine how case management duties impact instructional time intended for the support of students with needs. The research will examine the negative impact that current Teacher of Record (TOR) professional duties have on the amount of instructional time currently spent helping students with disabilities.

Time and Duration of Study: This study will take approximately 10-15 minutes. There are two parts to your participation in this research: A 24-question survey, and two open-ended questions. All research will be conducted during non-instructional time from Spring-Summer 2018.

Risks and discomforts: Adhering to the rules and regulations by the National Institutes of Health Office and Extramural Research minimizes potential risks to participants.   Participants may opt out at any time during the study. Potential risks may include negative perceptions of leadership.

Potential benefits: Participants will benefit from their own self-reflections inherent in the surveys and interviews as they consider their own beliefs, their students' needs, and their instructional practices. The educational community will benefit from a better understanding of the need to re-focus the pedagogical purpose, which is to educate students.

Confidentiality: All responses obtained from surveys and interviews will be coded. All staff names including that the school site and district will not be mentioned in this study. All staff identities will remain anonymous through this entire study. Participation is voluntary and any participant may opt out of the study at any time. No participant will be penalized in any way should he or she decides to withdraw or not participate from this study. All information shall be kept in a locked, password protected computer file that is only accessible to the researcher of this study at any given time. All documentation will be destroyed five years after the end of the study.

1. School Name: _____

2. School Principal's Gender
   ☐ Male
   ☐ Female

3. Your Gender
   ☐ Male
   ☐ Female

4. Ethnicity
   ☐ African
   ☐ Asian
   ☐ Caucasian
   ☐ Latino
   ☐ Other _____

5. Years of experience as a principal/teacher/para-educator: _____ years

6. Years of experience at current school: _____ years

7. Highest level of education completed:
   ☐ Associate Degree
   ☐ Bachelor's Degree
   ☐ Master's Degree
   ☐ Doctorate Degree

8. Current Residence Zip Code: _____

9. # of Special Academic Instruction classes _____ class periods per day

10. # of hours spent on instructional planning for students with needs _____ hours per day

11. # of hours spent on grading assignments and tests _____ hours per day

12. # of hours spent on IEP paperwork _____ hours per day

13. # of hours spent on communication with parents/students/staff/admin _____hours per day

14. # of hours spent on meetings and training _____ hours per week

For the following questions, please answer each one as it pertains to your **beliefs** about **your** professional work using the following scale: 1=completely disagree, 3=neutral, 5 =completely agree

	Completely Disagree		Neutral		Completely Agree
15. I believe that IEP work should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I believe that instructional planning should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I believe that grading assignments and tests should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I believe that meetings and training should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I believe communication with parents/students/staff/admin should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5

For the following questions, please answer in relation to the **Principal** at your school.

	Completely Disagree	Neutral	Completely Agree

20. Principals schedule and conduct meetings   1   2   3   4   5
with special needs students and their parents.

21. Principals handle IEP paperwork.   1   2   3   4   5

22. Principals communicate with special needs students   1   2   3   4   5
and their parents.

23. Principals provide clear policies for special education   1   2   3   4   5

24. Principals provide appropriate resources for   1   2   3   4   5
special education.

25. What are your greatest challenges in relation to your role as a teacher/para-professional working with students with needs?

26. What are the greatest challenges facing administrators, teachers and para-professionals working with students with needs?

Appendix E

General Education Teacher Surveys

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Diane Toppel (Michael)

IRB Certification of Completion Number: 2451390. The purpose of this study is to determine

how case management duties impact instructional time to support students with needs. Thank

you in advance for your participation in this study.

Purpose of study: The purpose of this study is to examine how case management duties

impact instructional time intended for the support of students with needs. The research will

examine the negative impact that current Teacher of Record (TOR) professional duties have on

the amount of instructional time currently spent helping students with disabilities.

Time and Duration of Study: This study will take approximately 10-15 minutes. There

are two parts to your participation in this research: A 24-question survey and two open-ended

questions. All research will be conducted during non-instructional time from Spring-Summer

2018.

Risks and discomforts: Adhering to the rules and regulations by the National Institutes

of Health Office and Extramural Research minimizes potential risks to participants.   Participants

may opt out at any time during the study. Potential risks may include negative perceptions of

leadership.

Potential benefits: Participants will benefit from their own self-reflections inherent in

the surveys and interviews as they consider their own beliefs, their students' needs, and their

instructional practices. The educational community will benefit from a better understanding of

the need to re-focus the pedagogical purpose, which is to educate students.

Confidentiality: All responses obtained from surveys and interviews will be coded. All staff names including that the school site and district will not be mentioned in this study. All staff identities will remain anonymous through this entire study. Participation is voluntary and any participant may opt out of the study at any time. No participant will be penalized in any way should he or she decides to withdraw or not participate from this study. All information shall be kept in a locked, password protected computer file that is only accessible to the researcher of this study at any given time. All documentation will be destroyed five years after the end of the study.

1. School Name: _____

2. School Principal's Gender
   ☐ Male
   ☐ Female

3. Your Gender
   ☐ Male
   ☐ Female

4. Ethnicity
   ☐ African
   ☐ Asian
   ☐ Caucasian
   ☐ Latino
   ☐ Other _____

5. Years of experience as a principal/teacher/para-educator: _____ years

6. Years of experience at current school: _____ years

7. Highest level of education completed:
   ☐ Associate Degree
   ☐ Bachelor's Degree
   ☐ Master's Degree
   ☐ Doctorate Degree

8. Current Residence Zip Code: _____

9. # of Special Academic Instruction classes _____class periods per day

10. # of hours spent on instructional planning for students with needs _____ hours per day

11. # of hours spent on grading assignments and tests _____ hours per day

12. # of hours spent on IEP paperwork _____ hours per day

13. # of hours spent on communication with parents/students/staff/admin _____ hours per day

14. # of hours spent on meetings and training _____ hours per week

For the following questions, please answer each one as it pertains to your **beliefs** about **your** professional work using the following scale: 1=completely disagree, 3=neutral, 5 =completely agree

	Completely Disagree		Neutral		Completely Agree
15. I believe that IEP work should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I believe that instructional planning should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I believe that grading assignments and tests should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I believe that meetings and training should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I believe communication with parents/students/staff/admin should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5

For the following questions, please answer in relation to the **Principal** at your school.

	Completely Disagree		Neutral		Completely Agree
20. Principals schedule and conduct meetings with special needs students and their parents.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Principals handle IEP paperwork.	1	2	3	4	5

22. Principals communicate with special needs students   1   2   3   4   5
and their parents.

23. Principals provide clear policies for special education   1   2   3   4   5

24. Principals provide appropriate resources for   1   2   3   4   5
special education.

25. What are your greatest challenges in relation to your role as a teacher/para-professional
working with students with needs?

26. What are the greatest challenges facing administrators, teachers and para-professionals
working with students with needs?

Appendix F

Special Education Teacher Survey

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Diane Toppel (Michael)

IRB Certification of Completion Number: 2451390. The purpose of this study is to determine

how case management duties impact instructional time to support students with needs. Thank

you, in advance, for your participation in this study.

Purpose of study: The purpose of this study is to examine how case management duties

impact instructional time intended for the support of students with needs. The research will

examine the negative impact that current Teacher of Record (TOR) professional duties have on

the amount of instructional time currently spent helping students with disabilities.

Time and Duration of Study: This study will take approximately 10-15 minutes. There

are two parts to your participation in this research: A 24-question survey and two open-ended

questions. All research will be conducted during non-instructional time from Spring-Summer

2018.

Risks and discomforts: Adhering to the rules and regulations by the National Institutes

of Health Office and Extramural Research minimizes potential risks to participants.   Participants

may opt out at any time during the study. Potential risks may include negative perceptions of

leadership.

Potential benefits: Participants will benefit from their own self-reflections inherent in

the surveys and interviews as they consider their own beliefs, their students' needs, and their

instructional practices. The educational community will benefit from a better understanding of

the need to re-focus the pedagogical purpose, which is to educate students.

Confidentiality: All responses obtained from surveys and interviews will be coded. All staff names including that the school site and district will not be mentioned in this study. All staff identities will remain anonymous through this entire study. Participation is voluntary and any participant may opt out of the study at any time. No participant will be penalized in any way should he or she decides to withdraw or not participate from this study. All information shall be kept in a locked, password protected computer file that is only accessible to the researcher of this study at any given time. All documentation will be destroyed five years after the end of the study.

1. School Name: _____

2. School Principal's Gender
   ☐ Male
   ☐ Female

3. Your Gender
   ☐ Male
   ☐ Female

4. Ethnicity
   ☐ African
   ☐ Asian
   ☐ Caucasian
   ☐ Latino
   ☐ Other _____

5. Years of experience as a principal/teacher/para-educator: _____ years

6. Years of experience at current school: _____ years

7. Highest level of education completed:
   ☐ Associate Degree
   ☐ Bachelor's Degree
   ☐ Master's Degree
   ☐ Doctorate Degree

8. Current Residence Zip Code: _____

9. # of Special Academic Instruction classes _____ class periods per day

10. # of hours spent on instructional planning for students with needs _____ hours per day

11. # of hours spent on grading assignments and tests _____ hours per day

12. # of hours spent on IEP paperwork _____ hours per day

13. # of hours spent on communication with parents/students/staff/admin _____ hours per day

14. # of hours spent on meetings and training _____ hours per week

For the following questions, please answer each one as it pertains to your **beliefs** about **your** professional work using the following scale: 1=completely disagree, 3=neutral, 5 =completely agree

	Completely Disagree		Neutral		Completely Agree
15. I believe that IEP work should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I believe that instructional planning should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I believe that grading assignments and tests should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I believe that meetings and training should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I believe communication with parents/students/staff/admin should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5

For the following questions, please answer in relation to the **Principal** at your school.

	Completely Disagree		Neutral		Completely Agree
20. Principals schedule and conduct meetings with special needs students and their parents.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Principals handle IEP paperwork.	1	2	3	4	5

22. Principals communicate with special needs students   1   2   3   4   5
and their parents.

23. Principals provide clear policies for special education   1   2   3   4   5

24. Principals provide appropriate resources for   1   2   3   4   5
special education.

25. What are your greatest challenges in relation to your role as a teacher/para-professional
working with students with needs?

26. What are the greatest challenges facing administrators, teachers and para-professionals
working with students with needs?

Appendix G

Administrator Survey

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Diane Toppel (Michael)

IRB Certification of Completion Number: 2451390. The purpose of this study is to determine

how case management duties impact instructional time to support students with needs. Thank

you in advance for your participation.

Purpose of study: The purpose of this study is to examine how case management duties

impact instructional time intended for the support of students with needs. The research will

examine the negative impact that current Teacher of Record (TOR) professional duties have on

the amount of instructional time currently spent helping students with disabilities.

Time and Duration of Study: This study will take approximately 10-15 minutes. There

are two parts to your participation in this research: A 24-question survey and two open-ended

questions. All research will be conducted during non-instructional time from Spring-Summer

2018.

Risks and discomforts: Adhering to the rules and regulations by the National Institutes

of Health Office and Extramural Research minimizes potential risks to participants.   Participants

may opt out at any time during the study. Potential risks may include negative perceptions of

leadership.

Potential benefits: Participants will benefit from their own self-reflections inherent in

the surveys and interviews as they consider their own beliefs, their students' needs, and their

instructional practices. The educational community will benefit from a better understanding of

the need to re-focus the pedagogical purpose, which is to educate students.

Confidentiality: All responses obtained from surveys and interviews will be coded. All staff names including that the school site and district will not be mentioned in this study. All staff identities will remain anonymous through this entire study. Participation is voluntary and any participant may opt out of the study at any time. No participant will be penalized in any way should he or she decides to withdraw or not participate from this study. All information shall be kept in a locked, password protected computer file that is only accessible to the researcher of this study at any given time. All documentation will be destroyed five years after the end of the study.

1. School Name: _____

2. School Principal's Gender
   ☐ Male
   ☐ Female

3. Your Gender
   ☐ Male
   ☐ Female

4. Ethnicity
   ☐ African
   ☐ Asian
   ☐ Caucasian
   ☐ Latino
   ☐ Other _____

5. Years of experience as a principal/teacher/para-educator: _____ years

6. Years of experience at current school: _____ years

7. Highest level of education completed:
   ☐ Associate Degree
   ☐ Bachelor's Degree
   ☐ Master's Degree
   ☐ Doctorate Degree

8. Current Residence Zip Code: _____

9. # of Special Academic Instruction classes _____class periods per day

10. # of hours spent on instructional planning for students with needs _____ hours per day

11. # of hours spent on grading assignments and tests _____ hours per day

12. # of hours spent on IEP paperwork _____ hours per day

13. # of hours spent on communication with parents/students/staff/admin _____ hours per day

14. # of hours spent on meetings and training _____ hours per week

For the following questions, please answer each one as it pertains to your **beliefs** about **your** professional work using the following scale: 1=completely disagree, 3=neutral, 5 =completely agree

	Completely Disagree		Neutral		Completely Agree
15. I believe that IEP work should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I believe that instructional planning should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I believe that grading assignments and tests should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I believe that meetings and training should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I believe communication with parents/students/staff/admin should be part of my job.	1	2	3	4	5

For the following questions, please answer in relation to the **Principal** at your school.

	Completely Disagree		Neutral		Completely Agree
20. Principals schedule and conduct meetings with special needs students and their parents.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Principals handle IEP paperwork.	1	2	3	4	5

22. Principals communicate with special needs students   1   2   3   4   5
and their parents.

23. Principals provide clear policies for special education   1   2   3   4   5

24. Principals provide appropriate resources for   1   2   3   4   5
special education.

25. What are the greatest challenges in relation to your role as a teacher/para-professional working with students with needs?

26. What are the greatest challenges facing administrators, teachers and para-professionals working with students with needs?

Appendix H

GENDER	ZIP	MEDINC	SES	ETHNIC	YTOTAL	YSCHOOL	SECLASS	DEGREE	PGENDER	SCHOOL	JOB	HIEP	HPREP	HGRADE	HTALK	HMEET	IEP	INSTRUCT	GRADING	MEETINGS	COMM	PSCH	PIEP	PCOMM	PPOLICY	PRESOUR
Male	90502	68676	LM	Latino	28	4	0	Doctorate	male	A	ADMIN	1	2	1	1	4	3	3	3	4	5	3	2	5	5	5
Male	90405	88445	LM	Caucasian	24	16	2.0	Masters	male	B	ADMIN	0	3	1.0	0.0	0.6	5	5	3	5	5	5	1	1	5	5
Female	90814	64623	LM	Caucasian	4	2	10.0	Doctorate	female	C	ADMIN	0	0	0.0	4.0	0.4	3	5	3	5	5	1	1	1	1	3
Female	90401	71154	LM	Latino	15	12	0.0	Doctorate	male	A	GENED	1	0	3.0	2.0	0.6	4	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	3	3
Female	90066	75209	LM	Latino	23	19	0.0	Masters	male	A	GENED	1	2	2.0	2.0	0.8	1	5	5	5	5	3	3	4	5	5
Female	90404	73601	LM	Caucasian	20	15	0.0	Bachelors	male	A	GENED	0	0	2.0	0.3	0.0	5	5	5	5	5	4	2	2	2	1
Female	90066	75209	LM	Caucasian	15	7	0.0	Masters	male	A	GENED	0	1	0.5	1.0	0.6	5	5	5	5	5	3	1	3	2	3
Female	91403	89552	LM	Caucasian	9	1	2.0	Masters	male	A	GENED	0	1	1.0	0.5	0.4	3	5	4	5	4	2	3	3	1	1
Female	90008	36641	L	Caucasian	10	2	5.0	Masters	male	A	GENED	1	2	1.0	2.0	0.4	4	5	4	5	3	2	4	4	4	
Female	90278	107242	LM	Caucasian	1	1	0.0	Bachelors	male	A	GENED	1	2	2.0	3.0	0.2	3	5	5	5	2	2	3	3	4	
Female	90404	73601	LM	Latino	10	3	5.0	Masters	male	A	GENED	1	2	5.0	2.0	0.2	4	4	5	4	5	1	1	4	4	4
Female	93065	97485	LM	African	11	1	0.0	Doctorate	male	A	GENED	1	3	3.0	2.0	0.2	5	5	5	5	3	1	3	2	2	
Female	90254	124849	UM	Caucasian	28	24	0.0	Masters	male	A	GENED	1	3	4.0	3.0	0.4	5	5	5	5	3	3	5	2	2	
Female	90062	40018	L	Caucasian	15	2	2.0	Masters	male	A	GENED	0	1	1.0	0.5	0.0	3	5	5	5	5	3	2	3	3	3
Female	90403	92096	LM	Caucasian	4	4	0.0	Masters	male	A	GENED	0	1	1.0	0.1	0.5	3	5	5	5	2	2	2	4	3	
Female	0	0	L	Latino	22	18	0.0	Masters	male	A	GENED	1	3	1.0	2.0	0.0	3	5	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	
Female	90230	79242	LM	Latino	27	16	0.0	Doctorate	male	A	GENED	0	1	2.0	0.5	0.0	2	5	5	5	3	5	3	4	2	
Female	93021	101627	LM	Caucasian	18	2	0.0	Masters	male	A	GENED	0	2	2.0	1.5	0.0	3	5	5	5	3	1	6	5	5	
Male	90066	75209	LM	Caucasian	8	8	0.0	Bachelors	male	A	GENED	0	1	1.0	0.5	0.4	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	5	4	
Female	90230	79242	LM	African	11	3	0.0	Masters	male	A	GENED	0	4	3.0	2.0	0.4	2	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	
Male	90045	90399	LM	Latino	40	40	5.0	Masters	male	A	GENED	1	2	2.0	0.5	0.0	5	5	5	5	3	3	3	5	4	
Female	90026	54342	L	Asian	3	3	0.0	Bachelors	male	B	GENED	0	0	0.5	0.5	0.2	3	3	2	4	4	4	3	5	3	4
Female	90230	79242	LM	Asian	8	1	0.0	Masters	male	B	GENED	0	2	1.0	0.5	0.4	3	5	5	5	3	3	3	3	3	
Female	90403	92096	LM	Caucasian	18	2	2.0	Masters	male	B	GENED	2	2	1.0	1.5	0.4	4	5	4	5	5	2	2	4	2	3
Female	90631	76910	LM	Asian	13	7	1.0	Masters	male	B	GENED	0	1	0.5	0.2	0.4	5	5	5	5	2	2	4	3	3	
Female	91320	116208	LM	Caucasian	3	3	0.0	Masters	female	C	GENED	1	1	1.0	3.0	0.2	4	5	5	5	4	3	3	5	5	
Female	91307	111043	LM	Caucasian	20	19	0.0	Masters	female	C	GENED	0	1	1.0	2.0	0.4	4	5	4	5	1	1	3	1	4	
Male	91301	117615	LM	Asian	29	11	5.0	Bachelors	female	C	GENED	0	1	1.0	0.5	0.4	4	5	5	5	5	3	3	5	5	
Male	90015	32979	L	Caucasian	14	4	4.0	Bachelors	male	A	PARA	0	0	0.0	6.0	0.6	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	1	3	
Male	90404	73601	LM	Latino	2	1	4.0	None	male	A	PARA	2	1	0.0	0.5	0.2	5	3	3	4	2	3	2	3	3	
Male	90405	88445	LM	African	10	5	4.0	Bachelors	male	A	PARA	0	4	0.5	3.0	0.4	2	3	5	5	3	2	2	3	3	
Female	90016	43443	L	African	7	5	4.0	Bachelors	male	A	PARA	0	7	0.0	0.0	0.6	4	1	1	3	3	5	2	3	5	5
Female	91755	49755	L	Latino	10	7	5.0	Bachelors	male	A	PARA	2	0	2.0	0.2	0.3	3	2	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	
Female	90034	65572	LM	Asian	10	19	0.0	Associate	male	A	PARA	0	6	0.0	0.0	0.0	5	1	2	3	1	3	4	4	4	5
Female	90025	78713	LM	Asian	32	32	6.0	Associate	male	A	PARA	0	6	0.0	6.0	0.4	4	2	1	3	4	3	1	2	4	5
Male	90016	43443	L	African	3	3	4.0	Associate	male	A	PARA	0	1	0.0	4.0	1.0	5	3	2	4	5	4	1	4	4	5
Female	90277	101532	L	Latino	9	6	6.0	Associate	male	A	PARA	0	1	0.0	2.0	0.2	4	4	3	5	5	2	1	2	2	2
Female	90250	49417	L	Caucasian	27	8	0.0	Bachelors	male	A	PARA	0	1	0.0	4.0	0.3	5	2	5	5	3	3	3	5	5	
Female	90405	88445	LM	Latino	3	3	4.0	Associate	male	A	PARA	0	0	0.0	6.0	0.6	4	5	3	5	3	3	2	2	2	2
Male	90034	65572	LM	African	19	10	6.0	None	male	A	PARA	0	2	0.0	0.0	0.6	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	
Male	91406	51564	LM	Latino	38	12	0.0	Bachelors	male	B	PARA	0	1	1.0	1.0	0.4	1	5	5	4	5	3	3	5	4	5
Female	90045	90399	LM	Caucasian	30	29	6.0	None	male	B	PARA	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.4	3	4	4	4	1	1	2	1	1	
Female	90810	56061	L	None	5	3	1.0	Associate	male	B	PARA	0	0	2.0	1.0	0.6	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	
Female	91360	93476	LM	Latino	4	4	4.0	Bachelors	female	C	PARA	0	0	1.0	2.0	0.0	4	3	4	5	3	2	3	3	3	
Female	90290	103553	LM	Caucasian	13	11	6.0	Bachelors	female	C	PARA	0	0	0.0	6.0	0.4	2	2	2	5	4	1	1	3	5	5
Male	90230	79242	LM	Caucasian	5	2	2.0	Bachelors	male	A	SPED	1	1	0.5	0.5	0.0	5	5	5	2	4	4	3	4	4	4
Male	90250	49417	L	Caucasian	18	3	4.0	Masters	male	A	SPED	2	2	1.0	3.0	0.3	5	5	5	5	2	1	3	2	3	
Male	90292	103948	LM	Caucasian	17	2	1.0	Masters	male	A	SPED	3	1	0.3	0.5	0.4	5	4	4	3	4	1	1	2	1	1
Male	90292	103948	LM	Caucasian	13	1	5.0	Masters	male	A	SPED	4	4	1.0	1.0	1.2	5	5	5	5	5	3	3	5	5	5
Male	90292	103948	LM	Caucasian	17	2	1.0	Masters	male	A	SPED	4	1	0.3	0.5	0.0	4	4	3	4	1	1	2	1	1	
Male	90250	49417	L	Caucasian	18	3	4.0	Masters	male	A	SPED	2	2	1.0	3.0	0.2	5	5	5	5	2	1	3	2	3	
Male	90066	75209	LM	Latino	23	18	5.0	Masters	male	A	SPED	1	2	1.0	0.5	0.4	5	5	4	4	5	1	1	1	1	
Male	90006	75209	LM	African	5	1	5.0	Bachelors	male	A	SPED	1	2	0.5	1.0	0.4	5	5	5	5	1	1	2	4	4	
Female	90045	90399	LM	Caucasian	21	1	5.0	Masters	male	A	SPED	1	1	1.0	0.5	0.6	5	5	5	5	1	1	1	1	1	
Female	90803	83861	LM	Caucasian	16	1	4.0	Masters	male	A	SPED	3	3	2.0	1.0	0.4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	
Female	90404	73601	LM	Caucasian	6	1	5.0	Masters	male	A	SPED	0	0	0.5	0.0	0.5	5	5	5	5	1	1	2	2	2	
Male	90291	88078	LM	Caucasian	9	3	5.0	Masters	male	A	SPED	2	5	5.0	1.0	0.2	5	5	5	4	5	1	1	3	3	2
Male	90302	43788	L	African	15	5	1.0	Bachelors	male	A	SPED	2	1	1.0	2.0	0.4	5	5	5	5	5	1	1	5	5	5
Female	90094	136250	UM	Caucasian	19	2	8.0	Masters	male	A	SPED	1	2	0.5	0.5	0.6	5	5	5	5	5	1	1	3	3	1
Female	90403	92096	LM	Caucasian	17	12	5.0	Masters	male	B	SPED	2	0	0.0	2.0	0.6	1	1	5	1	1	3	3	3		
Male	90034	65572	LM	Caucasian	6	2	5.0	Masters	male	B	SPED	1	1	1.0	1.0	0.1	3	4	4	3	5	1	5	3	4	
Female	91362	108167	LM	Caucasian	44	22	3.0	Masters	female	C	SPED	2	2	1.0	2.0	2.0	3	4	5	4	5	1	1	3	3	3
Female	91301	117615	LM	None	27	20	4.0	Masters	female	C	SPED	1	0	1.0	0.5	0.6	5	5	5	5	1	1	3	2	3	

Chart of Categorical and Interval Level Variables