The Attitudes and Practices of New Jersey Elementary Principals Toward Students with Disabilities Who Achieved Adequate Yearly Progress Under the No Child Left Behind Act

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THE ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES OF NEW JERSEY ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALS TOWARD STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES WHO ACHIEVED ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS UNDER THE NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT

BY

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ABSTRACT

The Attitudes and Practices of New Jersey Elementary Principals toward Students with Disabilities who Achieved Adequate Yearly Progress under the No Child Left Behind Act

Angelica L. Allen

The purpose of this study, using a qualitative analysis, is to explore the attitudes and practices of elementary principals toward students with disabilities who achieved AYP under NCLBA on the NJASK exam. This study is designed to promote the understanding of the phenomenon of inclusion from the perspective of the elementary principal. This research examines the factors described by New Jersey elementary principals that help to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP under NCLBA, as well as their attitudes toward inclusion. In addition, it examines the factors identified by elementary principals that contributed to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam. Finally, the research examines how the elementary principals support students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

The results of this study support previous research suggesting students with disabilities achieve AYP under NCLBA when inclusion is effectively implemented in schools. The research results also revealed similarities among the attitudes of elementary principals toward students with disabilities and uncovered differences in the areas of support students with disabilities receive in order to achieve AYP under NCLBA. In addition, the results reflected a variety of factors identified by New Jersey elementary principals that aid students with disabilities in achieving AYP under NCLBA.
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such a wonderful group of individuals love them in their lifetime.
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my daughter.

My daughter, Fairah, is an incredible girl who is becoming a young woman. Thank you for all of your unselfish support and love throughout this process. I could not have done it without you! You are my inspiration and I am so proud of you because of your willingness to share your mommy even on Mother’s Day with her dissertation at the library. Your support deserves great words of praise and I only hope that I have set a great example for you to follow in all areas of your life.

My parents have instilled a love of learning in me with an incredible propensity for hard work. In addition, dad you taught me that all things are attainable if you surround yourself with like minded people and mom you taught me that with faith all things are possible. You gave me my two legs to stand and I am walking tall because of you! My grandparents, thank you for providing me the history of our journey to this country and filling me with a desire to accomplish as much as I can as soon as I can.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

As school leaders, principals must be responsive to education policies established at the local, state, and federal levels (Faircloth, 2004). The latest version of such a policy, the Elementary and Secondary Act, renamed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA), includes new accountability requirements that are impacting, in some way, every school district in the United States (Harriman, 2005). “Despite criticism from some education groups about lack of funding and overambitious timetables, it nonetheless appears that most have praised the NCLBA’s objectives: ‘increasing academic standards and enhancing the educational experience for all students, regardless of their status or race’” (Henry, 2004, p. 1120).

One of the policy’s key provisions mandates that schools document the achievement by all students of adequate yearly progress (AYP) in meeting state content standards (Kossar, Mitchem, & Ludlow, 2005).

To meet the federal requirements, New Jersey has adopted the New Jersey Single Accountability System. State assessments in language arts literacy and mathematics for the elementary grade-level clusters as measured on the NJASK exam are based on the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. All students enrolled in New Jersey public schools, plus all significant student subgroups must meet the proficiency benchmarks to
ensure the goal of 100% proficiency, leaving no child behind. (New Jersey Department of Education, Retrieved October 30, 2005, ¶ 2).

In large part, the strategy of reporting AYP is designed to pressure educators to take whatever measures are necessary to increase achievement as measured by standardized tests (Harriman, 2005).

Until recently, the primary source of education policy for children and youth with a disability in the United States was the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Public Law 105-17. IDEA requires that all students with disabilities be provided a free and appropriate public education [FAPE] (Faircloth, 2004).

The goal of the law, as when first enacted in 1965, is to increase educational opportunities for students who are at a disadvantage educationally, culturally, or socio-economically. The purpose of the current accountability features is to measure, publicly report, and then decrease the achievement gap between more advantaged students and other students who might be expected to be at a disadvantage by virtue of membership in a subgroup (i.e., students with disabilities) (Harriman, 2005, p. 64).

Kauffman (2004) asserts a reality that will not go away is that a good education makes a group of learners more heterogeneous, and good special education simply helps students achieve more than they would without it.

According to Harvney (2004, p.68) in a publication titled “No Child Left Behind: Using Data to Influence Classroom Decisions” from the U.S. Department of Education: “Research shows that teachers who use student test performance to guide and improve their teaching are more effective than teachers who do not use such information.” Hence,
the appropriate use of measures currently in place to enhance student achievement is substantiated by the research.

Statement of the Problem

Under the NCLBA, there is increased pressure for educational accountability. Incumbent in this policy is the expectation that all children will succeed regardless of their ability or disability (Faircloth, 2004). Moreover, the accountability provision is designed to insure that schools maintain high expectations for achievement for all students, with and without special needs (Kossar, Mitchem, & Ludlow, 2005).

As a means to increase student achievement and hold teachers more accountable, the NCLBA applies pressure to every sector of the education community.

Nowhere has that pressure been felt more than in special education programs for students with high incidence disabilities in rural areas, where one-third of the nation’s school districts are located (Harden, Rosenberg, & Sindelar, 2005).

Students with disabilities occupy a special place in education in a society of complex stratification structures (Iarkina-Smirnova & Loshakova, 2004). NCLBA calls for the inclusion of all students, even students who may have been excluded or exempted from participating in state assessment programs in the past (New Jersey Department of Education, ¶ 1).

Inclusion contemplates the placement of students with disabilities in the regular classroom with non-disabled students as a right (Douvanis & Hulsey, 2002).

In an inclusive school, general education does not relinquish responsibility for students with special needs, but instead, works cooperatively with special education to provide a quality program for all students. This new arrangement for
providing services has created challenges for many education professionals, including the principal. (Praisner, 2003, p. 135)

Praisner (2003) goes on to maintain that due to their leadership position, the attitudes of principals about inclusion could result in either increased opportunities for students to be served in general education or limited efforts to reduce the segregated nature of special education services. Such positive attitudes among principals may help to explain recent increases in inclusive placements. However, principals are somewhat removed from the practice of inclusion and are more likely to hold positive attitudes toward the reform movement (Cook, Semmel, & Gerèr, 1999).

In inclusive education, the needs of students with disabilities have to be met by a whole continuum of services, including the educational environment that is most favorable for them (Iarkaia-Smirnova & Loshakova, 2004). Full inclusion demands that support services be brought to the child rather than allowing the child to be moved to a segregated setting to receive special services (Wright, 1999). Unfortunately, the term inclusion has become almost synonymous in the public mind with special education focusing attention on the schools and classrooms that students should attend and frequently upstaging the instruction they should receive (Crockett, 2000).

To ensure the success of inclusion, it is important that principals’ exhibit behaviors that advance the integration, acceptance, and success of students with disabilities in general education classes (Praisner, 2003). The task of the inclusive school is to build the kind of system that will meet everyone’s needs. All children, not just those with disabilities, must be provided with the support that enables them to achieve success (Iarkaia-Smirnova & Loshakova, 2004).
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study, using a qualitative analysis, is to explore the attitudes and practices of elementary principals toward students with disabilities who achieved AYP under NCLBA on the NJASK exam. This study is designed to promote the understanding of the phenomenon of inclusion from the perspective of the elementary principal. Inclusion is a term that stands for the collective practices used to achieve a least restrictive environment (Doyle, 2003). According to Hardman (as cited in Doyle, 2003) interpretations of inclusion vary considerably, causing multiple tensions for principals.

General and special education administrators at the local and state level are challenged to provide the leadership and resources needed to assist service providers in meeting the progress requirements of the NCLBA (Purcell, East & Rude, 2005). As school-site administrators and policy leaders, principals influence reform implementation decisions, control resource allocations, and exert a supervisory role relative to school personnel. Hence, principals' attitudes toward inclusion represent a particularly powerful influence on school-wide policy implementation and operational innovations (Cook, Semmel, & Gerber, 1999, p. 200).

Primary Research Question

What factors do New Jersey elementary school principals describe that help to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP under NCLBA?

Subsidiary Research Questions

1. How do elementary principals describe their attitudes toward inclusion?
2. What factors identified by elementary principals' contributed to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam?

3. How did the elementary principal support students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam?

Significance of the Study

NCLBA has set the goal of 100% proficiency by the year 2014 with states setting incremental benchmarks for grade-level clusters and each content area. The accountability system looks at the degree to which students across schools and districts are mastering the state standards, (www.hi.gov/ijped/grants/nclb/guidance/understanding.pdf). Schools nationwide are now struggling with how to meet the requirements of the NCLBA for special education students without excluding them from realistic assessments and/or negatively impacting their educational progression (Harvey, 2004). Schools that fail to achieve AYP are required to implement improvement plans, offer school choice to parents, and provide supplemental services; schools that continue to achieve inadequate progress may be subject to restructuring or takeover by the state education agency (Kosar, Mitkem, & Ladlow, 2005).

Principals need to understand the realm of special education, including laws and mandates, because they are responsible for ensuring that students with disabilities perform well on assessments (McLaughlin & Nolet, 2004). Cotton (2003) asserts that researchers from Edmonds to the present have consistently found that high-achieving schools (including poor and minority schools) are successful in part because the principals communicate to everyone in the school their expectations of high performance.
Thus, the advantage of setting targets for AYP, according to Harriman (2005), is the change in expectations for all students, especially those with disabilities.

McLaughlin and Nolet (2004) assert, when special education is working, when parents and families feel confident about their child's education, it is because a strong, supportive and informed building principal has created a school that values educating every child even if it is a by-product of NCLBA. Although Fullan (2005) argues that setting targets and mandatory "annual yearly progress", as is the case with the NCLBA, will change only a tiny slice of the context, neither large enough nor powerful enough to motivate people to succeed, it is still progress. Accordingly, we cannot ignore the need to make progress toward the goals mandated by NCLBA and the role that the principal plays in shaping the expectations of all students.

Limitations

1. This study is limited to elementary schools that have achieved AYP for students with disabilities.
2. The limited sample size decreases the ability to generalize from the findings, but increases the depth of knowledge about each principal's attitude toward students with disabilities in general education classrooms.
3. Interviewees are not equally articulate and perceptive.
4. A qualitative methodology depends heavily on the skill of the researcher.

Delimitations

This study will confine itself to interviewing ten elementary school principals whose students with disabilities population is 35 or greater and achieved AYP in 2004 on the NJASK exam in the state of New Jersey.
Definitions of the Terms

1. Elementary School - a nonprofit institutional day or residential school that provides elementary education, as determined under State law.

2. Special Education – Special education is specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability (Cornell Law School, Retrieved October 15, 2005, ¶ 25)

3. Inclusion – a term that stands for the collective practices used to achieve a least restrictive environment (Doyle, 2003).

4. Mainstreaming – implies that the child will be educated with nondisabled peers when appropriate, but not necessarily exclusively in general education (Douvanis & Hulsey, 2002).

5. Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) – refers to the Individual Disabilities Education Act’s mandate that children with disabilities be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with nondisabled peers (Douvanis & Hulsey, 2002).

6. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) – Under the accountability provisions in the No Child Left Behind Act, all public school campuses, school districts, and the state are evaluated for AYP.

7. Intervention & Referral Services Team (I&RS) – an interdisciplinary committee, which usually serves as a component of school’s guidance counseling and/or Student Assistance Program. The I&RS Team recognizes its obligation to provide assistance to students having school-related difficulties due to alcohol or drug use and other associated behavioral, psychosocial and health problems.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

The research is replete with literature regarding the federal enactment of legislation to improve the educational opportunities for students with disabilities. There are a number of areas in particular that merit attention and provide greater insight into the most recent federal legislative developments. This chapter examines the literature in the areas of accountability, least restrictive environment, inclusive education, instructional leadership, and principals as change agents in the United States and around the world.

Accountability

Education in the United States has been under intense scrutiny for almost twenty years beginning with a highly publicized report of the National Commission on Excellence in Education called *A Nation at Risk* (Cambron-McCabe, 2002, 117). This Commission was created by then Secretary of Education, B.H. Bell, to examine the quality of education in the United States. The report was as much an open letter to the American people as it was a report to the Secretary of Education (A Nation At Risk - April 1983, www.ed.gov/pubs/NatAtRisk/index.html).

The Commission was clear in stating its goal: to develop the talents of all to their fullest. To that end, the Commission asserted, "Attaining that goal requires that we expect and assist all students to work to the limits of their capabilities. We should expect schools to have genuinely high standards rather than minimum ones." (National Commission on Excellence in Education, Retrieved October 28, 2005, p. 6). Underlying
these efforts is the push to ensure the educational success of all children (Cambron-McCabe). The Commission also noted in its report that the public will demand that educational and political leaders act forcefully and effectively. In fact, such demands have already appeared and could well become a unifying national preoccupation (National Commission on Excellence in Education, Retrieved October 28, 2005, p. 7).

The report's pronouncements of the ills of American schools brought intense public pressure to reform schools. The federal government was called upon to reverse a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people (Cambron-McCabe, 2002). For example, one of the recommendations by the Commission in the areas of leadership and fiscal support stresses the role of the principals and superintendents in developing school and community support for the reforms they propose (National Commission on Excellence in Education, Retrieved October 28, 2005, p. 8). Until the advent of NCLBA, principals whose schools were posting low scores would be called in to explain their past actions, required to submit new improvement plans and monitored closely. They were rarely fired or demoted as a result of low student achievement (Geertz & Duffy, 2003, p. 8).

On January 8, 2002, at Hamilton High School in Hamilton, Ohio, President George W. Bush signed into law a significant reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 (P.L. 89-10 as cited by Henry, 2004). This legislation was part of the war on poverty led by President Lyndon B. Johnson, and was aimed at meeting the educational needs of disadvantaged groups (Faircloth, 2004). The newly revised ESEA was dubbed NCLBA of 2001 (P.L. 107-110 as cited by Henry, 2004).
NCLBA's sprawling 1,100-plus pages radically overhaul the federal role in education, rewrite the rules, and realign power— including more to Washington than ever before. It strives to boost overall pupil achievement, narrow a host of "learning gaps," and assure every student a "highly qualified teacher" (Finn & Hess, 2004, p. 35).

Although the extent to which NCLBA extends federal authority over public education is unprecedented, in general, the law continues rather than departs from the general direction of federal education policy in the 1990s (Geertz & Duffy, 2003). At the same time, greater control resides at the state level as standards and assessment measures are defined centrally and narrowly (Cambron-McCabe, 2002).

In the 1990s, all 50 states embarked on education initiatives related to high standards and challenging content (Geertz & Duffy, 2003, p. 4).

Federal legislation passed in 1994 (P.L. 103-382; Improving America's Schools Act, IASA), 1997 (P.L. 105-117; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, IDEA), and 1998 (P.L. 105-332; Perkins Vocational-Technical Education Act) required that states assess the performance of all students according to standards set in core academic areas at least once at each level of schooling (elementary, middle, and high school) (McDermott, 2003, p. 154).

Goertz and Duffy (2003) assert other components of standards-based reforms including assessments that measure student performance and accountability systems that are at least partially focused on student outcomes.

With the stroke of his pen, President Bush changed the culture of education in America and kept his promise to "leave no child behind" (Henry, 2004, p. 1120). For
Some states, the mandates reinforced the direction their policies were already taking and completed a cycle in which policy innovation moved from the states to the federal government and back to the states. However, for others, it was a departure from past policy (McDermott, 154-155).

NCLBA expanded state testing requirements to include every child in grades 3 through 8 in reading and mathematics by the 2005-2006 school year, and in science by 2007-2008. These assessments must be aligned with each state's standards and allow student achievement to be comparable from year to year (Goetz & Duffy, 2003).

As a country, we have shifted from the 'minimum competency' focus of the 1970s to a far more complex, demanding conception of student learning. A crucial dimension of the current reform emphasis is that it applies to all students, particularly those at risk of school failure (Cambron-McCabe, p. 117).

The policy environment in education has always been characterized by turbulence. Education has been reformed again and again and again (Crowson, 2003, p. 29).

Under NCLBA, states must now develop separate progress goals for subgroups of students, including economically disadvantaged students, students from major ethnic and racial groups, students with disabilities, and limited English proficiency students as well as all public school students (Goetz & Duffy, p. 7).

One of the strengths of NCLBA's sub-group rules: they make policy-makers, the public, and educators themselves aware of under-performing groups within schools that appear successful on the whole. Thirty-three states had previously neglected sub-group performance altogether, and policy-makers surely must address that, if the achievement gap is to be narrowed (Fitzberg, 2003, p. 38).
A school is then judged on the achievement level of each category in which it enrolls a minimum number of students (that minimum being determined by the state, subject to federal approval) (Finn & Hess, 2004, p. 40).

The linchpin of accountability systems as they are currently constituted is the standardized test. As President Bush stated during a visit to a Washington D.C. elementary school, "Accountability is so important, and by accountability I mean testing children to determine whether or not children are learning" (DeLissovoy & McLaren, 2003, p. 132). Even with the pervasive testing programs in states, few meet the demands of the NCLBA championed by President Bush (P.L. 107-110) (Cambros-McCabe, 2002). Blacker (2003) asserts, like justice or equality, accountability is something responsible parties are all for – at least in the abstract, before a particular accountability regime is specified. McCray (2002) makes the claim:

Indeed, during the last three decades special education has witnessed laudable accomplishments in assuring access to quality and individualized special education for many students with disabilities. Without steadfast, unrelenting advocacy and agency, many of them, without cause, would have continued to be excluded from equal opportunities to learn in settings with peers without disabilities or to develop their potentials fully. (p. 593)

This may in part be the reason for school improvement around standards and accountability achieving a wider and wider consensus (Crowson, 2003, p. 40).

President Bush claims that the NCLBA will accomplish lasting change via accountability:
[N]obody should allow an excuse...to undermine accountability... [O]therwise you just shuffle kids through. And that's unacceptable in America...

[A]ccountability is a crucial part of educational excellence and educational reform. And it's very important that all states take seriously what we insist upon; and that is, in return for money, we expect you to do what's right, by each single child that lives in your state" (Henry, p. 1120).

De Lisovery and McLaren (2004) emphasize that accountability schemes are attractive to many for their apparent neatness and efficiency. Furthermore, they are presented as rational, systematic, and progressive mechanisms for improving educational quality.

The primary tool for achieving accountability under the state plans is the statutory requirement that states must establish a definition of "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) to use each year to determine the achievement of each school district and school (Henry, p. 1121). AYP is at the heart of NCLB’s accountability system (Wiener & Hall, 2004). States hold schools and districts accountable for AYP toward the goal of having all students meet their state-defined proficient levels by the end of the school year 2013-2014 (Goertz & Duffy, 2003). In 2003, The Education Trust authored a report that compiled the results of state schools’ AYPs. The report revealed that the AYP system is doing what it was meant to do, that is identifying schools that need improvement, and closing achievement gaps (Henry, p. 1122).

If the school fails to "make AYP" in any sub-group categories in any year, it is deemed "in need of improvement," which subjects it to a cascade of sanctions and interventions that grow more stringent with each additional year of failure (Finn & Hess, 2004, p. 40). Fritzberg (2003) repeatedly lays emphasis on the complaint that standard
grade level tests are inappropriate for many special education students, and consequently schools are unfairly judged unsuccessful for reasons beyond their control. McCray (2002) underscores that there remains a need for research and practice to meet the educational and social needs of all students with disabilities.

School accountability systems are proliferating, and the stakes attached to the systems are increasing (Parkes & Stevens, 2003). As the results poured in after the first year of NCLBA, many schools and districts were left explaining to parents and the press how they had been well-rated by their state accountability systems yet labeled by federal officials as in need of improvement (Fritzberg, 2003, p. 37). It is highly unlikely that the emphasis on accountability will diminish any time soon (Urrieta, 2004).

To add to the perplexity, it is quite possible for an organization to be judged as legitimate by one set of elements (e.g., state accountability rules) but not by another (e.g., neighborhood/parental expectations) (Crowson, 2003). Blaeker (2003) stresses that there will always be standards and concomitant measurements of schools’ and students’ selected performances. This is part of what accountability means. Thus, the standards-based reformed movement that emerged in the 1990s began the shift in focus from education inputs to educational outcomes and from school districts and schools to schools (Goertz & Duffy, p. 6).

Least Restrictive Environment

Least restrictive environment (LRE), the legal term that spawned the educational strategies of mainstreaming and inclusion, brings together all elements of educational place and practice, it is the point in policy in which both general and special education intersect (Crockett, 2000). It emerged in an era in which persons with developmental
disabilities and their families were offered segregation or nothing at all (Taylor, 2004). Taylor (p. 220) goes on to point out, since its earliest conceptualization, the LRE principle has been defined operationally in terms of a continuum, an ordered sequence of placements that vary according to the degree of restrictiveness. According to Hitzing et al (as cited in Taylor, 2004):

A common way of representing the LRE continuum is a straight line running from the most to the least restrictive alternative or alternatively a hierarchical cascade of placement options. Most restrictive placements are also the most segregated and offer the most intensive services; least restrictive placements are the most integrated and independent and offer the least intensive services. The assumption is that every person with a developmental disability can be located somewhere along this continuum based on individual needs. If and when the person develops additional skills, he or she can ‘transition’ to a less restrictive placement. (p. 220)

The principle of LRE was extremely forward-looking for its time (Taylor, 2004). The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides access to services for students with disabilities, those services are provided through special education, a formal structure for tracking students according to ability (Doyle, 2003). IDEA requires that students with disabilities be provided a full educational opportunity through a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) and that promising practices, materials, and technology be employed (Crocken, 2000). We now know more about appropriate teaching of children and youth with disabilities than at any other time in our educational history (Mostert & Crockett, 2000).
Since the late 1960s and early 1970s, the concept of the LRE has guided the design of services for students with developmental disabilities. Nevertheless, because the term is used so differently in the field, it is difficult to arrive at a precise definition (Taylor, 2004).

Although Congress created the original document that defined some of the boundaries for IDEA, it relied on court decisions when drafting the document and allowed room for courts as well as federal, state, and local administrative agencies to define some aspects of the law. (Palley, 2003, p. 615)

As a legal concept and policy direction, LRE helped to create options and alternatives (Taylor, 2004). Crockett (p. 44) does however assert, “Without an understanding of the history of the plans for FAPE and LRE, educators risk creating structures that are illegal, untrustworthy, or both.”

Hamilton et al. (as cited in Palley, 2003) asserts in policy areas such as reproductive rights, school desegregation, and the inclusion of students with disabilities into public schools that the courts have been the original policy maker, and the other institutions of government have responded to their lead. Palley (2003, p. 615) explains that the IDEA states that all children are entitled to a FAPE in the LRE, but neither definition has been clearly delineated by the statute. Courts at all levels have made decisions that have helped to define and interpret many provisions of the act.

Katsiyannis and Herbst (2004, p. 106) maintain, “school districts must place students in the least restrictive environment as well as ensure that children with disabilities are educated with same-age peers to the maximum extent possible.” Mainstreaming involves changing the architecture and teacher training so children with
and without disabilities can get educated in the same schools where they simultaneously learn how to interact with each other (Gaad, 2004, p. 316). Vaah (as cited in Gaad, 2004), describes a new model he refers to as a new melting pot in which differently colored squares melt and merge to create new shapes and colors. In the study conducted by Cross, Traub, Hutter-Pishgahi, & Shelton (2004, p. 169-170), they cited four elements associated with the successful inclusion of children with severe disabilities:

1. The children made progress on their individualized outcomes or goals.
2. The children made gains in their personal development and in the acquisition of the knowledge and skills anticipated for all children.
3. The children were welcomed by the staff members and peers in each program and were accepted as full members of the group.
4. Parents were pleased with their child’s gains and that their children appeared comfortable and happy in the group setting.

The LRE principle defined the challenge in terms of creating less restrictive and more normalized and integrated environments and programs (Taylor, 2004, p. 227).

Katsiyannis and Herbst (2004) also underscore school districts obligations to provide a free, appropriate public education (FAPE), based on the child’s unique needs and not on the disability:

1. Districts must ensure the participation of the required individuals in the IEP (Individualized Education Program) meeting, particularly general education teachers.
2. Districts must ensure that students have access to the general educational curriculum.
3. Districts must ensure that related services are provided as needed to ensure that the child is benefiting from special education.

4. Districts must ensure that all students with disabilities participate in state- or district-wide assessments.

5. Districts should use validated instructional methodologies. Although school districts have relative supremacy in deciding instructional methodologies, those methodologies must be defensible (validated) and allow the students to receive FAPE (educational benefit) (p. 107-108).

While the data show that students with disabilities have improved access to the general curriculum, we do not have data that they are actually learning the general curriculum (Nisbet, 2004). According to Jorgensen et al (as cited in Nisbet, 2004), the field is struggling today to ensure that there is learning as well as access for students with disabilities.

Inclusive Education

Historically, special education was created as an organizational sub-system of regular education to normalize deviance (Bishop et al. as cited in Doyle, 2002).

The education of children and youth with disabilities prior to Pub. L. No. 94-142 (Education for All Handicapped Children’s Act of 1975) was largely uncoordinated and devoid of a united rational voice. Educational efforts were generally the purview of scattered professionals, parents, and advocates whose efforts were crucial in maintaining the visibility of children with disabilities (Mostert & Crockett, 2000, p. 138).
Students were removed and excluded from the mainstream, taught in secluded environments, and returned to mainstream upon normalization (Doyle, 2003). Lieberman (as cited in Crockett, 2000) defined for whom special education was initially intended and suggested that understanding viable placement alternatives comes from making distinctions between a disability and handicap: "Special education is for people with disabilities who are in danger of becoming handicapped if they do not receive special services. ... Special education is not for regular education curriculum failures; rather, special education is for individuals with disabilities" (p. 56).

Public Law NO. 94-142 radically transformed educational approaches and considerations for children and youth with disabilities and resulted in profound departures from previous educational configurations (Mostert & Crockett, 2000, p. 140). Nevertheless, Skrtic (as cited in Doyle, 2003, p. 139) argues that until deficiency and normalization are no longer the foundational ideology behind special education, inclusion of students with disabilities will not succeed. Zigler and Hall (as cited in Mostert & Crockett, 2000) in reviewing the history of instructional practices, suggested that specialized services and supports in special education have progressed in cycles that swing from optimism to despair, dominated by trends with an average life span of about a decade.

This law codified categories of exceptionality and processes related to the service of children and youth with disabilities in the public schools as well as relatively clear educational process expectations at the federal and state levels for these individuals (Mostert, et. al). Even so, there is a complexity to the concept of inclusive education (Shoedy, Rix, Nind, & Simmons, 2004). According to Kniveton (2004, p. 342):
Children seen as a problem to parents tend not to be thought suitable for inclusion, and those not seen as a problem tend to be prime candidates for inclusion. Those seen as candidates for inclusion tend not to be regarded as in need of resource allocation. The children who are not regarded as priorities for inclusion in mainstream classes are those seen to be in need of the most resources. It is imperative for the principal to carefully structure the instruction of special education students in a general education classroom. Otherwise, fragmented learning can result. This is because many special education students spend time in both general and special education classrooms (Jenkins, 2005). The study conducted by Martin (2004) found that the implementation of an inclusive education program lies within the scope of the principal’s responsibility. Yet, some principals are giving “lip service” to inclusion.

In the United States, the Office for Standards in Education found that the government’s revised inclusion framework has contributed to a growing, but uneven, appreciation of the benefits of inclusion (McMillan, 2004). That may be in part, according to Martin (2004), due to the absence of an effective district-monitoring program that would substantiate the implementation of an inclusive program at any school at any given time. Within the English education system the Office for Standards in Education formulated a set of inclusive principles with which to judge schools. They observe that an inclusive school is one in which “the teaching and learning, achievement, attitudes, and well-being of every person matter (Hodkinson, 2005).

Wiener and Hall (2004, p. 20) argue this by focusing attention on the goal of holding all students to the same high standards of achievement and bringing urgent attention to achievement gaps between different groups of students, NCLBA and AYP.
can be powerful tools in this process. Olson (as cited in Stanford and Reeves, 2005) states, assessment drive instruction, but assessments often lack the primary goal of guiding instructional decisions. For example, as you will find in many of the best schools in America, schools where standardized test scores are high, educators are using thematic interdisciplinary units to educate all students successfully (Jenkins, 2005). Inclusion affects structures, local school policies, attitudes and practices (Avissar, Reiter, & Leyser, 2003). Even so, assert Stanford and Reeves (2005, 18), “the two challenging aspects of inclusive education are knowing what to teach children with learning disabilities and knowing how to teach the material.”

Instructional Leadership

The implementation of NCLBA poses a number of ethical challenges, if not dilemmas, for the principalship. This is particularly evident in the administration and supervision of special education programs and services for children and youth with disabilities (Faircloth, 2004, p.38). Hargreaves et al (as cited in MacNeill, Cavanagh, & Silcox, n.d.) noted that significant school-wide change is impossible without effective school leadership and the educational change literature consistently points to principals as vital agents for creating the conditions in which school reform can succeed. Faircloth (p. 33) goes on to add:

As the school leader, the principal is responsible for the education of all students, including students with disabilities. In this role, the principal is expected not only to be responsive to the individual needs of the students within his or her school, but to respond to policy directives from the federal and state levels. (Faircloth, p. 33)
Specifically, the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act may force school principals to choose between two competing values, that of the individual child and that of the school at large (Faircloth, 2004).

Now more than ever, school principals must step into classrooms and provide the support, guidance, and feedback necessary to ensure quality teaching and enhanced student achievement (Duvall & Wise, 2004).

The stakes for effective practice are significant in special education for at least two important reasons. First, the issue of credibility and integrity are pivotal to what we are about in attaining status within the field and among parents and the general public. Second, children and youth with disabilities often face many more life challenges and educational difficulties than their nondisabled counterparts. (Mostert & Crockett, 2000, p. 138)

Faircloth (2004) asserts the belief that the successful education of children and youth with disabilities is dependent upon collaboration and coordination of special and general education. Sage & Burrello (as cited in Faircloth, 2004, p. 33) purport, critical to such effective collaboration and coordination is the building-level principal.

Educators are gradually redefining the role of the principal from instructional leader with a focus on teaching to leader of a professional community with a focus on learning (Dufour, 2002). According to the Institute for Educational Leadership (as cited in Fullan, 2005, p. 62) over the past decade, the role of principals has expanded to include a larger focus on teaching and learning, professional development, data-driven decision making, and accountability. Characterizing instructional leadership as the principal’s
central role has been a valuable first step in increasing student learning, but Fulan (2002) stresses that it does not go far enough.

Scholars conducting research during the 1980s in various areas including change implementation, school effectiveness, school improvement, and program improvement consistently found that the skillful leadership of school principals was a key contributing factor in explaining successful change, school improvement, or school effectiveness (Hallinger, 2003). Principals in effective schools are leaders in curriculum design and instruction, as well as facilitators of order and discipline. Principals need to teach! (Pallas, 2001). For example, in schools where teachers perceived their principals to be strong instructional leaders, student achievement scores in reading and mathematics exhibited significantly greater gains than in schools operated by principals who were perceived by teachers as average or weak instructional leaders (Andrews, Basom, & Basom, 2001).

Instructional leadership models emerged in the early 1980s from early research on effective schools (Hallinger, 2003). Edmonds et al. (as cited in Hallinger, 2003), asserts that the early body of research identified strong, directive leadership focused on curriculum and instruction from the principal as a characteristic of elementary schools that were effective at teaching children in poor urban communities.

By concentrating on teaching, the instructional leader of the past emphasized the inputs of the learning process. By concentrating on learning, today's school leaders shift both their own focus and that of the school community from inputs to outcomes and from intentions to results. (DuFour, 2002, p. 15)
In places where instructional leadership truly exists, it becomes an integral, almost invisible, part of how a school community works, lives, and learns together (King, 2002).

Lambert (2002) states, the days of the principal as the lone instructional leader are over. According to Elmore et al. (as cited in Lambert, 2002), it is no longer believed that one administrator can serve as the instructional leader for an entire school without the substantial participation of other educators. DuFour (2002, p. 13) succinctly states the following:

Teachers and students benefit when principals function as learning leaders rather than instructional leaders. When learning becomes the preoccupation of the school, when all the school’s educators examine the efforts and initiatives of the school through the lens of their impact on learning, the structure and culture of the school begin to change in substantive ways.

For that reason, when school districts decide that student achievement has to become its sole focus, school and district-level roles will be reconstructed to free up time for principals to be instructional leaders (Ovall & Wise, 2004).

In a study supported by the Brookings Institution, Chubb and Moe concluded that although student achievement is not affected by school resources or by state or local policy, achievement is influenced by the acts of school principals (Andrews, Bascom, & Jesse, 2001).

For a school to be truly effective the administrator needs to be broadly aware of and involved with the school’s vast array of activities, formal and informal. This necessarily implies that he/she needs to be in the classroom, and know what is being taught to the students (Palliniuk, 2001, p. 272).
As one principal cautions, "The more adept I became at solving problems, the weaker the school became. A principal who goes it alone or who dominates will find that the school becomes overly dependent on his or her leadership." (Kohm as cited in Lambert, 2002, p. 40).

There is no litmus test for the presence of instructional leadership, nor is there a definitive list of its characteristics or behaviors (King, 2002). According to Fullan (2003), the role of the principal as instructional leader has taken us only so far in the quest for continual school improvement. We must now raise our sights and focus on principals as leaders in a culture of change.

Principals as Change Agents

Educational issues are not new to rational agendas worldwide (Urieta, 2004). Inclusive education as a form of educational services offered to children with special education needs is an international phenomenon (Fierpoint & Forest as cited in Gaad, 2004).

Many data support the increase of included students with disabilities in general education classrooms in many countries. Such data cite the paramount need for general educators to become knowledgeable and skilled in modifying and adapting their curricula to meet the needs of students with disabilities. (Gaad, 2004, p. 318)

Starting from about the 1970s, a number of countries around the world have been developing and adopting a package of normative acts that serve to expand the educational opportunities of students with disabilities (Iarkaia-Smirnova & Lohakova, 2004). The focus of the movement to include students with disabilities in general education has
recently shifted from viewing inclusion as an innovation within special education towards viewing it within the broader context of school restructuring (Sebba et al. as cited in Avissar, Reiter, & Leyser, 2003).

Since certain strategies are more conducive to problem solving than others, principals need to enlarge their repertoire for effective management of problems (Law & Walker, 2005). Sergiovanni (as cited in Faircloth, p. 42) states:

The increased attention to accountability and results potentially creates tension and conflict for the school leader who may be held singularly responsible for improvement in student performance. What's more, in order to be successful, principals will be forced to adapt to the changing role of the principalship. Specifically, they will need to reshape the school to meet expectations for achievement. This, in itself, presents a dilemma for the principalship.

Despite the key role principal's play in instituting inclusive measures few empirical studies have been reported on mainstreaming and the school environment and school climate (Avissar, Reiter, & Leyser, 2003).

In a Hong Kong study conducted by Law & Walker (2005) five principal typologies were identified and examined to ascertain the pivotal role that values play in the process and how principals distinguish certain decisions as better than others amid the complexities of reform efforts in schools. The principal typologies are:

1. **Pacifists**—principals who most closely embrace the value cluster of pacifism, which includes values such as harmony, tolerance, submission and human favors. In practice, they strive to maintain amicable
relationships and peace with and between teachers, as well as with their superiors.

2. Progressive Mentors — principals who most closely embrace the value clusters associated with those of progression and mentoring. Progressive mentors supported extensive reforms and believed these could be successfully implemented through empowering teachers for professional growth.

3. Philosopher Mentors — principals who showed a strong inclination toward values that developed teachers and involved them in decision making. In practice, they were more obsessed with ideals and principles per se, while developing teachers to reach the visions they aspired to.

4. The Pragmatists — principals who embraced values that clung to the other end of the rationality dimension that included consequences, utilitarianism, situational ethics and market values. In practice, they focused more on items of immediate concern as they lacked strong long-term lofty educational principles.

5. The Eclectics — principals who could be viewed as having balanced values preferences. In practice, they do not adhere strongly to any one type of dominant values, apart from the professional and consideration value clusters which were common to all principal types. (69-73).

Of the five types of principals identified, the progressive mentors and the philosopher mentors appeared to be better geared for change, managed problems more smoothly and enjoyed relatively greater success in the reform context (Law & Walker, 2005).
According to Dimmock & Walker (as cited in Law & Walker, 2005) informing the knowledge of leadership values and problem solving in an East Asian context, thus stretching understanding beyond just Western theoretical paradigms and experiences which currently dominate the literature, is critical for change.

Lambert (2002) highlights steps principals in several countries including the United States, Canada, England and Australia have undertaken to build leadership capacity to bring about sustainable school improvement. They include:

1. Study Groups - read articles or books together and discuss the implications of the texts' ideas. Groups examine topics of interest and improvement plans often emerge from this process.

2. Action Research Teams - identify a compelling question of practice and conduct research to discover information that will shed new light on the question and lead to new actions.

3. Vertical Learning Communities - multiple grades in this model are linked together in a common community in which teacher leaders have the authority to work closely with students in instruction, curriculum design, discipline, and family relations. Teachers are assigned to students for multiple years. This 'looping' structure creates strong, long-term relationships. Teachers do intensive collaborative planning in this model.

4. Leadership Teams - are composed of representatives from various school departments (grade level and special education teachers and reading specialists) who are nominated and selected by the staff. The principal is also a team member. They analyze data and plan, advocate, monitor, and
implement the school improvement plan. The team keeps the plan alive and ensures that its components are systematically implemented. (p. 38-39)

Concurrently, the need for change is drawing attention outside of the school. This is highlighted in the study conducted by Deroui. Deroui's (2003) findings indicate that principals voiced a need to "get together and talk" regularly with one another to discuss issues, review material and explore new ideas to counter feelings of isolation and loneliness.

It has become necessary for principals to take time to reflect on their growth as leaders and managers (Mestry & Grobler, 2004). However, most theories of educational leadership ignore the principal's career stage and development, which have a great impact upon the principal's ability to lead and manage the school (Oplaska, 2004). Sobel (as cited in Faircloth, 2004, p. 43) maintains:

Educational leaders have the power and duty to influence the education of large numbers of students. Moreover, they work in organizations and complex political environments wherein competing values and beliefs must be moderated toward wise and just ends. Such enterprises cannot be conducted well by administrative technique and politics alone; they must be informed by a larger sense of purpose and guided by clearly delineated ethical considerations.

To that end, principals need, above all, to reflect on and grasp their own values. Once principals understand the impact of values in their management of problems, which is ultimately related to school effectiveness, and the way they manage problem reform becomes more manageable (Law & Walker, 2005).
Day (2000) identified evidence from and about each of the twelve principals in his study in England that suggests that all engaged in at least five kinds of reflection necessary for effective leadership in successful schools. The study highlights how good leadership in successful schools is closely connected to the commitment and capacity of principals to engage in reflective practice in the following ways (Day et al. as cited in Day, 2000):

1. the holistic, where the emphasis is upon vision and culture building;
2. the pedagogical (on and in action), in which they place emphasis upon staff acquiring, applying and monitoring teaching which achieves results allied to their vision (which includes but is greater than the demands made by policy implementation imperatives);
3. the interpersonal, where the focus is upon knowing and nurturing staff, children, and parents;
4. the strategic, where the focus is upon entrepreneurship, intelligence gathering and networking to secure some control of the future;
5. the intrapersonal, where the focus is upon self-knowledge and self-development and fulfillment (Day, 2000, p. 118).

Detuosti (2003) also found that there is little time for administrators to be reflective due to the fast paced and often demanding school environment. However, these same administrators recognize the value of change, but struggle when it comes to getting people to change. "Because principals, like teachers, pass through particular development phases (Day et al. as cited in Day, 2000, p. 116), as 'leading learners' in the school community (Barth et al. as cited in Day, 2000, p. 116), they too must engage in
reflective practices and revisit and review their own commitments, qualities and skills if they are to encourage others to do so."

Thurlow (as cited in Thurlow, Lazarus, Thompson, & Morse, 2005) asserts NCLBA also recognizes that students with significant cognitive disabilities may need alternate assessments to participate in formal accountability and assessment systems. NCLBA’s accountability engine is driven by two pistons: imposing systematic testing on schools and districts, and imposing forceful remedies on weak schools (with immediate relief for their pupils). If the two main pistons are not firing well, this complex engine won’t budge the massive barge that is American schooling—much less render it a more agile craft (Finn & Hess, 2004, p. 39).

Being a change agent includes both vision (driven by perceptions) and actions taken (Avissar, Reiter, & Leyser, 2003).

Fuller and Heck (as cited in Jason, 2001) conclude that principal leadership that makes a difference is aimed toward influencing internal school processes that are directly linked to student learning. These internal processes range from school policies and norms to the practices of teachers. Therefore, principals can lead as change agents by assuring that inclusive practices in schools reflect more fundamental types of change by overcoming attitudinal and knowledge barriers that can impact the success of the inclusion of special needs students in schools (Avissar, Reiter, & Leyser, 2003).

Summary

NCLBA is seeking to change the culture of education by prompting educators across the country to challenge long-held beliefs and practices and to do what is necessary to ensure that all students achieve at high levels (Wisner & Hall, 2004). The
role of the principal is pivotal in changing this culture. The process must begin within first with the principal. In order to effectively make the shift from an instructional leader to a leader of a professional learning community, the principal must become more self-reflective of his or her daily practices. The old adage, “Do as I say and not as I do,” will only yield the same results in the past because those in the principal’s charge will be less compelled to change their beliefs and practices without proper modeling from the leader.

Still, there are others who espouse the views of Orlish (2004) by clearly stating that NCLBA continually ignores schools’ rights and subjects them to double jeopardy by holding them accountable for the same so-called crimes of failure each year. Nevertheless, the principal as a change agent has the ability to narrow the achievement gap through the use of different professional learning opportunities for all professionals in the school. Engagement of faculty in meaningful activities that in turn inform the quality of instruction provided to all students is very important. Moreover, providing professional learning opportunities for colleagues to interact for the purpose of reviewing best practices in a discipline or examining the latest research on a relevant topic helps schools do what is right by each child — provide them with a school where learning for all is valued and supported.

The full impact of the law will not begin to reveal itself until the end of the 2013-2014 school year (Faircloth, 2004). However, additional gains can be made for all students and students with disabilities in particular through the process of informing the delivery of instruction. The principal must ensure that teachers not only know what to teach but more importantly how to teach the material so that each student fully benefits from the educational experience. One should note that this legislation is both
evolutionary and revolutionary. That helps us to understand why it inspires both accolades and catcalls (Fine & Hest, 2004, p. 36).

Both NCLBA and IDEA recognize a need for the appropriate use of instructional and assessment accommodations to enable some students with disabilities to access large-scale tests (Thurlow et al., 2005). Therefore, the principal must ensure that students with disabilities (i) have access to the general education curriculum and (ii) while in that environment, students are learning what they need to learn to become successful students. According to Olson (as cited in Fancloath, 2004) we do know that the preliminary data indicate that large gaps exist between the performance of students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers. There is much work to be done to narrow this gap. However, who is better to lead the charge than the principal? There is no one more capable of ensuring that students with disabilities are supported in this endeavor than the principal and we need to take advantage of that fact by insisting on change in the way that we educate all of our students.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A qualitative research design was used to address the research question. More specifically, the standardized open-ended interview approach is the basis for the design. This approach required carefully and completely structuring each question before the interview. (Patton, 2002). A “jury of experts” reviewed the content of the interview questions to determine their validity. The use of a consistent procedure produces reliability. Using qualitative interviews, researchers delve into important issues. “We interview to find out what is in and on someone else’s mind, to gather their stories,” (Patton, 2002, p. 341). Similarly, decision makers use the results of qualitative interviewing studies to shed new light on old problems (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).

Participants

The elementary principals interviewed in this study all work in public schools in the state of New Jersey. The total number of elementary schools testing 4th grade students was 1,353. Out of this total, only 16 elementary schools had a measurable special education population of 35 or more which is the benchmark number as set by the New Jersey Department of Education. The ten participants of this study represented the total population of elementary school principals whose schools made AYP in the subgroup of students with disabilities in the 2003-2004 academic school year. The criteria for selection were: 1) elementary schools with a population of 35 or more special
education students who made AYP in Language Arts, and/or 2) elementary schools with a population of 35 or more special education students who made AYP in Mathematics. This data consists of the latest available results at the time of this study.

**Instrument**

The instrument for this study is contained in Appendix C. It contains 12 questions designed by the researcher. "The quality of the information obtained during an interview is largely dependent on the interviewer," (Patton, 341). "Interviewers often try to learn about a narrow range of topics in detail. The depth, detail, and richness sought in interviews, called thick description, are rooted in the interviewees' first-hand experiences and form the material that researchers gather and synthesize," (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 13).

**Data Collection Procedures**

The schools were identified from the New Jersey Department of Education’s Office of Title I Program Planning and Accountability website, (Retrieved August 30, 2005, p. 1), where the “Final Adequate Yearly Progress Status Under No Child Left Behind Accountability Requirements for 2004” are made available. This website identified each elementary school with a subgroup of 35 or more “Students with Disabilities” who made AYP in the benchmark target areas of language arts and mathematics, where indicated with a “yes” in either benchmark category.

Permission to conduct this study and to contact each principal was granted by the superintendent of schools in each of the ten participants respective school districts. Each of the ten participants was provided by the researcher with a brief description of the study
and its purpose, a request for voluntary participation, and the researcher’s affiliation with Seton Hall University.

The researcher has been an elementary principal for six years. The researcher has over ten years of experience in education. The researcher has professional experience working with students with disabilities.

A Letter of Solicitation (Appendix A) was forwarded to the school of each participant. Enclosed with the Letter of Solicitation was an Informed Consent Form (Appendix B). Potential subjects were given a chance to ask questions about the study and consider their participation in the study. Subjects who willingly agreed to participate signed and returned the informed consent form to the researcher.

Nine of the ten subjects agreed to participate in the study. Additional attempts were made to contact the remaining subject within the protocols approved by the Institutional Review Board. The subject’s secretary called the researcher on the subject’s behalf to decline participation in the study.

Once the subjects were recruited, the researcher contacted the subjects by phone to schedule an interview time and to inform them that they may withdraw at any time without a penalty. The interview took place at a time that was convenient for each principal. The preferred method of interviewing for the majority of the participants was a telephone interview.

Rubin & Rubin (2005) assert that to ensure accuracy, the entire interview is recorded one way or another. The use of a recording device enabled the researcher to “capture how those being interviewed view their world, to learn their terminology and judgments, and to capture the complexities of their individual perceptions and
experiences," (Patton, p. 348). This use of a recording device for the purpose of ensuring the accuracy of the participant's views was explained to the participants. The subjects were also advised that only the researcher will transcribe the audiotape of each interview. All data would then be combined and analyzed to find patterns in the responses.

The introduction to the interview and a list of the 12 interview questions (Appendix C) acted as a guide for the structured interview. The researcher used a standardized open-ended interview format, with one final question ("What other information do you think I need to know in order to better understand how your school helps students with disabilities succeed?") allowing the interviewee to add any additional comments and to have the final word.

The interview method facilitated interviewing participants for a fixed time of approximately one hour. The participants were assured confidentiality, but could not be guaranteed anonymity although individual names or schools will not be used in the reporting of the data. In addition, participants were advised that the data will be held in a locked file cabinet in the researcher's home for no less than three years. After that time, the data will be shredded.

An immediate post interview review detailing observations about the interview was conducted by the researcher. The interviewer examined the interview notes to make sure there were no areas of ambiguity. If there were areas that needed additional clarification, the interviewer contacted the interviewee via telephone. The post-interview review is a critical time for reflection and elaboration, and establishes the context for making sense of the interview later (Patton, 2002).
Data Analysis Procedures

Content analysis is used to refer to any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that identifies core meanings, patterns, and themes (Patton, 2002). The initial step for the researcher was to transcribe the interviews. Then the researcher read through all of the transcripts to get a general idea of the responses from the participants. Next the researcher began to look for themes or statements that repeated throughout the interview process by grouping the data by common features. The researcher used a hybrid model, partway between the responsive interviewing formal coding schema and grounded theory models, where you need not code every passage or term but select only those concepts and themes that are most closely related to your research question (Rubin & Rubin, p. 223).

The researcher made a list of all topics or factors that surfaced in the review of the transcripts of the interviews that the interviewees used to help explain students with disabilities achieving AYP under NCLBA. The researcher then gave each factor a code. The researcher then went back to the data and wrote the code that represents a particular factor next to the appropriate segment(s) of the text. The researcher then grouped or clustered the factors into categories and gave each category of factors a name/abbreviation. The researcher then assembled together the responses belonging to each category of factors and performed a preliminary analysis. "Analysis entails classifying, comparing, weighing and combining material from the interviews to extract the meaning and implications, to reveal patterns, or to stitch together descriptions of events into a coherent narrative," (Rubin & Rubin, p. 201). Matrices (see Figures 4 through 13) were then developed to detect patterns in the coded data from the nine
respondents delineated by interview questions. Therefore, interview questions two to
twelve each have a matrix in Appendix D.

The raw data, the topics or factors that initially emerged, and the codes for the
categories of those factors were entered into a qualitative software program that allows
for coding into data units. Data units are blocks of information that are examined
together (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The raw data including the transcribed interviews, the
topics or factors, and coded categories can be found in Appendix E. Text from the
individual data codes was merged to allow review of the textual evidence of each
category or theme. The software program assisted the researcher in quantifying the
number of similar responses among the subjects, and in observing the patterns that
existed in the responses. The data was then summarized in narrative form, using the
principals’ own words to illustrate any themes, in order to describe the factors that help
students with disabilities achieve AYP under NCLBA.

Data analysis is the process of moving from raw interviews to evidence-based
interpretations that are the foundation for published reports (Rubin & Rubin, 2005).
Toward that end, after completing the first analysis, the researcher set aside the data and
the narrative. The researcher returned to it, and looked again at the themes, rereading the
transcripts for additional support and evidence of those themes.
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Overview

This chapter presents the findings of the study designed to explore the attitudes and practices of New Jersey elementary principals toward students with disabilities who achieved AYP under NCLBA on the NJ ASAP exam. The results include an analysis of the participants’ answers to structured interview questions. The presentation of the data is organized around the main research question and the three subsidiary questions. The interview questions and resulting presentation of the data revolve around a hybrid model, partway between the responsive interviewing formal coding schema and grounded theory models.

The first set of codes was derived from the structured interview questions that can be found in Appendix C. As shown in Table 1, sixty codes emerged to categorize the data into organized units. The codes are listed in alphabetical order. The codes were subdivided into three groupings based upon the number of respondents. Figure 1 contains the number of respondents for each code. Codes with a count of five or more respondents, representing the majority of the respondents, are grouped as primary factors prioritizing the data in the hierarchy order of codes. Codes with a count of two to four respondents are grouped as secondary factors and codes with a count of one respondent are grouped as tertiary factors. The percentage of codes per factor grouping is depicted in
Figure 2. The number of responses per code from the nine respondents is shown in Figure 3.
<table>
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Table 1: Data Entry Table
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Figure 3. Number of Responses per Code
Presentation of Data

The presentation is organized to present the data in a structured manner to answer the main research question: What factors do New Jersey elementary school principals describe that help to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP under NCLBA? The presentation is organized to present the data in a manner that also addresses the three subsidiary questions: (i) how elementary principals describe their attitudes toward inclusion, (ii) what factors elementary principals identified as contributing to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam, and (iii) how the elementary principal supports students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam. Furthermore, Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 displays the relationship between the research questions and the interview questions, including all data codes.

Matrices were created as themes emerged connecting data codes (see Figures 4 through 13). The ten matrices appear in the summary of the chapter and inform the overview provided by the researcher. Moreover, the matrices begin the framework for the conclusion and recommendations that will appear in Chapter 5. Interview questions 1 and 6 do not have a matrix due to the nature of the responses. More specifically, interview question 1 served to provide background information which was not the primary focus of this study. Interview question 6 yielded one data code; thus, there are no additional data codes to examine for connecting themes.
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<td>10) Modifications – (7)</td>
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Table 4

Subsidiary Research Question 2: Correlating Factors

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| 7) Child Study Team (9) |

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### Interview Questions

- 8
- 10
- 9
Main Research Question:
What factors do NJ elementary school principals describe that help to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP under NCLBA?

Instructional Practices

Instructional Practice is a primary factor described by seven respondents that include mandating students in basic skills to attend an after school program. "A parent can get them out of it by writing a letter but most of the parents want them to stay after school," reported a respondent. This instructional practice is an outgrowth of the Superintendent's philosophy that states, "Students belong in the classroom as much as possible because if you pull them out they're missing something and they're already behind." However, another respondent cited the benefits of "Flex Grouping" students throughout the day for a particular writing skill such as editing. Students, special education as well as general education students struggling with this skill, are pulled out by the in-class support teacher, taken to his or her classroom with their writing piece and then brought back to the regular education classroom for the author's chair. This practice can be applied in reading, writing, and math. The respondent concludes the description of this practice by stating, "All of those types of strategies help in pulling up the literacy scores."

Another theme that emerged as an instructional practice is the delivery of instruction by teachers to students. This includes the use of a "Problem of the Day" geared toward the instructional level of the students to ensure that they are all doing what they need to do. "So, that's where the teacher will focus all of their learning, all of her teaching so that the child is not exposed to only one size fits all teaching," offered one
respondent. It also includes the review of lesson plans examining, "The daily kind of a math problem that will respond to the types of questions that are on the test. You know the open-ended questions where they have to explain and go through that as well as the reading and writing experiences." In addition to specific materials being utilized in the classroom, an increase in the time of the delivery of instruction was also discussed by respondents. For example, "Special education students receive approximately 60 minutes of math every day -- whole class right in there with general education and then concentrated small group instruction. So, I think that led to higher scores. Plus, the biggest element is that we all are on the same wavelength with the big ideas in math and literacy but how we deliver it varies."

Although some respondents focus on the delivery of instruction, one respondent focused on "Providing meaningful and authentic work so students become volunteers in their learning process and that's been a little bit of a shift with our staff where we tell them we're not talking about your delivery of instruction. We're talking about the work that you're expecting children to do." Overall, is the work something that students want to do? This is WOW, "Working on the Work," and it has been ongoing for years in this respondent's school. This theme evolves with the use of space repetition which is described as, "Over time that if I really want you to be able to write a topic sentence, I don't give up on doing that after I teach it in September but that I continually find ways to re-enforce it over the course of the year." A phrase, killing two birds with one stone, was compared to stopping and treading water when a respondent tells teachers as much as possible when you can embed the strategies into the curriculum. With these strategies teachers aren't so quick to say, "Ooh, I can't reach this kid. He needs to go be assessed"
by the team. Now teachers are looking at what can they do in the classroom before they jump to the gun and refer the kid to child study."

Another theme that emerged within instructional practices is the role of the principal in the modeling of lessons every now and then for faculty as well as the coordinated efforts of teachers. An example is, "I made all of special education teachers teach writing in the regular classroom. Now that was a feat because nobody wanted to do it. But it makes a difference in the level of writing, and I have seen that."

Overall, Instructional Practices help to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP with a combination of the utilization of the curriculum to teach needed skills, the amount of time spent on a subject, the location of the delivery of instruction, and learning activities that students become excited about because they want to do them. The overarching phrase to describe these themes is differentiation which was noted by one respondent. "Most of the strategies that work for the special needs population through differentiation also help some of the at-risk borderline regular education children as well." Therefore, targeting the special education population will help all children, particularly those at-risk but not receiving special education services.

Assessment of Students

Assessment of Students is a secondary factor which is a part of instructional Practices and associated with Test Preparation and Modifications. The respondents describe the importance of the data yielded from student assessments. This is an area that is described as an ongoing process to gauge and measure the level of student achievement of various assessment tools. For example, "The department leaders [in one school] take the information from Edu-Test and work as a group to see where the student weaknesses
may be and then develop an action plan based on that analysis. So, that action plan is put into effect for the next trimester before the next benchmark assessment." Another assessment tool in Diblees which is helping to identify the needs of all students, even students with special needs. The use of "I-KNOWS" which is an electronic assessment for language arts, reading, and math gives the teacher immediate feedback. While the assessment schedule varies between schools, the primary goal is to try to predict how students are going to perform on the New Jersey ASK. Another goal is to look at individual student’s strengths and weaknesses identified through an assessment of their class work for the purpose of making changes to improve their academic achievement. Discussions between teachers and administrators when focused on Assessment of Students and Student Work yield positive change in student’s academic experience.

**Student Characteristics**

Student Characteristics described by two respondents' falls within the secondary tier of factors and is a part of Instrucional Practices. When reflecting on the students who made AYP a respondent commented, "By the luck of the draw, I hate to say this but simply by the luck of the draw sometimes you have a group of kids that just are less disabled and more, have more ability to achieve." This is supported by another respondent who states, "What we've realized is all children learn differently on different days in different ways and it doesn't matter if they're special education classification or they're regular education students." So, any given year a special education population can achieve AYP or not. Students come to school at different levels. Therefore, the use of proven instructional practices is very important because it may make the difference in student achievement.
Grants

Grants are a secondary factor described by four respondents as having influenced the instructional practices of students with disabilities. The primary theme that emerged was the enhancement of technology through grants. This ranges from receiving laptops to use with projection units tied into a wireless network to grants garnered by a district-wide grant writer for the enhancement of technology into classrooms. "I probably have 15 classes that actually have plasma screens in the classrooms. Yes, I know, it's great. They have plasma, they have scanners, they have digital cameras and they're trained monthly on how to infuse technology into literacy, which is what the grant is about," shared one respondent.

A second theme that emerged was the provision of interventions to reduce or eliminate social promotion in one school. Tutoring was a factor discussed and explained by one respondent, as an offering provided as a result of being a recipient of a grant. "This grant targeted students who were partially proficient on the ASK test, so we're definitely stepping up our intervention." In addition, "those students are eligible for a summer program in August that ran for five weeks every day, two and a half hours a day and tutoring throughout the school year on a 1:2 ratio." Also, to hire specialized people who would actually work with the in-class support teachers to make sure that the models that they are using are useful and adaptable and functional in another school. This additional component greatly aided schools in supplementing their instructional practices to help explain what factors describe students with disabilities achieving AYP. Grants were pursued from various entities including the State of New Jersey, the PTA, and through district personnel hired to garner grants from other sources.
Principal Expectations

Principal Expectations are a primary factor described by seven respondents and have a broad range of application from the teacher to the student to principal’s role in helping students with disabilities achieve AYP. The first theme that emerged was the principal’s belief in setting high expectations for everyone. An example of high expectations for students was reflected by one respondent, “First of all, I have the expectation with everybody – is everybody can pass. No, I – I truly believe everybody can pass this test. It’s not going to be easy, but everybody can pass the test and what we need to do is look at – for those, especially, some of the lower functioning children that are going to be forced to take the test.” Another respondent shared, “I believe they belong in the community. I believe that it’s our job to differentiate naturally and to make them believe that they can achieve but just in a different way.” This statement embodies an expectation for all professionals in the learning community as another respondent shares, “We know that we are under a microscope, in terms of what we need to deliver, and we deliver it!”

The second theme that emerged was teacher accountability. “I don’t care whether it’s a self-contained class or if you have resource students, everyday they have to learn to solve a problem.” This translates into teachers being held accountable for the level of student engagement in the learning environment, particularly students with disabilities.

“All teachers are responsible for our special education students,” shared one respondent. “So, if you’re an in-class support [teacher], just because Trudy’s in that in-class support [class] and I’m special ed. doesn’t mean the regular ed. teacher’s not as equally responsible for my achievement and that’s I think what makes it work.” Moreover, a
respondent shared, “All writing is taught collaboratively in this building. I don’t care if you’re basic skills or special ed., you co-teach writing.” In addition to working with students, another respondent described principal expectations in terms of teacher accountability in the form of submitting articles for the newsletter. “They submit information about clubs, curriculum, specialists, any special activities, upcoming events, you know, things like that. It’s quite lengthy.”

The final theme that emerged was an expectation for an understanding of student’s learning styles. “I think the basic philosophy of understanding that these kids have different learning styles and that we recognize these learning styles through the specific programs has really, really helped,” to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP. Furthermore, making sure that all special education children are included in the general population raises their expectations of themselves. “If you set the expectations high enough, teachers will work towards that goal just as kids will.” As one respondents shared, “So my first challenge was to get them to understand that they have a right to be in the writing community even though they may not move at the same pace in a writing piece.” Sharing with teachers that, “I have seen my gifted children struggle greatly and my special needs students just fly by them where they even have to go to them for help. It’s been phenomenal moments that I thought thank you for just letting me see this minute.” As one respondent shared, “You need that in a learning community: to know that you’re very bright but only in some areas and in some areas I’m brighter than you. It’s just a different gift.” Therefore, the expectations of principal, teachers, and students for high levels of achievement help to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP.
Test Preparation

Test Preparation is another primary factor described by six respondents as a necessary practice to ensure students with disabilities are prepared to achieve AYP on the NJASK exam. The first theme that emerged focused on what test preparation looked like. "Let’s show them the format, how is the test set up, how to go about reading the questions. So they can see how to take the test and what’s the format and teach them how to read longer passages and when they see a math problem, how to use the calculator when it’s appropriate. We’re showing them the set-up of New Jersey ASK.” In addition, to familiarizing the students with the test format and test prep books, “another program that the teachers use in the classroom is called Study Island. It’s an online resource where the children can go on a computer with teacher guidance and practice test-taking skills and strategies. Its standards based.” Special education teachers have been trained and the children may work on this in school or at home. More specifically, “They do an assessment on the computer and the computer actually generates math and language arts questions that are connected to what the NJASK would be like and also what the curriculum should prepare them to do.” Overall, “we work with special ed. kids to reduce test anxiety, to try to make the experience less stressful for them.”

The second theme that emerged focused on when test preparation took place. “We have an after school program all the time, but the test prep is a month before the test. It’s a volunteer program where the children stay Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays,” shared one respondent. This connects with focusing on why test preparation is organized in this fashion. “What we did was we don’t have basic skills during the day anymore. So anybody that needs extra help, it’s after school.” The class size is a maximum of 10
students, "cause we have a lot of children whose parents want them involved in the test prep class." This permits students who need help to not miss any of the general education curricula in order to better prepare for the NJASK exam.

The third theme that emerged focused on who informed test preparation materials and/or practices. "The Director of Special Services, every month, stressed strategies to help make kids successful on the test." In addition, "For the test prep we actually created the curriculum, the two supervisors and the two principals. We actually sat down and figured out what types of things, based on our pre- and post-test that we're doing need to be focused on in terms of making sure that it's covered before the test." Administrative input in guiding the pathway for test preparation helps to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP. The final theme that emerged focused on the parent connection to test preparation. Whether it is parents getting a printout of their child's pre-test results to see how their child is doing or volunteering to bring snacks in during testing, parents play a role in their child's readiness for the NJASK exam.

Test Preparation Materials

Test Preparation Materials arose as a secondary factor described by four respondents. This factor focused on gauging students' academic strengths and weaknesses. The purchased programs are described as follows: "The Global Math and the Global Writing, it's wonderful. You have the child do a writing piece. You send it out. They have two or three people look at it and score it based on the rubric. Then they send you back the writing and the rubric's scores." "The Rally materials look identical to the format of the test. So I highly recommend those and it comes in three different versions. So, that month before the test, they're gonna use the third version after school,
again. Mostly reviewing the format [of the test], 'cause that's what they're unfamiliar with.' "Strategies for Success is what we purchased. They're not perishable. They're not consumable. They cost twelve bucks apiece. I'd rather buy a couple reams of paper. They each have a math and language arts literacy test prep book that they will use once every other week for a class period." "What we do is a problem of the week, which is something to do with the content standards or some type of problem that's similar that they'll see on New Jersey ASK." There is a wide range of variety in the test preparation materials utilized by the respondents.

The second theme that emerged is the frequency of use of test preparation materials. "We get several tests throughout the year to kind of see how the children are—to predict how they're going to do on New Jersey ASK. So we give a writing test, a math test, and a reading test in September, November, February, and at the end of the year." With this frequency of testing, the respondent highlighted the quick response time as the writing and math tests are online and only the reading test is sent out. When the scores return, the respondent described a follow-up meeting with teachers to analyze the data and plan appropriate instruction to meet the needs of the students. Other test preparation materials were described as being utilized from as early as January to only a few weeks before the NIASK exam. Also, School Spirit Activities was discussed by one respondent as a positive motivational tool utilized the week before the NIASK to get students excited about the test and at the same time reduce test anxiety. Nevertheless, use of test preparation materials in advance of the NIASK was identified as a factor by elementary principals to help explain students with disabilities achieving AYP.
Interventions

Interventions is a primary factor described by five respondents that highlights how students are identified and prepared to strengthen their academic skills to achieve AYP under NCLB-A. This theme focused on the combination of convening professionals with programmatic changes to meet a child's need. "This may take place in an I&R&S (Intervention & Referral Services) meeting where I think we have done everything because my program in Balanced Literacy truly lends itself to children who learn differently," shared one respondent. Another respondent shared, "We'll meet with our Dibbles results and during one of the common planning times and without using names, talk about a child and then toss to the group how can this teacher help this child. What can they do?" This respondent likened this experience to that of a PAC or I&R&S meeting.

Yet another respondent shared,

"This year we identified students and we have actually five different groups that we're running... working on developing writing skills. We have groups where two teachers meet with about 25 kids after school. My LDTC is meeting with two groups of 3rd graders over lunch and recess one day a week, working on developing their writing and how to respond to picture prompts. Then I have a group that I'm working with of about 12 kids over lunch and recess one day a week, working on developing their writing and how to respond to picture prompts and things like that."

In summary, a respondent explained, "I think the Study Island, teachers being trained in Schools Attuned, hiring good staff, the workshops, the communication, the professional
relationships we have, the relationships with parents all played a role in achieving AYP that year." This coupled with the one respondent sharing the benefits of receiving a grant for a summer program in August that ran for five weeks every day, two and a half hours a day and included tutoring throughout the school year on a one to two ratio help to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP under NCLBA.

Modifications:

A Modification is a primary factor described by seven of the respondents to explain how students' needs are met. This includes two themes that emerged. The first theme was the use of modifications for testing. "We did everything we could to provide all of these accommodations for testing where if it was legal we did it," typifies the belief of several respondents.

"Our test coordinator met with the special education teachers to further expand areas that we could modify. Like sometimes the children in math use charts and so they read that to say that if they use it every day then they can use it. If it's an aid that they can use every day, you know, then it's an aid that they can use during testing. So they really studied hard, specifically for the special ed. teachers and students, what areas could we make that testing environment the optimum."

General test modifications shared by respondents included, "the small group, the extended time, making sure that they are in a good testing environment, having breaks for them, and teachers reread the directions to them or re-explain the directions to them."

Another example of test modifications included the use of scribes, "A scribe would be someone who -- if we had someone whose thinking was real good but he was unable to
put pen to paper that person would write the essay for example in the kid's words."

Overall, "they are just unable to do the same thing but because the modifications, I think they are achieving but they couldn't if they took the test like everyone else."

The second theme is teacher interaction for the purpose of informing curricula modifications. "We meet with teachers regularly and talk about inclusive practices and how to make modifications and adaptations for the students," characterizes the general response. "So that by modifying and adapting and using positive reinforcement with the kids, they really could achieve anything under the right circumstances," shared a respondent. "We teach the curriculum. They receive some modifications but they're receiving the same program." Therefore, whether it's modifications for students in the classroom or on a test, teacher involvement in both areas is an essential effort that helps explain students with disabilities achieving AYP.

**Empowerment of Teachers**

Empowerment of Teachers is predicated upon teacher involvement. This factor was described by a majority of respondents who valued the educational direction that the teachers' provided in curricula areas as well as through instructional practices. The theme that emerged is one of ownership through a leadership role in the educational process for students through the incorporation of teacher ideas and teacher buy-in. "Last faculty meeting, the library media specialist took ownership—and she's a first-year librarian, too. She and a representative from World Book presented on how to use the Internet for research skills." In addition teachers serve on district-wide committees to inform curricula. However, they offer more than their own opinions. As one respondent shared, "The grade-level teacher would have a committee meeting with everybody at
their grade level on their own time and show them what they’re doing and get their buy-in, and then they come back as a committee to finalize it.” So, teachers serve as liaisons between groups to maximize dialogue and infuse various viewpoints into a discussion to inform a decision.

Support from the principal according to respondents makes a difference in the success of teacher efforts. An example is,

I have a group of teachers who said, “Can we burn one of our Professional Days and just spend the entire day reviewing our new anthology, designing lessons, writing down activities we want to do, laying out a scope and sequence?” I said, “You bet your ass, you can.” Then my boss said, “No.” That just was not going to fly. So I said, “How about I just take all four of their classes for the day and I’ll do a lecture hall and I’ll free them up and do nothing.” He said, “Well, what if a kid gets hurt.” I said, “That’s why I want you to approve the Professional Day.” So he did.

As one respondent shared, “Empowering them to become responsible for partially a leadership role I think had really provided them with the opportunity to feel more ownership of the whole process and I think it’s been becoming more successful for us at a school.” Thus, this helps to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP.

Internal Organization

Internal Organization (teams/committees) emerged as a secondary factor described by three respondents. Highlighted were the value of input from different perspectives including various departments and teachers on various grade levels. The establishment of Instructional Management Teams (IMT) includes representation from
one representative per grade level as well as Bilingual, ESL, and Special Education. "They become instructional leaders," shared the respondent. "We're trying to switch or shift the emphasis from the administration to the educators because they're the ones in the trenches and they're the ones that see day in and day out what's going on in the classroom." "We have what's called "common planning time" (CPT) once a week and I meet with the teachers," shared a different respondent. "We also have team leaders on each grade level. I have two team leaders per grade and a team leader that represents special education, a team leader that represents specialists, and a team leader that represents our intervention program." The role of the team leaders as described by the respondent is, "they plan agendas. They do minutes. They do their budget. They do a lot of work and then we meet before school starts and they come in on their own. They don't get really paid for that." Furthermore, "we'll spend like a whole day or two before school starts planning out our goals for the school year." This helps to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP under NCLBA.

An additional secondary factor that emerged when respondents were asked to share any additional comments not discussed previously in the interview, perceptions of students emerged. Four respondents described the importance of perceptions making it a secondary factor describing their attitudes toward inclusion. The first perception highlighted was the belief that all children can learn. "If you believe kids can learn, they'll learn," stated one respondent. Echoing this, another respondent stated, "All children will learn. They just do differently at different times in different ways and different days." So, the perception that students can learn affects their attitudes toward inclusion. A second theme that emerged under perceptions focuses on the schools
themselves. One respondent stated, “A lot of parents have moved here because of the special education programs that the district provides.” Another respondent affirmed this response by sharing, “We are called ‘lighthouse district’ because our special services are so good. They just keep moving, and they’re killing our budget. So if they were 10% of the population, they were 25% of the budget and the state is not helping us because of our DFG (district factor group).

Teacher Feedback

A majority of the respondents also described the importance of teacher feedback in decision-making efforts to improve the quality of education that all students receive. Teacher feedback is a primary factor that has two themes: teacher to principal feedback and principal to teacher feedback. The teacher to principal feedback informs assessment of students and influences principal involvement with students within the classroom. Students benefit when lines of communication are open and teachers feel comfortable voicing their opinions on a topic related to student instruction.

Moreover, principal to teacher feedback informs the placement of students in the in-class support model and redirects teachers’ efforts to provide better instruction for students. Both examples are outgrowths of seizing opportunities to push students beyond conventional expectations and providing the guidance to enhance their overall educational experience. After reviewing student answers to a “Problem of the Day” question, a respondent said to a teacher, “I don’t think your response to them makes them understand what they’re doing and not doing.”

Furthermore, a 5 x 5 walk-through, a method of supervision where five classrooms are visited a day for five minutes each and there is either a general type of
walk-through where specific items related to instruction or classroom management are observed was touted as very successful by one respondent. A checklist may be used and provided to the teacher or a handwritten note is placed in their mailbox to provide feedback of the walk-through. This practice also helps to keep the principal focused while walking around and to pinpoint the feedback. Two-way communication in the form of feedback as described by six respondents helps to explain why students with disabilities achieved AYP under NCLBA in these schools.

Results with Teachers

The secondary factor “results with teachers” is associated with principal-teacher feedback as principals’ work to ensure that teachers have good teaching practices. For example, one respondent uses the articulation period, which is a designated teacher preparation period for meetings, to review their students’ writing scores with them. The principal also provided them with some ideas on how to model, what kind of things to model, and how to go about implementation. This weekly meeting may be facilitated by the principal or the content area supervisor. This factor helps to explain how students with disabilities make progress toward achieving AYP in their preparation phase prior to the administration of the NJASK exam as teachers are refining their instructional practices to better meet the needs of students.

PTA/PTO/HSA

Whether it is called a PTA (Parent Teacher Association), a PTO (Parent Teacher Organization), or a HSA (Home School Association), assistance offered by parents to schools supported endeavors to benefit all students. The support ranges from grant opportunities made available to teachers for individual projects to raising money for
special equipment and supplies. The first theme that emerged was the close working relationship with the school as evidenced by the targeted activities and materials provided. "They do assemblies including cultural arts activities throughout the year. In addition, they provide support materials such as a new set of books for core literature or Judy Clocks." What the parent organization provides to the schools in terms of meeting its needs aids the elementary principal in supporting students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

The second theme that emerged was the offering of grants for different things in the school. The teachers or principal may apply for a grant for a project, a special program or if they are developing something to benefit the students. The third theme that emerged was the willingness of the parent organization to fund special projects such as prizes for a math carnival. Another example was the establishment of a school store where a PTA bought all of the supplies that teachers wanted kids to have. "This was set up right in the school for parents to come to the school in lieu of going to Staples and the Wal-Mart because they hated that," shared the respondent. The PTA was told that the six or so kids on free and reduced lunch might not be able to afford to buy all these things and they put together a whole backpack of school supplies for those kids. Overall, an active parent organization enhances the quality of education provided to all students and contributes to the elementary principal being able to support students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

Special Education PTA

In stark contrast to the views of the general parent organization, two respondents discussed the existence of a Special Education PTA making it a secondary factor. One
respondent described this organization as separate a little bit and believed that their existence defeats their purpose. "They do functions, do fundraisers, and belong to the general PTA too. We're supposed to be all together as one and I think their existence does separate us," the respondent added. Conversely, the other respondent described the PTA specifically devoted to special needs kids as very active. They have their own monthly meetings. They offer parents workshops at night. The tone of this respondent was more tolerant of their existence and purpose. "They support the school with an After School Social Skills Program where they pay one of the staff members to have bi-monthly interactions groups with kids who don't fit in real well - both classified and unclassified." Although this organization is not present in every school, this quote reflects the impact their presence can have in the educational environment, especially for students with disabilities. "If you don't do it right, they let you know. They're not critical. But it's the way, you know, kids behave better when dad's watch'n."

Parent Support

Parental support is not limited to the PTA/PTO/HSA organizations in each elementary school. Parents make themselves available to participate in numerous areas in the school, including volunteering in general and holding special drawings to provide assistance such as copy services to a lucky teacher or snacks during testing time. "Most parents are very good," remarked one respondent. "Of all the parents that we work with most go along with the program and will support what we're trying to do. If they know that you care and you're there for their kid, they're gonna support you." So, parental support aides not only the students but the staff. Also note that the special education
parents are also ready and willing to serve, but tend to work within the scope of the general education parents role when assisting students and staff members.

Parent Contact

Parent Contact is a primary factor associated with Parent Support. This is a vital component in the education of special education children in particular and general education students in general. Parents are contacted to meet with teachers before school starts in one school while in another “Parent Nights” are held. Individual meetings occur when parents are invited to attend an I&RS (Intervention & Referral Services) meeting where one respondent is always involved. Whether it is via a newsletter or individual contact for the purpose of addressing a programmatic need for a student, parent contact keeps home and school connected for the ultimate benefit of the students. Therefore, the more contact you have with parents the greater the opportunity to enhance the educational experiences of the students in your school.

In the beginning of the year, parent-teacher meetings in one school are held and called “Individual Student Goal Conferences.” The respondent goes on to share, “We found it more important that they meet with parents than they meet with us. The parents and teachers both like meeting together.” A few of the first days of school are half-days to provide additional time for meetings in case a meeting did not take place between the parent and teacher before the start of school.

“So before school even starts, all of our teachers meet with parents before school starts to talk about the child and to develop a plan. Usually, we don’t focus on academics during that one. It’s more about social or emotional or behavioral things that the parents want us to know about the
child and we pick something that we want to work on throughout the year.

All parents – regular and special education – are all involved in that."

Parent contact has the opportunity to yield additional information for the teacher about
the student and to get the parents onboard with the teacher's plan for the student for the
year. The elementary principal's support of this process supports students with
disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

*Parent Desires*

A secondary factor associated with Parent Contact is Parent Desires. "When it
comes to readiness for the NJASK, a lot of parents want their children involved in the test
prep class," shared one respondent. The extra help desired by many parents as explained
by two respondents goes beyond test preparation to support in the classroom. "They see
the benefit of having a second teacher in their child's class."

*Accountability – Negative*

Negative responses on the topic of accountability were described by eight
respondents in such as student progress is compared with a different population
annually and schools that have been successful in meeting the needs of its students are
being unfairly targeted to address the schools that have neglected segments of their
populations in the past. Sentiments such as,

We have a large school, a large population in third and fourth grade.

Therefore the likelihood that our special ed. population will be larger and
we'll meet that number 35 is greater. Other schools may not have that
number and therefore it's not calculated. You know, it's not held against
them.
"In a town like [redacted] where we do our own internal standardized norm referenced testing anyway, I don't see what the criterion referenced test that they're giving us here is going to do to improve anything about what goes on in our school." A different respondent adds,

> It stinks because of the fact that, you know, they don't study the same students. You know, we made progress. My biggest concern is our special ed. population improved by like 17% and the AYP for this year is based for 4th grade on that fact. Well my 3rd grade which is now my 4th grade didn't do real well but because those kids did so well in order to make AYP the kids from 3rd grade are gonna have to go up like 25%. So it's not a true measure. They didn't, you know, they should use how they did in 3rd grade to determine their 4th grade AYP, not what the class before them did because it's a totally different group of students. It's just... it's flawed. The whole accountability part of it is flawed. The whole system is flawed.

Ranging from, "I don't really see it helping or benefiting the kids at all. I just don't find it to be very accurate for a lot of the children," to, "It is also giving the message that we want all of our kids to be super perfect," reflect the respondents' view in general.

The focus on the student and their respective challenges under NCLBA appeared very empathetic. As one respondent described, "The first time we actually administered the test, everybody was in an uproar, nervous and those children looked at those tests and its work that they can't do." "I think that there needs to be alternatives for those children who, you know, there are some children who don't take test well." So, are their
perceptions that they are better or worse off with this level of accountability? One respondent sums up the opinion on this topic, "I don't see it as helping me be a better administrator than I was before-hand. I certainly don't think it's helping my teachers be better teachers. I think it's giving kids and parents ulcers." "They're used to getting help to complete work and complete tasks, and they completely fall apart. I mean, it's just not fair," shared another respondent. The sub-theme of the unfair nature of accountability for students with disabilities ties into the pressure that is placed upon them as well as their teachers.

Pressure on Students & Teachers

Six respondents described pressure on students as a direct result of the accountability component of NCLBA and three identified pressure on teachers. The theme that emerged was test anxiety and its effect on student self-esteem. "I think they feel the pressure. I think the kids feel the pressure and I think the teachers feel the pressure and I know I feel the pressure," remarked one respondent. "Some of our special ed. kids are not going to make the same standards as the regular ed. kids. I wish they could. I think we just put too much pressure on kids to begin with," leading to test anxiety. "I see them biting their nails. I see them crying. I see the visits to the nurse tripling because kids are getting physically sick to their stomach." One respondent pointed the finger away from NCLBA to NALS. "I think we give kids test anxiety that they don't have because we feel, I don't know, it's not really NCLB. It's NALS! That's No Administrator Left Standing."

Summarily posits one respondent,
We're way under the gun and, you know, this all flows down hill. You know, the — the federal government is gonna deny states money, so states put the pressure on the county supt. The county supt.s say, "You know, this isn't going to fly," so they put the pressure on the local supt. who puts it on the principals who puts on the teacher who puts it on the kids. Like just the — the gun is huge, and then it gets smaller and smaller and smaller and smaller, but ultimately it's pointed at a kid's head.

"I don't like high-stakes testing. I think it scares kids. I think it scares grownups," shared one respondent as the pressure felt by students, teachers, administrators, and parents is not going away as long as NCLBA is here, at least to 2013.

**Accountability - Positive**

Conversely, three respondents describe the accountability component of NCLBA as a positive because it promotes accountability for every school and ensures that sub-groups of the student population are provided an education that will enable them to succeed like their counterparts. "We need to improve certain types of instruction. We need to get the kids mainstreamed into regular classes more for what they can do. I think that the kids will achieve more." One of the nine respondents only held positive views while two others shared positive and negative views on accountability.

I feel that it's a fair accountability overall. I really do even though my teachers fuss about it. You know, the classes change every year. And how can they say this class is like that class. But I believe that it's made us be far more attentive to students with different types of learning and forced us to find the answer through differentiation. I believe far more of
us fall into those areas of differentiation and therefore it in turn helps the regular ed. learner, as well. Because most of the strategies that works for the special needs population through differentiation also help some of the at-risk borderline regular ed. children as well.

Furthermore another respondent stated, "I feel that it is raising the bar but it is forcing districts if they don't reach that proficiency level to put programs in place to help students. That to me is the good part of it." This coupled with the fact that, "I think it will help districts to think about what they're doing with kids and train their teachers better," help to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP.

Subsidiary Research Question 1:
How do elementary principals describe their attitudes toward inclusion?

Educational Philosophy of Principals

The Educational Philosophy of Principals is best characterized as, "I believe that these special needs students should be in the community of learners, but saying it is a lot easier than doing it." Therefore, including students with disabilities in the general education population as much as possible and helping them get as far as they can go describes the sentiments of the respondents. Moreover, shared one respondent, "You can't distinguish special ed. from regular ed. when you go into these classes. They just blend in so well and the kids themselves work together." The first theme that emerged was principal expectations of students with disabilities as a defining component of their educational philosophy. The belief that, "All kids can learn," and, "By modifying and adapting and using positive reinforcement with the kids, they really could achieve anything under the right circumstances," was a recurring theme among respondents.
Illustrative of their attitudes toward inclusion, respondents continued to explain their educational philosophy focusing on meeting the needs of individual learners within the general education classroom. "Well, we recognize and accept that all kids have different learning styles, even our special needs kids." Toward that end, "I've seen really low level kids do amazing things. In fact, I used to do some things in class that with my brightest class that they wouldn't get and with my lowest class they would get it just fine." Acknowledging and addressing the different needs of learners in the classroom, any classroom, are key components of the educational philosophy of principals and their attitudes toward inclusion. Furthermore, "Every child has a right to grade-level material. But it's how you deliver it. I believe that's a subtle segregation when we do not allow special needs children to have accessibility to grade-level literature. It might be read to them," offered one respondent. Setting high educational goals for students and meeting them where they are is very important to respondents and further describes their attitudes toward inclusion.

Principal Self-Perception

Principal Self-Perception was used to describe the respondents' attitudes toward inclusion. All nine respondents provided vivid descriptors of themselves that included, "high expectations", "supporting them," "just really being the cheerleader," "it's important for the staff and the kids to see me as a practitioner," and "my role is to be an enforcer." Principal interaction emerged as the theme for this code. Interaction was initially referred to only in terms of teachers and students. "My role has been really to make sure the teachers are doing what they're supposed to in the classroom. We do visits in the classrooms." Moreover, a respondent shared, "I think that the leadership role is not
just knowing what the program is and making sure that it’s done. It’s also reassuring
teachers that it’s not going anywhere. We’re staying with this. So let’s work towards it.”
Additionally, time with students is a valuable component of how several respondents
view their effectiveness. As described below, returning to the classroom can be a very
rewarding experience for all parties involved.

I’m still learning an awful lot. Not sure I’m ever doing it really well but
just remembering back to the classroom days what is it I would have
wanted to see my principal do. I wanted — I would have wanted to know
the guy could teach and I had two previous principals where I knew that
was not true. So this way I figure it works — kind of — sort of both ways.
Then I — even with the regular teachers sometimes they’ll go listen, “Can I
leave a period early, and I go, “Well, only if I can come and teach.” So I
think they’re glad and they leave and I just go have fun with kids. It
doesn’t happen as often as I’d like. That’s probably about once every two
weeks.

Furthermore, principal interaction includes maintaining a connection with the current
trends in the field. “It’s my job to provide resources,” offers one respondent. Another
states, “I try to take an active role in promoting all of the programs that our teachers have
and supporting them with Project Read and Great Leaps and the professional
development aspect.” Therefore, to be effective at meeting the needs of students with
disabilities a respondent stated, “You have to live it and breathe and constantly read
about it and constantly scan your whole population and your programs and say, are we
looking at supporting them in every way possible?”
Visibility

"I'm somewhere in between Perry Como and Mr. Rogers. I'm one of the most visible principals that you'll ever see," remarked a respondent. "I spend an enormous amount of time with kids. I don't really believe this has any impact on how they do educationally, although I wish it did." Whether or not you believe the visibility of a principal impacts student performance, eight respondents described visibility as a primary factor in their attitudes toward inclusion. The first sub-theme of principal interaction that emerged was informal interaction with students and teachers within the school. "There's daily interaction," stated one respondent. An example of the daily interaction described was, "We visit children I guess to see what children are working on. I'll stop at individual desks and talk to children, "What are you working on? What are you doing?"" Additionally, "eating lunch with students in the cafeteria nearly every day," stated one respondent was a very common occurrence highlighted by respondents. Various respondents eat lunch with students on a monthly or weekly basis. Informal visits to classrooms also include the review of lesson plans and observation of teaching practices in the classroom. "I don't collect lesson plans. This way it forces me again to visit all of the classrooms." Moreover, "completing five-by-five walkthroughs," stated one respondent, "allows one respondent to enter every classroom at least once or twice per week." The purpose of informal interaction is to ensure a balanced relationship with students and teachers. By building positive working relationship with both groups, the elementary principal can be effective.

The second sub-theme of principal interaction that emerged was formal interaction with teachers and students within the school. Formal observations of
teachers, attendance at IEP meetings, Intervention and Referral Services meetings and
disciplining students were highlighted by respondents.

So that when there is an issue, they see me... and it's not just the principal
as a disciplinarian, they see [redacted] who's out all the time and asking
about how they're doing and talking with them and joking with them and
having a light conversation with them. So, it does help our discipline, it
really does.

This type of visibility is customary as it is often defined within the protocols of the terms
and conditions of employment or defined by state mandates for services for students.
Furthermore, the third sub-theme of principal interaction that emerged was respondent
interaction with groups outside of the building, including newsletters and board of
education presentations on New Jersey ASK results. The eight respondents described
their attitudes toward inclusion through the lens of visibility emphasizing the informal
interaction between them and both students and teachers. What is most important is that
respondents described no difference in their interaction with students with disabilities and
with students in the general education population.

Time with Students

Nine respondents described their attitudes toward inclusion by highlighting the
amount of time that they spend with students, making time with students a primary factor.
Time spent with students included conversations with students in the hallway, “Lunches
with the Principal,” reading to the class, as well as class visitations, discipline issues, and
working with a group of students on academic needs. “I'm working with about 12 kids
over lunch and recess one day a week, working on developing their writing and how to
respond to picture prompts,” shared one respondent. All activities lead to a positive educational experience for students in the school including enhanced academic achievement.

The effect of a one-on-one student to principal relationship is described by one respondent,

I have one guy that I meet with every morning. I meet him off the bus and we spend 5, 10 minutes going over homework. A lot of it is just trying to boost his self-confidence and get him off to a good start every day. His mother ended up passing away last year and dad works second shift. You know it’s a real tough situation on him. He has a lot of abilities. It’s just he really lacks self confidence and things and it’s just one of those things. He was kind of one of those special kids you kind of feel for and want to do something special with him and try to help him out.

Whether one-on-one or in a group, the time that elementary principals spend with students with disabilities in particular and students in general is very positive and helps to describe their attitudes toward inclusion. This includes time spent with students recognizing their efforts and achievements in a major way. “I do the recognition over the PA and then these little written certificates. I have these little tags that I give my special ed. kids that read, “My Principal Thinks I’m Special,” “My Principal Sees How Well I’m Working.”” Awards assemblies and announcements over the PA system are two ways highlighted by respondents to afford students recognition for their accomplishments.
Teacher Interaction

Teacher Interaction with the principal was a primary factor described by seven respondents that helps to reveal their attitudes toward inclusion. Their interaction ranges from providing feedback after classroom walkthroughs to discussions on curriculum matters. Two themes emerged. The first centered on the principal meeting with teachers to discuss test preparation and performance, monitoring curricular needs and the individual needs of students. "We meet with the teachers regularly and talk about inclusive practices and how to make modifications and adaptations for the students." "That's - that's the whole idea. Let's see how we can make them grow," shared a respondent capturing the essence of the purpose of this type of teacher interaction.

Meeting with teachers for the purpose of enhancing the achievement of students is the heart of the first theme.

In addition to meeting with teachers directly, a second theme of teacher interaction that respondents described was the principal's role in the facilitation of contact between teachers. The contact facilitated by the principals may take place in the form of a meeting, classroom observation, or pairing for the delivery of instruction. "I assign two 3rd grade and two 4th grade teachers to each self-contained learning disabled class to work with the special ed. teacher so that as their children become able to be mainstreamed, they can mainstream for whatever subject is appropriate." An example of pairing is, "Once we structure those groups [of students], we pair, preferably based on previous interaction and/or affinity for one another, the in-class support teacher and the mainstream teacher." Additionally, a respondent describes the preparing of a new teacher for the expected interaction between teachers in an in-class support environment.
I just hired a new resource teacher because one retired. So, what she will
now do is... I will have her visit the others for the next week or so to see
how each teacher does it. How they work it out between the classroom
teacher and the resource teacher.

This helps to describe the principal’s attitude toward inclusion as great care is taken to
ensure that expectations are known prior to a teacher assuming a teaching role, which
ultimately benefits the students. Moreover, careful selection in the assignment of
teachers to work with students with disabilities is indicative of the importance placed on
the success of inclusion.

PTA/PTO/HSA

Whether it is called a PTA (Parent Teacher Association), a PTO (Parent
Teacher Organization), or a HSA (Home School Association), assistance offered by
parents to schools supported endeavors to benefit all students. The support ranged from
grant opportunities made available to teachers for individual projects to raising money for
special equipment and supplies. The first theme that emerged was the close working
relationship with the school as evidenced by the targeted activities and materials
provided. “They do assemblies including cultural arts activities throughout the year. In
addition, they provide support materials such as a new set of books for core literature or
Judy Closs.” What the parent organization provides to the schools in terms of meeting
its needs aids the elementary principal in supporting students with disabilities in
achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

The second theme that emerged was the offering of grants for different things in
the school. The teachers or principal may apply for a grant for a project, a special
program or if they are developing something to benefit the students. The third theme that emerged was the willingness of the parent organization to fund special projects such as prizes for a math carnival. Another example was the establishment of a school store where a PTA bought all of the supplies that teachers wanted kids to have. “This was set up right in the school for the parents to come to the school in lieu of going to Staples and the Wal-Mart because they hated that,” shared the respondent. The PTA was told that the six or so kids on free and reduced lunch might not be able to afford to buy all those things and they put together a whole backpack of school supplies for those kids. Overall, an active parent organization enhances the quality of education provided to all students and contributes to the elementary principal being able to support students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

Special Education PTA

In stark contrast to the views of the general parent organization, two respondents discussed to existence of a Special Education PTA making it a secondary factor. One respondent described this organization as separate a little bit and believed that their existence defeats their purpose. “They do functions, do fundraisers, and belong to the general PTA too. We’re supposed to be all together as one and I think their existence does separate us,” the respondent added. Conversely, the other respondent described the PTA specifically devoted to special needs kids as very active. They have their own monthly meetings. They offer parent workshops at night. The tone of this respondent was more tolerant of their existence and purpose. “They support the school with an After School Social Skills Program where they pay one of the staff members to have bi-monthly interactions groups with kids who don’t fit in real well — both classified and non-
classified." Although this organization is not present in every school, this quote reflects the impact their presence can have in the educational environment, especially for students with disabilities. "If you don't do it right, they let you know. They're not critical. But it's the way, you know, kids behave better when dad's watch 'n."

**Parent Support**

Parental support is not limited to the PTA/PTO/HSA organizations in each elementary school. Parents make themselves available to participate in numerous areas in the school, including volunteering in general and holding special drawings to provide assistance such as copy services to a lucky teacher or snacks during testing time. "Most parents are very good," remarked one respondent. "Of all the parents that we work with, most go along with the program and will support what we're trying to do. If they know that you care and you're there for their kid, they're gonna support you." So, parental support aids not only the students but the staff. Also note that the special education parents are also ready and willing to serve, but tend to work within the scope of the general education parents role when assisting students and staff members.

**Parent Contact**

Parent Contact is a primary factor associated with Parent Support. This is a vital component in the education of special education children in particular and general education students in general. Parents are contacted to meet with teachers before school starts in one school while in another "Parent Nights" are held. Individual meetings occur when parents are invited to attend an I&RS (Intervention & Referral Services) meeting where one respondent is always involved. Whether it is via a newsletter or individual contact for the purpose of addressing a programmatic need for a student, parent contact
keeps home and school connected for the ultimate benefit of the students. Therefore, the more contact you have with parents the greater the opportunity to enhance the educational experiences of the students in your school.

In the beginning of the year, parent-teacher meetings in one school are held and called “Individual Student Goal Conferences.” The respondent goes on to share, “We found it more important that they meet with parents than they meet with us. The parents and teachers both like meeting together.” A few of the first days of school are half-days to provide additional time for meetings in case a meeting did not take place between the parent and teacher before the start of school.

“So before school even starts, all of our teachers meet with parents before school starts to talk about the child and to develop a plan. Usually, we don’t focus on academics during that one. It’s more about social or emotional or behavioral things that the parents want us to know about the child and we pick something that we want to work on throughout the year.

All parents – regular and special education – are all involved in that.”

Parent contact has the opportunity to yield additional information for the teacher about the student and to get the parents onboard with the teacher’s plan for the student for the year. The elementary principal’s support of this process supports students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NIASK exam.

Parent Desires

A secondary factor associated with Parent Contact is Parent Desires. “When it comes to readiness for the NIASK, a lot of parents want their children involved in the test prep class,” shared one respondent. The extra help desired by many parents as explained
by two respondents goes beyond test preparation to support in the classroom. "They see the benefit of having a second teacher in their child's class."

Instructional Practices

Instructional Practices is a primary factor described by seven respondents that include mandating students in basic skills to attend an after school program. "A parent can get them out of it by writing a letter but most of the parents want them to stay after school," reported a respondent. This instructional practice is an outgrowth of the Superintendent's philosophy that states, "Students belong in the classroom as much as possible because if you pull them out they're missing something and they're already behind." However, another respondent cited the benefits of "Flex Grouping" students throughout the day for a particular writing skill such as editing. Students, special education as well as general education students struggling with this skill, are pulled out by the in-class support teacher, taken to his or her classroom with their writing piece and them brought back to the regular education classrooms for the author's chair. This practice can be applied in reading, writing, and math. The respondent concludes the description of this practice by stating, "All of those types of strategies help in pulling up the literacy scores."

Another theme that emerged as an instructional practice is the delivery of instruction by teachers to students. This includes the use of a "Problem of the Day" geared toward the instructional level of the students to ensure that they are all doing what they need to do. "So, that's where the teacher will focus all of their learning, all of her teaching so that the child is not exposed to only one size fits all teaching," offered one respondent. It also includes the review of lesson plans examining, "The daily kind of a
math problem that will respond to the types of questions that are on the test. You know
the open-ended questions where they have to explain and go through that as well as the
reading and writing experiences." In addition to specific materials being utilized in the
classroom, an increase in the time of the delivery of instruction was also discussed by
respondents. For example, "Special education students receive approximately 60 minutes
of math every day — whole class right in there with general education and then
concentrated small group instruction. So, I think that led to higher scores. Plus, the
biggest element is that we all are on the same wavelength with the big ideas in math and
literacy but how we deliver it varies."

Although some respondents focus on the delivery of instruction, one respondent
focused on "Providing meaningful and authentic work so students become volunteers in
their learning process and that's been a little bit of a shift with our staff where we tell
them we're not talking about your delivery of instruction. We're talking about the work
that you're expecting children to do." Overall, is the work something that students want
to do? This is WOW, "Working on the Work," and it has been ongoing for years in this
respondent's school. This theme evolves with the use of space repetition which is
described as, "Over time that if I really want you to be able to write a topic sentence, I
don't give up on doing that after I teach it in September but that I continually find ways
to re-enforce it over the course of the year." A phrase, killing two birds with one stone,
was compared to stepping and treading waters when a respondent tells teachers as much
as possible when you can embed the strategies into the curriculum. With these strategies
teachers aren't so quick to say, "Ooh, I can't teach this kid. He needs to go be assessed
by the team. Now teachers are looking at what can they do in the classroom before they jump to the gun and refer the kid to child study."

Another theme that emerged within instructional practices is the role of the principal in the modeling of lessons every now and then for faculty as well as the coordinated efforts of teachers. An example is: "I made all of special education teachers teach writing in the regular classroom. Now that was a feat because nobody wanted to do it. But it made a difference in the level of writing, and I have seen that."

Overall, Instructional Practices help to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP with a combination of the utilization of the curriculum to teach needed skills, the amount of time spent on a subject, the location of the delivery of instruction, and learning activities that students become excited about because they want to do them. The overarching phrase to describe these themes is differentiation which was noted by one respondent. "Most of the strategies that work for the special needs population through differentiation also help some of the at-risk borderline regular education children as well." Therefore, targeting the special education population will help all children, particularly those at-risk but not receiving special education services.

Assessment of Students

Assessment of Students is a secondary factor which is a part of Instructional Practices and associated with Test Preparation and Modifications. The respondents describe the importance of the data yielded from student assessments. This is an area that is described as an ongoing process to gauge and measure the level of student achievement of various assessment tools. For example, "The department leaders [in one school] take the information from Edu-Test and work as a group to see where the student weaknesses
may be and then develop an action plan based on that analysis. So, that action plan is put into effect for the next trimester before the next benchmark assessment. Another assessment tool is Dibbles, which is helping to identify the needs of all students, even students with special needs. The use of "I-KNOWS" which is an electronic assessment for language arts, reading, and math gives the teacher immediate feedback. While the assessment schedule varies between schools, the primary goal is to try to predict how students are going to perform on the New Jersey ASK. Another goal is to look at individual student's strengths and weaknesses identified through an assessment of their class work for the purpose of making changes to improve their academic achievement. Discussions between teachers and administrators when focused on Assessment of Students and Student Work yield positive changes in student's academic experience.

Student Characteristics

Student Characteristics described by two respondents' falls within the secondary tier of factors and is a part of Instructional Practices. When reflecting on the students who made AYP a respondent commented, "By the luck of the draw, I hate to say that but simply by the luck of the draw sometimes you have a group of kids that just are less disabled and more, have more ability to achieve." This is supported by another respondent who states, "What we've realized is all children learn differently on different days in different ways and it doesn't matter if they're special education classification or they're regular education students." So, any given year a special education population can achieve AYP or not. Students come to school at different levels. Therefore, the use of proven instructional practices is very important because it may make the difference in student achievement.
Grants

Grants are a secondary factor described by four respondents as having influenced the instructional practices of students with disabilities. The primary theme that emerged was the enhancement of technology through grants. This ranged from receiving laptops to use with projection units tied into a wireless network to grants garnered by a district-wide grants writer for the enhancement of technology into classrooms. "I probably have 15 classes that actually have plasma screens in the classrooms. Yes, I know, it's great. They have plasma, they have scanners, they have digital cameras and they're trained monthly on how to infuse technology into literacy, which is what the grant is about," shared one respondent.

A second theme that emerged was the provision of interventions to reduce or eliminate social promotion in one school. Tutoring was a factor discussed and explained by one respondent as an offering provided as a result of being a recipient of a grant.

"This grant targeted students who were partially proficient on the ASK test, so we're definitely stepping up our intervention." In addition, "those students are eligible for a summer program in August that ran for five weeks every day, two and a half hours a day and tutoring throughout the school year on a 1:2 ratio." Also, to hire specialized people who would actually work with the in-class support teachers to make sure that the models that they are using are useful and adaptable and functional in another school. This additional component greatly aided schools in supplementing their instructional practices to help explain what factors describe students with disabilities achieving AYP. Grants were pursued from various entities including the State of New Jersey, the PTA, and through district personnel hired to garner grants from other sources.
Principal Expectations

Principal Expectations are a primary factor described by seven respondents and have a broad range of application from the teacher to the student to principal's role in helping students with disabilities achieve AYP. The first theme that emerged was the principal's belief in setting high expectations for everyone. An example of high expectations for students was reflected by one respondent, "First of all, I have the expectation with everybody - is everybody can pass. No, I - I truly believe everybody can pass this test. It's not going to be easy, but everybody can pass the test and what we need to do is look at - for those, especially, some of the lower functioning children that are going to be forced to take the test." Another respondent shared, "I believe they belong in the community. I believe that it's our job to differentiate naturally and to make them believe that they can achieve but just in a different way." This statement embodies an expectation for all professionals in the learning community as another respondent shares, "We know that we are under a microscope, in terms of what we need to deliver, and we deliver it!"

The second theme that emerged was teacher accountability. "I don't care whether it's a self-contained class or if you have resource students, everyday they have to learn to solve a problem." This translates into teachers being held accountable for the level of student engagement in the learning environment, particularly students with disabilities. "All teachers are responsible for our special education students," shared one respondent. "So, if you're an in-class support [teacher], just because Tracy's in that in-class support [class] and I'm special ed. doesn't mean the regular ed, teacher's not as equally responsible for my achievement and that's I think what makes it work." Moreover, a
respondent shared, “All writing is taught collaboratively in this building. I don’t care if you’re basic skills or special ed., you co-teach writing.” In addition to working with students, another respondent described principal expectations in terms of teacher accountability in the form of submitting articles for the newsletter. “They submit information about clubs, curriculum, specialists, any special activities, upcoming events, you know, things like that. It’s quite lengthy.”

The final theme that emerged was an expectation for an understanding of student’s learning styles. “I think the basic philosophy of understanding that these kids have different learning styles and that we recognize these learning styles through the specific program has really, really helped,” to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP. Furthermore, making sure that all special education children are included in the general population raises their expectations of themselves. “If you set the expectations high enough, teachers will work towards that goal just as kids will.” As one respondents shared, “So my first challenge was to get them to understand that they have a right to be in the writing community even though they may not move at the same pace in a writing piece.” Sharing with teachers that, “I have seen my gifted children struggle greatly and my special needs students just fly by them where they ever have to go to them for help. It’s been phenomenal moments that I thought thank you for just letting me see this minute.” As one respondent shared, “You need that in a learning community: to know that you’re very bright but only in some areas and in some areas I’m brighter than you. It’s just a different gift.” Therefore, the expectations of principal, teachers, and students for high levels of achievement help to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP.
Test Preparation

Test Preparation is another primary factor described by six respondents as a necessary practice to ensure students with disabilities are prepared to achieve AYP on the NJASK exam. The first theme that emerged focused on what test preparation looked like. "Let's show them the format, how is the test set up, how to go about reading the questions. So they can see how to take the test and what's the format and teach them how to read longer passages and when they see a math problem, how to use the calculator when it's appropriate. We're showing them the set-up of New Jersey ASK." In addition, to familiarizing the students with the test format and test prep books, "another program that the teachers use in the classroom is called Study Island. It's an online resource where the children can go on a computer with teacher guidance and practice test-taking skills and strategies. Its standards based." Special education teachers have been trained and the children may work on this in school or at home. More specifically, "They do an assessment on the computer and the computer actually generates math and language arts questions that are connected to what the NJASK would be like and also what the curriculum should prepare them to do." Overall, "we work with special ed. kids to reduce test anxiety, to try to make the experience less stressful for them."

The second theme that emerged focused on when test preparation took place. "We have an after school program all the time, but the test prep is a month before the test. It's a volunteer program where the children stay Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays," shared one respondent. This rationale for why it is organized in this fashion is as follows: "What we did was we don't have basic skills during the day anymore. So anybody that needs extra help, it's after school." The class size is a maximum of 10 students, "cause
we have a lot of children whose parents want them involved in the test prep class." This permits students who need help to not miss any of the general education curricula in order to better prepare for the NJASK exam. However, a majority of respondents described that their test preparation activities took place during the school day although at various times throughout the school year.

The third theme that emerged focused on who informed test preparation materials and/or practices. "The Director of Special Services, every month, stressed strategies to help make kids successful on the test." In addition, "For the test prep we actually created the curriculum, the two supervisors and the two principals. We actually sat down and figured out what types of things, based on our pre- and post-test that we're doing need to be focused on in terms of making sure that it's covered before the test." Administrative input in guiding the pathway for test preparation helps to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP. The final item that emerged focused on the parent connection to test preparation. Whether it is parents getting a printout of their child's pre-test results to see how their child is doing or volunteering to bring snacks in during testing, parents play a role in their child's readiness for the NJASK exam.

**Test Preparation Materials**

Test Preparation Materials arose as a secondary factor described by four respondents. This factor focused on gauging students' academic strengths and weaknesses. The purchased programs are described as follows: "The Global Math and the Global Writing, it's wonderful. You have the child do a writing piece. You send it out. They have two or three people look at it and score it based on the rubric. Then they send you back the writing and the rubric's scores." "The Rally materials look identical to
the format of the test. So I highly recommend those and it comes in three different versions. So, that month before the test, they're gonna use the third version after school, again. Mostly reviewing the format of the test, "cause that's what they're unfamiliar with." "Strategies for Success is what we purchased. They're not consumable. They cost twelve bucks apiece. I'd rather buy a couple packs of paper. They each have a math and language arts literacy test prep book that they will use once every other week for a class period." "What we do is a problem of the week, which is something to do with the content standards or some type of problem that's similar that they'll see on New Jersey ASK." There is a wide range of variety in the test preparation materials utilized by the respondents.

The second theme that emerged is the frequency of use of test preparation materials. "We get several tests throughout the year so kind of see how the children are -- to predict how they're going to do on New Jersey ASK. So we give a writing test, a math test, and a reading test in September, November, February, and at the end of the year." With this frequency of testing, the respondent highlighted the quick response time as the writing and math tests are online and only the reading test is sent out. When the scores return, the respondent described a follow-up meeting with teachers to analyze the data and plan appropriate instruction to meet the needs of the students. Other test preparation materials were described as being utilized from as early as January to only a few weeks before the NJASK exam. Also, School Spirit Activities was discussed by one respondent as a positive motivational tool utilized the week before the NJASK to get students excited about the test and at the same time reduce test anxiety. Nevertheless, use of test
preparation materials in advance of the NJASK was identified as a factor by elementary principals to help explain students with disabilities achieving AYP.

**Interventions**

Interventions is a primary factor described by five respondents that highlights how students are identified and prepared to strengthen their academic skills to achieve AYP under NCLBA. This theme focused on the combination of convening professionals with programmatic changes to meet a child’s need. “This may take place in an I&RS (Intervention & Referral Services) meeting where I think have we done everything because my program in Balanced Literacy rally tends itself to children who learn differently,” shared one respondent. Another respondent stated, “We’ll meet with our Dibbles results and during one of the common planning times and without using names, talk about a child and then toss to the group how can this teacher help this child. What can they do?” This respondent likened this experience to that of a PAC or I&RS meeting.

Yet another respondent stated,

“This year we identified students and we have actually five different groups that we’re running...working on developing writing skills. We have groups where two teachers meet with about 25 kids after school. My LDTC is meeting with two groups of 3rd graders over lunch and recess one day a week, working on developing their writing and how to respond to picture prompts. Then I have a group that I’m working with of about 12 kids over lunch and recess one day a week, working on developing their writing and how to respond to picture prompts and things like that.”
In summary, a respondent explained, "I think the Study Island, teachers being trained in Schools Attuned, hiring good staff, the workshops, the communication, the professional relationships we have, the relationships with parents all played a role in achieving AYP that year." This coupled with the one respondent sharing the benefits of receiving a grant for a summer program in August that ran for five weeks every day; two and a half hours a day and included tutoring throughout the school year on a one to two ratio help to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP under NCLBA.

**Modifications**

A Modification is a primary factor described by seven of the respondents to explain how students' needs are met. This includes two themes that emerged. The first theme was the use of modifications for testing. "We did everything we could to provide all of these accommodations for testing where if it was legal we did it," typifies the belief of several respondents.

"Our test coordinators met with the special education teachers to further expand areas that we could modify. Like sometimes the children in math use charts and so they read that to say that if they use it every day then they can use it. If it's an aid that they can use every day, you know, then it's an aid that they can use during testing. So they really studied hard, specifically for the special ed. teachers and students, what areas could we make that testing environment the optimum."

General test modifications shared by respondents included, "the small group, the extended time, making sure that they are in a good testing environment, having breaks for them, and teachers re-read the directions to them or re-explain the directions to them."
Another example of test modifications included the use of scribes. “A scribe would be someone who – if we had someone whose thinking was real good but he was unable to put pen to paper that person would write the essay for example in the kid’s words.” Overall, “they are just unable to do the same thing but because the modifications, I think they are achieving but they couldn’t if they took the test like everyone else.”

The second theme is teacher interaction for the purpose of informing curricula modifications. “We meet with teachers regularly and talk about inclusive practices and how to make modifications and adaptations for the students,” characterizes the general response. “So that by modifying and adapting and using positive reinforcement with the kids, they really could achieve anything under the right circumstances,” shared a respondent. “We teach the curriculum. They receive some modifications but they’re receiving the same program.” Therefore, whether it’s modifications for students in the classroom or on a test, teacher involvement in both areas is an essential effort that helps to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP.

**Empowerment of Teachers**

Empowerment of Teachers is predicated upon teacher involvement. This factor was described by a majority of respondents who valued the educational direction that the teachers’ provided in curricula areas as well as through instructional practices. The theme that emerged is one of ownership through a leadership role in the educational process for students through the incorporation of teacher ideas and teacher buy-in. “Last faculty meeting, the library media specialist took ownership – and she’s a first-year librarian, too. She and a representative from World Book presented on how to use the internet for research skills.” In addition teachers serve on district-wide committees to
inform curricula. However, they offer more than their own opinion. As one respondent shared, "The grade-level teacher would have a committee meeting with everybody at their grade-level on their own time and show them what they're doing and get their buy-in, and then they come back as a committee to finalize it." So, teachers serve as liaisons between groups to maximize dialogue and infuse various viewpoints into a discussion to inform a decision.

Support from the principal according to respondents makes a difference in the success of teacher efforts. An example is, I have a group of teachers who said, "Can we have one of our Professional Days and just spend the entire day reviewing our new anthology, designing lessons, writing down activities we want to do, laying out a scope and sequence?" I said, "You bet your ass, you can." Then my boss said, "No." That just was not going to fly. So I said, "How about I just take all four of their classes for the day and I'll do a lecture hall and I'll free them up and do nothing." He said, "Well, what if a kid gets hurt." I said, "That's why I want you to approve the Professional Day." So he did.

As one respondent shared, "Empowering them to become responsible for partially a leadership role I think had really provided them with the opportunity to feel more ownership of the whole process and I think it's been becoming more successful for us as a school." Thus, this helps to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP.

Internal Organizations

Internal Organization (teams/committees) emerged as a secondary factor described by three respondents. Highlighted were the value of input from different
perspectives including various departments and teachers on various grade levels. The establishment of Instructional Management Teams (IMT) includes representation from one representative per grade level as well as Bilingual, ESI, and Special Education.

"They become instructional leaders," shared the respondent. "We're trying to switch or shift the emphasis from the administration to the educators because they're the ones in the trenches and they're the ones that see day in and day out what's going on in the classroom." "We have what's called “common planning time” (CPT) once a week and I meet with the teachers," shared a different respondent. "We also have team leaders on each grade level. I have two team leaders per grade and a team leader that represents special education, a team leader that represents specialists, and a team leader that represents our intervention program." The role of the team leaders as described by the respondent is, "they plan agendas. They do minutes. They do their budget. They do a lot of work and then we meet before school starts and they come in on their own. They don't get really paid for that." Furthermore, "we'll spend like a whole day or two before school starts planning out our goals for the school year." This helps to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP under NCLBA.

Perceptions of Students

An additional secondary factor that emerged when respondents were asked to share any additional comments not discussed previously in the interview, perceptions of students emerged. Four respondents described the importance of perceptions making it a secondary factor describing their attitudes toward inclusion. The first perception highlighted was the belief that all children can learn. "If you believe kids can learn, they'll learn," stated one respondent. Echoing this, another respondent stated, "All
children will learn. They just do differently at different times in different ways and
different ways." So, the perception that students can learn affects their attitudes toward
inclusion. A second theme that emerged under perceptions focuses on the schools
themselves. One respondent stated, "A lot of parents have moved here because of the
special education programs that the district provides." Another respondent affirmed this
response by sharing, "We are called 'lighthouse district' because our special services are
so good. They just keep moving, and they're killing our budget. So if they were 10% of
the population, they were 25% of the budget and the state is not helping as because of our
DFG (district factor group).

Subsidiary Research Question 2:
What factors identified by elementary principals' contributed to students with disabilities
achieving AYP on the NJAASK exam?

Inclusion Models & Implementation

Inclusion Models and Inclusion Implementation are primary factor described by a
majority of respondents as contributing to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the
NJAASK exam. The variety of inclusion models and their implementation methodology
are shown in Table 6. Nonetheless, they reflect the awareness of the respondents to offer
a variety of settings to meet the various needs of students in the least restrictive
environment. Moreover, when describing how inclusion is best implemented a
respondent shared, "In those in-class support rooms you almost need like a team building
experience in how to work together, how to plan together, how to... how to jive
together."
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Inclusion Model</th>
<th>Inclusion Implementation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Autistic Program</td>
<td>&quot;We have a team teaching approach where as the special educator is in the room with the regular ed, teacher all day. We have a district objective for differentiating instruction which was something that central office pretty much put out a couple of years ago and that's the underlying goal for the district - meet the needs of our learners. We definitely follow the IDEA. We follow PAPE and we educate them in the least restrictive environment and we try to meet the needs of all, all the different learners.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disabled Self-contained LLD (Language Learning Disabled)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Behavior Classrooms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Resource Replacement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supplemental Resource Instructior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inclusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2          | N/A | "We just have to find out what makes them tick and help them get to where they need to go."

"But we really try to include them in everything. For my multi-handicapped and my autistic class, those teachers - we - we meet with the entire faculty. We have socialization programs, like, the teacher really explains her children to the whole entire faculty at a faculty meeting, and kind of explains what kinds of things she would like to have. Like, if there's a socialization time, like, they do a lot of cooking. So the teacher will say, "You know what? Every Friday we do some type of cooking activity. I would like some other students, some regular education students to come in and actually help us."

3 | Four LD self-contained classrooms | "Well I think it's important that, again if you look at our model that they [students with disabilities] are with all different children. Children have to be paired with... We have classes where we'll have resource, regular and our excelled - gifted students all in one class. It is important and I believe that they are throughout the |
| ICS at every grade level 1 to 5 | |
| 10 resource teachers in class for literacy and math if needed and for content area in the upper grades | |
4th and 5th.

- LLD self-contained
- Out-of-class resource center replacement
- Pull-out programs
- ICS
- Mainstreamed with support of an aide
- Mainstreamed with modifications
- Mainstream

“Okay, we have something really unique. We have a full - full-time inclusion class. We have two in 5th grade where a special ed. teacher and a regular ed. teacher stay in the room all day and work together. There’s about 8 special ed. kids max in each of those rooms. We have two in 5th and we have one in 4th grade. If you were to walk into those rooms, you wouldn’t be able to tell the special ed. kids from the regular ed., “cause that’s how well it works.”

5

- Self-contained LLD classroom
- Autistic classroom
- ICS pull out for resource room instruction
- ICS setting all day
- ICS setting part-time where we have five or six special education students with regular education and special education teachers team teaching in a part-time situation.

“We believe in providing the least restrictive environment and making adjustments and being flexible enough to adjust our teaching approaches and strategies. Like I mentioned, we might have a part-time setting one year and not the other year, specifically based on what kids need. So we never just say, “Okay, this kid is classified. Put him in a special ed. class. We don’t really have that setup.”

6

- Self-contained where students are included for the specials: music, art, physical education, Spanish, and library.
- Pull-out for math and language arts
- Pull-out/inclusion where students are pulled for the language arts and math in the morning
- Full inclusion classrooms include having two teachers for at least part of the day

“So we’ve really included the kids in the whole program, you know, for testing, for everything. So they really are focusing on what you know, being included in the classroom and no different than any other students. You know, for, you know, not totally but every special ed. student even the self-contained classes are assigned to a general ed. homeroom where they go to homeroom periods. They participate, you know, in all the assemblies and things like that with their homeroom.”

7

- “Our model is least restrictive all the way. We try to keep kids in the mainstream with the in-

“Resource is really pretty much reading, language arts, and mathematics. And in virtually every single case, the same teacher who provides the in-class support...”
class support model being our preferred model as well as differentiated instruction being one of the leading initiatives in the past several years. We have really found that for most of our kids that is the most successful model for us."

"For the most part, in one particular room will be the kids who need ICS [in-class support] and then of course the kids who also need the Resource. And then since we don't offer Resource in science and social studies, every classified kid, whether it's in their IEP or not, gets that level of service. So we often, by default, are offering a higher level service than the IEP warrants which is a good thing."

8  • Resource room setting for reading and math only.
  • Two classes of fourth grade inclusion for reading and math only.
  • Cognitively Delayed self-contained classroom.
  • Mainstream Model

"Our students are included based on recommendations from our special education teachers done in the spring. It's - they are generally students who are the higher-achieving resource room students and then they are recommended for inclusion the following year."

9  • We have reduced the number of self-contained classes to four - two Behavioral Disordered classes, an autistic class, and a Life Skills type of class.
  • Pull-out resource classrooms where students with disabilities are distributed evenly among every classroom.
  • In-class support which is definitely a growing trend and is the large population at this point. We have one in the 3rd grade, two in the 4th grade and then two in each of the 5th and 6th grades too.

"I found that we've had to do actually more training because the personalities are not necessarily a perfect match. So you really have to do a lot of massaging of professional egos, personal egos, just to make sure that you can find matches that will work and be productive with kids. Twelve years ago, if I had two in-class support rooms that was easy. No problem because I had friends working together and they read off each other. It's just not as easy now because we've been demanded to have more and more classes. That pool of personalities that just click automatically, it's not there."
Self-contained classroom environments are described by respondents as the most restrictive placement within the school environment. Conversely, inclusion in the form of in-class support provided by two teachers for two subject periods or two teachers for the entire day within a regular education classroom describes the least restrictive placement within the school environment. The medium range includes “pull-out” for resource center instruction in either mathematics or language arts, mainstream in general education with the support of an aide, and mainstream with modifications. Overall, successful implementation of any model is best characterized as utilizing the most effective instructional strategies, the successful pairing of teachers with one another and with support staff, and a commitment to continually exposing students with disabilities to other students and activities within the school.

Effective instruction strategies also decrease the number of referrals to the Child Study Team (CST) according to one respondent. “What we learned the first year of implementation is that referrals for evaluation by CST decreased from 38 to 6 in one year because these teachers are better equipped to differentiate instruction.” Additionally, “Teachers aren’t so quick to say, “Ooh, I can’t teach this kid. He needs to be assessed by the team. Now teachers are looking at what can they do in the classroom before they refer the kid to the CST.” The use of differentiated instructional practices also benefits students with disabilities within the classroom as this ensures that their individual needs are being met as teachers are skilled in tailoring instruction for individual students.

According to respondents, successful pairing of teachers within classroom settings does not just happen. Student success is tied to teacher success which is measured by teacher effectiveness. An example offered by one respondent best describes the
importance of the role of the elementary principal in setting clear expectations for the delivery of instruction to students.

"Just sitting down with this new teacher saying I don’t need a paraprofessional, someone to walk around and point to things and say what page you are on. I don’t need that. You’re to walk in there and not just parallel teach, we expect them to determine the needs of the students and we have various ways to do that and you can be teaching a lesson, teaching something other than what the teacher’s teaching. They need to work at the instructional level of the students."

In a broader sense, respondents described the challenges they face when bringing together a new team for in-class support instruction. “What we’ve done, too, is linking the teachers’ professional plan to the school goal so that they’re - these are key connections to really benefit our kids.” When teachers are focused on school or district goals, the ability of the elementary principal to connect them together is easier as they are both tied to the success of the students. Another respondent elaborated on this theme, "In the business world if you’re going to a conference with someone or a business meeting in New York and you have to present a project, you may not like the other person but guess what, you better do your job or you get heisted right out of there. In education, it’s probably going to be at that same point where we have to say okay, you don’t want to work together but you are. Therefore, these are the things that you need to prepare for so you do do a good job."
That denotes the importance of embracing your assigned role within an organization.

“That pool of personalities that just click automatically, it’s not there. I found that we’ve had to do more training because the personalities are not necessarily a perfect match.”

Furthermore, “you really have to do a lot of massaging of professional egos, personal egos, just to make sure that you can find matches that will work and be productive with kids.”

Additional Programs

Additional Programs is another primary factor described by six respondents that contributed to students with disabilities achieving AYP by utilizing teacher guided supplemental programs and additional student programs. Supplemental programs were the first theme and included Rally materials, Dibbles (helps to identify fluency and decoding problems), Stevenson Reading Program (used for a lot of special education students because it is visual), and Project Read (a very tactile visual). The second theme highlighted additional student programs, including extracurricular activities such as band, chorus, intramurals, and an academically talented program and an extra help program after school at one site. Additionally, an extended school year program for special needs students exists. Moreover, a guidance counselor delivered social skills program titled, “I Can Problem Solve,” was described by another respondent as, “a real big help this year as she has been getting into the classes on a rotating basis and talks about a different theme for the month.” Furthermore, “this program has been so helpful because she can just hone right into the class to whatever the issue is and work it through with the teachers.” As described by the respondents, additional programs contributed to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.
Curriculum

Curriculum is a primary factor identified by eight respondents as contributing to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam. Table 7 highlights the programmatic features of the curriculum. This included: curriculum alignment with standards and programmatic features, curriculum and test preparation, curriculum and student success, and curriculum and parent expectations. Nevertheless, a respondent connected curriculum with testing with the pressure often associated with test results, "I don't like high-stakes testing. I think it has us covering curriculum a mile wide but only an inch deep." More specifically, with regard to curriculum alignment with standards one respondent shared, "Well, we do have certain things that we definitely put into place. One being, of course, making sure our curriculum is in line with the standards."

Furthermore another respondent offered, "All of our IEPs we put core curriculum. We don't designate another program. It's all the McMillan Spotlights and again we can use other multi-modality techniques. " Towards this end, a myriad of approaches were described by the eight respondents.

However, there is a contrasting view on the effectiveness of Everyday Math. One respondent shared, "It really does lend itself to special education, too, because it does have built into it ways to help children who are working below grade level and it's a lot of hands-on." Conversely, another respondent shared, "We have the Everyday Math program which is a challenge for special education students. " Subsequently, yet another respondent shared remarked on the promise of another program, "It's not like an Everyday Math kind of thing which prescribes the daily instructions. " So, depending on
whom you ask, Everyday Math either helps or does not contribute to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Curriculum Programmatic Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Curriculum alignment with Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Language Arts: Balanced Literacy using mostly Fountas &amp; Pinnel Students write every day basically in their journals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independent reading is based upon the 100 Book Challenge program because the books are color coded and already leveled to match the Fountas &amp; Pinnel levels as well as guided reading levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics: Everyday Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Studies: We’re piloting several different programs but leaning towards using the McGraw-MacMillan series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science: Discovery Lab includes hands-on kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Health: The Great Body Stop is a scholastic-type magazine on health topics that comes out monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Language Arts: McMillan, McGraw Hill’s Spotlight on Literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Problem of the Day is connected with the reading program and collected by the principal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics: Scotts Foresman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All of our IEPs contain core curriculum. Another program is not designated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Programs that address different learning styles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project Read &amp; SRA with Project Read (It uses the kinesthetic approach to teaching kids)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Great Leaps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Framing Your Thoughts (is also used in the Resource Room)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Language Arts: Wilson Reading Program or Orton Gillingham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mathematics: Everyday Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Project Read is highly graphical with kids in terms of bare-bones sentences and predicate expanders. It is a pretty visual approach for kids to learn how to read and write better. It’s a research-based, language arts program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Balanced Literacy includes guided reading and/or core literature, what we call novel study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Language Arts: Literacy First is a program that probably accumulated all the functional good practices that I learned 30, 35 years ago and today’s researched based practices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Curriculum Planning

Curriculum Planning emerged as a secondary factor contributing to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam. Three out of the four respondents described the role of committees in the curriculum planning process.

In our programs that we use with the Everyday Math program, our teachers have developed their own assessments. For the last three years, they've felt that the program wasn't ad - wasn't really adequately identifying how kids were progressing and how they were achieving. So, these teachers pulled that whole program apart and they developed their own assessments. That has been really, really effective. A child could get two answers correct on a secure goal and they get mastery. Meanwhile, the teachers find in their daily performance, they're really not mastering those concepts. So they pulled it apart. They developed all kinds of assessments for every three units and they developed remediation activities because that program actually lacks those reinforcement basic skills for addition, subtraction, multiplication.

The remaining respondent highlighted the programmatic changes made to achieve AYP.

I told you we moved from the basal to the Balanced Literacy and that helped them. Before the special needs population was really struggling to be able to read a longer piece of material and with the Balanced Literacy you start off with Reader's Workshop and reading to gain stamina.

The curriculum mapping and backward design curriculum planning model described by another respondent connects to benchmarks, core curriculum, and content standards.
These are additional examples that made contributions to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

Technology

Technology is a primary factor that seven respondents stated contributed to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam by providing interactive opportunities for students and additional equipment for student and school use to enhance the delivery of instruction. As one respondent shared, “We are very much into technology.” This characterizes the attitude of seven of the nine respondents who described the technology in their respective schools.

Technology software emerged as the first theme. This includes a multitude of programs that can be used at home and at school. As a respondent noted, “If you’re just looking to afford kids practice, and there is some merit to practice without supervision, then this is something that let’s us do that as well as do some diagnostic stuff.” The “something” this respondent was referring to is a piece of software called “Skills Tutor,” which is an on-line skill development program that pre-assesses kids and then puts them into a program prescribed by what their needs are and then tracks their progress electronically over the internet. Study Island is another online resource. It is standards-based and children go online with teacher guidance and practice test-taking skills and strategies. I-KNOWS is another electronic assessment. It is used for language arts, reading, and math. Students take it individually and it provides teachers with immediate feedback. It takes about an hour. Everyday Math online games are used by students both in school and at home. Edu-Test is basically a computer-generated assessment for students. It can provide a snap shot of learning. The teachers can make up the questions
and put them into this assessment tool. Then the students complete the assessment and the computer program analyzes it for the teacher of each student.

Technology equipment emerged as the second theme. "Because we received the Star W Grant, I probably have 15 classes that actually have plasma screens in the classroom." Additionally, "They have scanners, digital cameras, printers for the cameras, and their own printer and they're trained monthly on how to infused technology into literacy, which is what the grant is about." Moreover, "We probably have purchased over a hundred laptops over the last three years. They're dispersed among teachers and then I have one lab that any teacher can borrow it and take it into their class to do a project."

Another respondent shared, "Recently we received two laptops that we can use with projection units so they're tied into a wireless network." This was the generous donation from their PTO. Furthermore, a respondent described the multitude of computers available for use. "In our library there's a class set of computers in both the computer lab and in the library we have about 15 computers." This computer lab is used for the after-school component of instruction and test preparation.

Websites

Six respondents provided specific feedback making Websites a primary factor that underscores the important role of additional assessment tools and curriculum supplements to reinforce academic skills. Table 8 indicates each website discussed by six of the nine respondents.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><a href="http://www.plato.com">www.plato.com</a></td>
<td>Plato Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.100bookchallenge.com">www.100bookchallenge.com</a></td>
<td>100 Book Challenge is phenomenal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><a href="http://www.rallyeducation.com">www.rallyeducation.com</a></td>
<td>The testing that we do online is called Global. Global does the writing and the math. We use Scholastic Reading Inventory for reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><a href="http://www.stevensonsemple.com">www.stevensonsemple.com</a></td>
<td>Stevenson Reading Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td><a href="http://www.studyisland.com">www.studyisland.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ahsprocess.com">www.ahsprocess.com</a></td>
<td>The [checklist I carry] — some of it is adopted from A Framework For Understanding Poverty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.skillstutor.com">www.skillstutor.com</a></td>
<td>It’s Achievement Technologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.projectread.com">www.projectread.com</a></td>
<td>It’s a research-based language arts program. There are five curriculum strands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hellofriend.org/programs">www.hellofriend.org/programs</a></td>
<td>A video played for faculty by Bill Cosby that spoke to children with learning disabilities and his son.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Scheduling of Teachers

Scheduling of Teachers is a primary factor contributing to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam which highlights the importance of common planning time for teachers and time for teachers to meet with department supervisors and/or the principal. “During the common planning time, without using names, we talk about a child and then toss to the group how this teacher can help this child.” Moreover, this time is used by teachers to meet, discuss, and plan their delivery of instruction.

Additionally, time for teachers to meet with parents was discussed because of the enhanced home-school relationship it fosters for the students. “We haven’t had those beginning of the year meetings or professional development day since we started this program. We found it more important that the teachers meet with parents than they meet with us,” shared a respondent. Three days are allotted for this before the start of school and a few half-days, as well, in case a meeting could not be scheduled earlier. The respondents also described a good working relationship with the Special Services or Pupil Personnel Services department that allows them to plan early for the instructional needs for students with disabilities and schedule teachers accordingly.

Student Success

Student Success is a secondary factor describing the philosophy behind students achieving success as shared by three respondents. As one respondent shared, “The basic philosophy of understanding that these kids have different learning styles and that we recognize these learning styles through the specific programs has really really helped.” Additionally, focusing on specific skills such as working with students on their writing
abilities improves student success. "We do a daily writing experience with them and really focus on that. I think that was a big key in helping them to achieve success."

Summarily, it is shared, "Our inclusion students probably made the most gains on the New Jersey ASK than any other population in our school."

**Hiring Practices**

Hiring Practices emerged as a secondary factor where two respondents discussed the importance of hiring teachers that are aware of student differences because every teacher will come into contact with a student with disabilities sometime in his or her career. "I think as long as we are differentiating, we're modifying instruction, we're communicating with all parties involved and we hire good teachers who know student differences, then I think that goes a long way in helping the kids succeed." This discussion expanded to include dual certification of general education teachers as well as the benefits reaped by the students when the interviewer looks at the candidate from two vantage points: subject matter or discipline and as a community member in a school.

I think the only thing that I didn't really mention is that I think when you're hiring someone you have to hire them not based only on what they know and how they can teach kids. I mean that's obviously primarily what you want to do. But you also have to look at the personality of the teacher and really think is this personality going to be the right thing for a child.

Also, the notion of a marriage surfaced in the elaboration by one respondent between the teacher and the school. "When I hire someone I look at it as a marriage and I take
marriage very seriously. If I don't feel that we're going to be a good match, I'm not gonna give you a contract; therefore, like entering into a marriage."

Results with Teachers

Results with teachers and teacher characteristics are two secondary factors that connect with hiring practices and inform student success. "I have really a wonderful staff that is very committed and dedicated to helping these kids," shared a respondent, which is a valuable teacher characteristic. Furthermore, to inform the delivery of instruction, students results are discussed with teachers and "we develop a plan of how they're going to address the weak areas." This team approach includes the principal in the planning phase and builds the capacity for the effective implementation of all suggestions because teachers are working together to increase student success.

Scheduling of Aides

Scheduling of Aides was described by one respondent and is a tertiary factor contributing to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam. "The aides are based specifically on what the needs of the kids are. So it changes from year to year," shared a respondent. This additional flexibility in scheduling was identified as contributing to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

Scheduling of Students

Scheduling of Students is a secondary factor that three respondents highlighted as a contributing factor to students with disabilities achieving AYP. From, "scheduling students with disabilities first and establishing groups of kids depending upon the level of service that they need," to "not offering basic skills during the day anymore but instead after school," student needs have taken a priority to contribute to their success on the
NJASK exam. In addition, a respondent shared, "I attribute their success to having a co-
teaching environment all day with the ability to pull-out and Flex Group students as
needed." This model of scheduling students to work in small groups for a period of time
on a specific topic enhances their proficiency level due to the small group direct
instruction. Moreover, this model includes students without disabilities who also need
additional assistance; therefore, boosting the overall achievement of all students.

Mainstreaming

Mainstreaming was identified by eight respondents as a primary factor that
contributed to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam. "Yes,
every special education student is included at some point, when they're able to, whether
it's just attending assembly or lunchtime. They're - they're included for everything."

Two themes emerged to further describe the mainstreaming experience for students with
disabilities. The first theme represented the mainstreaming areas for students with
disabilities. Waile respondents differed on the extent to which students with disabilities
were mainstreamed during the day, the consensus highlighted areas such as: lunch,
recess, and special areas including art, music, library, and physical education. One
respondent described mainstreaming every special needs student in the following manner:

They're all included in specifically in social studies and science settings.

Those are the two subject areas that all children, even - even self-contained
are included in social studies and science instruction. The reason why
they're included there is because our science is a hands-on science
curriculum. Our social studies curriculum, we generally have classroom
aides that are in there to help support the special education children and
we can differentiate those through unit work. So, everybody is in that one.
I don’t care which — you know, what — you know, you could be — even
our most severe cognitively impaired children are in science and social
studies.

“I’m a firm believer,” shared a respondent, “that every child should be able to do the
most that they are able to do. Kids should not be held back and discriminated against just
because they’re disabled.” The respondents overwhelmingly echoed this comment in
various forms. The support for mainstreaming by respondents in their respective schools
contributed to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

Basic skills are no longer offered in one school during the day. Rather, “Anybody
that needs extra help, it’s after school.” This coupled with structuring the special
education population first and, “establishing groups of kids depending upon the level of
service that they need,” greatly aids in the effectiveness of mainstreaming. Appropriate
scheduling of students with disabilities is an important secondary factor identified by
elementary principals’ as contributing to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the
NJASK exam. Although much focus was given to students with disabilities in self-
contained classes, students with disabilities in general education classes also benefit from
flex-grouping scheduling.

Well that means if a child is in a reading class and they’re working on
inferences, my resource room teacher who was co-teaching with my
regular ed. teacher can pull a couple of those special needs students just
for inferencing out with a couple of general ed. students and take them
into another group that’s working in the back of the room or to a different
room and just work on that specific skill of inferencing for the next couple of days. Then pull them back into the regular classroom for the remainder of the time once they've mastered that skill of inferencing. So they can pull those "Flex Groups" at any moment. So that has made a great difference. Sometimes it's the special ed. children and some, it's mostly special ed., but it's mixed with some regular ed. too because they're very sensitive to the special education children not feeling singled out. That is one of the reasons why I feel that group always comes out with the strongest scores.

Mainstreaming students in the least restrictive environment has demonstrated success according to the respondents when you inform teacher interaction and support teacher initiatives to enhance the experience of students with disabilities in particular and students in general.

The second theme revealed the culture of mainstreaming. One example shared by a respondent described the purpose of mainstreaming in the following manner: "I think by including them, it gives them an exposure, an opportunity to be with their peers and to develop good social interactions and also to be challenged educationally. So yes, these kids are included." Furthermore,

Some of the kids have befriended the children and become so close that they come to the class and visit them and do activities with them. It's a whole network of kids, 3rd and 4th graders, who've taken it upon themselves to reach out to these kids. They play basketball with the kids. They sing with them, you know. They get involved in the songs.
"It's more socialization," shared another respondent. "All kids are assigned to homerooms and even if it's something as simple as they go to their homerooms and go for attendance, if that's academically all they can handle that's what they do." For example, "The multi-handicapped children, some of them are ready for homerooms. So, they just go to classes for homeroom. In addition, shared the respondent, "I assign two 3rd-grade and two 4th-grade teachers to work with the special ed. teachers for each LD class, so that as their children become able to be mainstreamed, they can mainstream for whatever subject is appropriate." Aside from subject specific mainstreaming, "It might be for a party. If they have a Valentine's party next week, that child has to be in that mainstream class." This approach makes mainstreaming far more effective as prior planning and teacher interaction allows for ease of transition for students with disabilities. Moreover, students with disabilities are part of a learning community that that does not solely exist in their classroom be it self-contained or not.

Modifications

A Modification is a primary factor described by seven of the respondents to explain how students' needs are met. This includes two themes that emerged. The first theme was the use of modifications for testing. "We did everything we could to provide all of these accommodations for testing where if it was legal we did it," typifies the belief of several respondents.

"Our test coordinator met with the special education teachers to further expand areas that we could modify. Like sometimes the children in math use charts and so they read that to say that if they use it every day then they can use it. If it's an aid that they can use every day, you know, then it's an aid that they can use
during testing. So they really studied hard, specifically for the special ed. teachers and students, what areas could we make that testing environment the optimum."

General test modifications shared by respondents included, "the small group, the extended time, making sure that they are in a good testing environment, having breaks for them, and teachers reread the directions to them or re-explain the directions to them."

Another example of test modifications included the use of scribes. "A scribe would be someone who - if we had someone whose thinking was real good but he was unable to put pen to paper that person would write the essay for example in the kid's words."

Overall, "they are just unable to do the same thing but because the modifications, I think they are achieving but they couldn't if they took the test like everyone else."

The second theme is teacher interaction for the purpose of informing curricula modifications. "We meet with teachers regularly and talk about inclusive practices and how to make modifications and adaptations for the students," characterizes the general response. "So that by modifying and adapting and using positive reinforcement with the kids, they really could achieve anything under the right circumstances," shared a respondent. "We teach the curriculum. They receive some modifications but they're receiving the same program. " Therefore, whether it's modifications for students in the classroom or on a test, teacher involvement in both areas is an essential effort that helps to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP.

Professional Development Offerings

Professional Development Offerings is a primary factor mentioned by all nine respondents. The professional development offerings range between the respondents and are described in Table 9. However, the general theme is focusing on providing the
teachers with the professional training they need to be most effective with their students as an instructional leader. Furthermore, professional development generally speaking is tailored to the needs of the teachers. Toward that end, one respondent shared, “Whenever we plan staff development, I’ll go to them. I’ll go to everyone and say, “What are your needs?”” Another respondent offered when sharing the myriad opportunities provided to teachers in the district for professional development, “They do more workshops and in-service in this district than I’ve ever seen in my life.” Professional Development Time Allotment is an extension of the professional development offerings. Six respondents provided specific feedback making it a primary factor that highlights various time frames ranging from one hour faculty meetings to summer training sessions (Table 9).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Professional Development Offerings &amp; Experiences</th>
<th>Time Allotment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1          | • Observations of successful school districts with inclusion.  
• Workshops  
• In-service training offered within the district  
• Peer Coaching with other grade levels started at the inception of inclusion | N/A            |
| 2          | • Child Study Team does the training in terms of inclusion. For instance, this afternoon they are working with special area teachers on how to make sure those children can be mainstreamed into the special areas the best and actually succeed there.  
• Speakers have come in but on a limited basis  
• Teachers are given $150/year to spend on professional development. They are encouraged to go to a good workshop.  
• We are connected with a local college, and some of their graduate classes are offered on our school campus making it easier for teachers to actually go to graduate school. Special education is one of those areas in which classes are offered here. Teachers are eligible for payroll deduction so that they don’t have to pay tuition all at once. Also, some of our supervisors and administrators teach the classes. | Teachers are trained monthly on how to refuse technology into literacy |
| 3          | • Workshops to off-site destinations take place where teachers will return and turn-key within the building. This includes the Stevenson program.  
• The focus now is in-service training offered within the district. This includes classroom observations of teachers by new teachers to see what is already working in classrooms within the building.  
• Working on the Work by Philip Schieblety is another offering for teachers. | N/A            |
| 4          | • Teachers trained in brain-based learning techniques by Dr. Phil DePina on a full-day district-wide scale. He also does after-school teacher workshops where teachers voluntarily signed up. | Training has taken place on Saturdays and is voluntary.  
An example is the |
• Teachers trained in Schools Attuned techniques.
• Special education teachers have been trained in both Orton-Gillingham programs.
• Trained in “I Can Problem Solve,” by a consultant who came in on a curriculum half day.
• Training sessions at faculty meetings on how to work with kids with special needs. This includes my LDTC presenting and special education teachers share out techniques from Project Read and Great Leaps.

5

• Teachers trained, including BSI and special education teachers, in the use of Study Island which is an online resource for practice of test-taking skills and strategies.
• Teachers trained in the Schools Attuned model developed by Mel Levine to focus on different kinds of learners and how you meet their needs. Teachers have to keep portfolios and get parents involved. They really do a specific analysis on a child and how they’re learning. This is not solely for special education students.
• Workshops were also offered for in-class support teachers to hear from the experts or those who had best practice models.
• The New Staff Academy provides an opportunity for every new staff member to learn about special education, whether they were a special education teacher or not.
• Whenever we plan staff development, I’ll go to them. I’ll go to the whole staff. I’ll go to everyone and say, “What are your needs?”
• We offered a building-based workshop entitled: Implementing IEPs in the General Education Classroom. In addition, Implementing IEPs in the Related Arts Classroom was conducted by the Child Study Team who sat down and said, “Here’s what you really need to know. Here’s what you should be doing to help address their IEPs when they’re with you.”
The Director of Special Services tries to meet monthly and provide professional development for teachers in that department.

6  • The teachers were primarily trained in Wilson Reading and used a lot of those strategies.

7  • We in-house on Project Read.
    • We in-house on using technology in a classroom.
    • We in-house on Smart Boards.
    • We in-house on Columbia's Writer's Project.
    • You name it, we got something cooking!

8  • Inclusion teachers have been trained by Rick Welch. This involves them emailing him their lessons before he comes, he co-teaches with them when he arrives, and he meets with them outside of the classroom for more training.
    • At a faculty meeting everyone viewed a video by Bill Cosby that spoke to children with learning disabilities and his son. The video moved the staff.
    • Teachers were trained in co-teaching but not as extensively as I had desired. I was only able to get a co-teaching workshop through ETTC. I need to do a lot more.

9  • A mixture of formal and informal training. This includes training that is received by a teacher and turn-keyed upon their return to their building.
    • Training to the specific needs of inclusion teachers is growing. As a result, I found that we've had to do actually more training because the personalities are not necessarily a perfect match.
    • Teachers have been trained by Literacy First Consultants. Everything that is done is based upon assessments of the kid.
    • The informal can be me going into a classroom, saying change this around, do this, or do that.

Teachers get two professional days for their individual use and then they get typically a minimum of two to three other special district days.

Rick Welch trains for a full week.

Training was offered for as hour after school.

It is a two year process.
Special Services Support

Special Services Support is a primary factor identified by eight respondents as contributing to students with disabilities achieving AYP. The support ranged from involvement in student placement to facilitating workshops to serving on committees/teams with principals and/or teachers. "The support I receive is basically collaborative," shared a respondent, which typifies the sentiments of all eight respondents. The distinctions arose in the level of contact respondents described between themselves and Special Services personnel, particularly the Director or Supervisor. "It is almost impossible for them to have direct contact. Certainly if I make a phone call there's some support but is there on a consistent basis, absolutely not."

The collaboration that exists is best described in two separate manners: student-centered and adult-centered. The first theme of Special Services support was student-centered collaboration. This includes, "The Director of Special Services, every month, stressing strategies to help make kids successful on the test." The support was described as tremendous. It's in them calling me, "You have a new student who's coming who needs this kind of program. What's your class size look like? You know, just making sure they bounce things off of me," shared another respondent. This relationship aids elementary principals in supporting students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

The second theme of Special Services support was adult-centered collaboration. This included, "The Director of Special Services in his monthly faculty meetings going over inclusion practices and things like that. We really encourage the inclusion with the team in the building." Additionally, "We've had our special education department
learning consultants speak at faculty meetings." Overall, the communication is characterized as being, "completely open." "In fact, it's not uncommon for the Special Ed. Director to walk over and bang on my door and say, "Hey, Can we talk about a kid?" You know, that's one of the nice things about being small."

**Special Services Workshop Offerings**

Although only two respondents described Special Services Workshop Offerings, making it a secondary factor, it does describe in greater detail the level of support provided by Special Services. The array of workshops was described as a valuable support for students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam. This was connected directly to meeting the needs of the faculty. Workshops titled, "IEP Writing was designed to prepare special education teachers on writing IEPs." "Managing Misunderstood Minds was designed to help teachers understand and address the neurodevelopmental constructs that impede learning."

There was a workshop called Using Authentic Assessment to Guide IEP Development for Special Education Teachers and they were able to look at classroom data and use it to inform decision making, communicating with parents and making recommendations for their special education students for the following year.

On occasion workshops occurred which addressed the interaction of teachers and aides in the classroom. The overall sentiment was characterized in the following manner, "Because we have so many kids who are mainstreamed into a general classroom, our Pupil Services Department has workshop throughout the school year and the summer for teachers."

"Another workshop that was offered twice was Differentiating Mathematics in
the ICS Classroom and that was run by the Pupil Services Supervisor and our Mathematics Director. They network to come up with a way to address that for those teachers.” Overall, support from Special Services was identified as a factor by elementary principals enhancing their support of students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

Child Study Team

More specifically, the Child Study Team was described as an integral part of the inclusion process through the various ways in which they support students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam. This included the delivery of quality programming to faculty, establishing and maintaining a positive rapport with parents, effective decision making, and involving the principal in IEP meetings and other pertinent meetings relating to students with disabilities. This primary factor was discussed by all nine respondents who were eager to share their experiences with their respective Child Study Team.

Three themes emerged for Child Study Teams beginning with the respondents’ interaction with the Child Study Team. “We have our own Child Study Team right here in our building,” shared one respondent. The presence of the Child Study Team in the building allows greater interaction with the team and the building staff, including the principal, as was expressed by multiple respondents. However, an overarching theme was expressed in the following manner: “We felt that our special ed. population has grown and our community has become accustomed to us offering services for everything. Now we focus on making sure we’re giving it to the kids who really, really, truly need it.” This sentiment was shared by several respondents who highlighted their desire to
attend as many IEP meetings as possible, schedule permitting. “I can walk down and say I need to see you and unless they’re testing or in a meeting with a parent, we can deal with something immediately on the spot,” was an example of the open communication that exists to permit issues to be addressed quickly to support students with disabilities. Furthermore, due to the high number of student referrals, “Now we have someone from the Child Study Team sit in on our meetings so they can kind of tear what’s coming down the pike or what may not be coming down the pike.”

The second theme of Child Study Teams centered on the Team’s interaction with students with disabilities. An example was, “My LDTC is meeting with two groups of 3rd graders over lunch and recess one day a week, working on developing their writing and how to respond to picture prompts.” The third theme of Child Study Team focused on the Team’s interaction with teachers for professional growth and development.

My Child Study Team actually has very different backgrounds and teaches at colleges. So my team actually does the training in terms of inclusion for all teachers. For instance, this afternoon the Child Study Team is working with all my special area teachers on how to make sure those children can be mainstreamed into the special areas the best and actually succeed there.

Another respondent shared,

There was also ‘Implementing IEPs in the Related Arts Classroom’ and that was a building-based request and our Child Study Team sat down with those teachers and went specifically through the IEPs of the kids those teachers had, and said, “Here’s what you really need to know."
Here's what you should be doing to help address their IEPs when they're
with you."

These two distinct responses capture the essence of the support provided by the direct and
direct efforts of Child Study Teams to assist teachers in aiding students with disabilities
in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

The last theme Child Study Team that emerged was Child Study Team interaction
with parents. A respondent recalled, "Our Child Study Team is very good about calling
parents, involving parents, and making decisions. Showing them what the test is going to
be about so that they understand." Helping the parents and making decisions in concert
with them supports students with disabilities in numerous ways, one of which is academic
achievement. In addition, "Sometimes the team will say, 'Let that parent write the letter.'
We usually try to avoid it but we try to have all of our referrals in by March 1st to child
study. We really work to, at least." This level of interaction describes one of the many
roles played by the Child Study Team and provides insight into their areas of influence
and direction by informing, communicating, and making effective decisions.

Other Department Support

Other Department Support is a secondary factor that captures and connects three
respondents' experiences with the role of other department support in curriculum
planning associated with Special Services. "The best way I could put it is just that
collaborative relationship and support from other supervisors and administrators is
important because students with disabilities do have exposure to the regular education
curriculum." An example is, "We get support from most of the special areas like art and
music because even they tie in 'eig ideas from math and literacy into their classes because it's kinesthetic,' and benefits students with disabilities.

Other Department Workshop Offerings

Other Department Workshop Offerings is a tertiary factor identified by one respondent who offered workshop opportunities for teachers. "Some of our supervisors and administrators teach the classes. So that's nice, too." Support for students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam comes from an awareness of the principal's involvement in key areas to ensure student needs are addressed by the appropriate party, including teachers, students, and the Child Study Team.

Subsidiary Research Question 3:

How did the elementary principal support students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam?

Teacher Feedback

A majority of the respondents described the importance of teacher feedback in decision-making efforts to improve the quality of education that all students receive. This is a primary factor that has two themes: teacher to principal feedback and principal to teacher feedback. The teacher to principal feedback informs assessment of students as well as influences principal involvement with students within the classroom. When lines of communication are open and teachers feel comfortable voicing their opinions on topic related to student instruction, students benefit.

Moreover, principal to teacher feedback informs the placement of students in the in-class support model as well as redirects teachers' efforts to provide better instruction for students. Both examples are outgrowths of seizing opportunities to push students
beyond conventional expectations and providing the guidance to enhance their overall educational experience. A respondent shared a conversation with a teacher, “I don’t think your response to them makes them understand what they’re doing and not doing,” after reviewing student answers to a “Problem of the Day” question.

Furthermore, a 5 x 5 walk-through which is a kind of supervision where you do five classrooms a day for five minutes and you either do a general kind of walk-through or you look for things related to instruction or classroom management was touted as very successful by one respondent. A checklist may be used and given to the teacher or a handwritten note tossed in their mailbox to provide feedback of the walk-through. This practice also helps to keep the principal focused while walking around and pinpoints the feedback. Two-way communication in the form of feedback as described by six respondents helps to explain how the elementary principal supports students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam in these schools.

Results with Teachers

The secondary factor “results with teachers” is associated with principal-teacher feedback as principals’ work to ensure their teachers are utilizing good teaching practices. For example, one respondent uses the articulation period, which is a designated teacher preparation period for meetings, to review their students’ writing scores with them. The principal also gave them some ideas on how to model, what kind of things to model, and how to go about implementing it. This weekly meeting may be facilitated by the principal or the content area supervisor. This factor helps to explain how the elementary principal supports students with disabilities in their preparation phase.
prior to the administration of the NJASK exam as teachers are refining their instructional practices to better meet the needs of students.

**Instructional Practices**

Instructional Practices is a primary factor described by seven respondents. The first theme that emerged was mandating students in basic skills to attend an after-school program. “A parent can get them out of it by writing a letter but most of the parents want them to stay after school,” reported a respondent. This instructional practice is an outgrowth of the Superintendent’s philosophy that states, “Students belong in the classroom as much as possible because if you pull them out they’re missing something and they’re already behind.” However, another respondent cited the benefits of “Flex Grouping” students throughout the day for a particular writing skill such as editing. Students, special education as well as general education students struggling with this skill, are pulled out by the in-class support teacher, taken to his or her classroom with their writing piece and then brought back to the regular education classroom for the author’s chair. This practice can be applied in reading, writing, and math. The respondent concludes the description of this practice by stating, “All of those types of strategies help in pulling up the literacy scores.”

The second theme that emerged as an instructional practice was the delivery of instruction by teachers to students. This included the use of a “Problem of the Day” geared toward the instructional level of the students to ensure that they are all doing what they need to do. “So, that’s where the teacher will focus all of their learning, all of her teaching so that the child is not exposed to only one size fits all teaching,” stated one respondent. It also includes the review of lesson plans examining, “The daily kind of a
math problem that will respond to the types of questions that are on the test. You know the open-ended questions where they have to explain and go through that as well as the reading and writing experiences."

In addition to specific materials being utilized in the classroom, an increase in the time of the delivery of instruction was also discussed by respondents. For example, "Special education students receive approximately 60 minutes of math every day – whole class right in there with general education and then concentrated small group instruction. So, I think that led to higher scores. Plus, the biggest element is that we all are on the same wavelength with the big ideas in math and literacy but how we deliver it varies."

Although some respondents focus on the delivery of instruction, one respondent focused on "Providing meaningful and authentic work so students become volunteers in their learning process and that's been a little bit of a shift with our staff where we tell them we're not talking about your delivery of instruction. We're talking about the work that you're expecting children to do." Overall, is the work something that students want to do? This is WOW, "Working on the Work," and it has been ongoing for years in this respondent's school. This theme evolved with the use of space repetition which was described as, "Over time if I really want you to be able to write a topic sentence, I don't give up on doing that after I teach it in September but I continually find ways to re-enforce it over the course of the year." A phrase, killing two birds with one stone, was compared to skipping and treading waters when a respondent recalled telling teachers as much as possible, when you can, embed the strategies into the curriculum. With these strategies teachers aren't so quick to say, "Ooh, I can't teach this kid. He needs to go be
assessed by the team. Now teachers are looking at what can they do in the classroom before they jump the gun and refer the kid to child study.”

The third theme that emerged within instructional practices is the role of the principal in the modeling of lessons every row and then for faculty as well as the coordinated efforts of teachers. An example is, “I made all of special education teachers teach writing in the regular classroom. Now that was a feat because nobody wanted to do it. But it makes a difference in the level of writing, and I have seen that.” The principal serving as a catalyst for teachers working together for the benefit of students is another way in which elementary principals support students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

Overall, Instructional Practices emerged as a data code that helps to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP with a combination of the utilization of the curriculum to teach needed skills, the amount of time spent on a subject, the location of the delivery of instruction, and learning activities that are engaging to students. The overarching phrase to describe these themes is differentiation which was best captured by one respondent. “Most of the strategies that work for the special needs population through differentiation also help some of the at-risk borderline regular education children as well.” Therefore, targeting the special education population will help all children, particularly those at-risk but not receiving special education services was the overarching sentiment.

Assessment of Students

Assessment of Students is a secondary factor that is a part of Instructional Practices and Modifications as well as associated with Test Preparation (see Matrices 7
and 1). The respondents described the process of student assessment as yielding specific data to gauge the level of student achievement at various times utilizing a variety of assessment tools on an ongoing basis. For example, "The department leaders [in one school] take the information from Ede-Test and work as a group to see where the student weaknesses may be and then develop an action plan based on that analysis. So, that action plan is put into effect for the next trimester before the next benchmark assessment." Another assessment tool, Diddles, helped to identify the seeds of all students including students with disabilities. Also, the use of "I-KNOWS" which is an electronic assessment for language arts, reading, and math gives the teacher immediate feedback. While the assessment schedule varies between schools, the primary goal is to try to predict how students are going to perform on the New Jersey ASK. Another goal is to look at individual student's strengths and weaknesses identified through an assessment or from their class work for the purpose of making immediate changes to improve their academic achievement. Discussions between teachers and administrators who focused on Assessment of Students and Student Work yield positive changes in student's academic experience.

**Student Characteristics**

Student Characteristics described by two respondents' falls within the secondary tier of factors and is also part of Instructional Practices. When reflecting on the students who made AYP a respondent commented, "By the luck of the draw, I hate to say that but simply by the luck of the draw sometimes you have a group of kids that just are less disabled and more, have more ability to achieve." This was supported by another respondent who stated, "What we've realized is all children learn differently on different
days in different ways and it doesn’t matter if they’re special education classification or they’re regular education students.” So, any given year a special education population can achieve AYP or not. Students come to school at different levels. Therefore, the use of proven instructional practices is very important because it may very well make the difference in student achievement.

**Grants**

Grants are also a secondary factor described by four respondents as having influenced the instructional practices of students with disabilities. The primary theme that emerged was the enhancement of technology through grants. This ranged from receiving laptops to use with projection units tied into a wireless network to grants garnered by a district-wide grant writer for the enhancement of technology into classrooms. “I probably have 15 classes that actually have plasma screens in the classrooms. Yes, I know, it’s great. They have plasma, they have scanners, they have digital cameras and they’re trained monthly on how to infuse technology into literacy, which is what the grant is about,” shared one respondent.

The second theme that emerged was the provision of interventions to reduce or eliminate social promotion in one school. “With that grant the students that performed partially proficient on the ASK test grade three into four, so our current fourth graders are eligible for, we have a summer program in August that ran for five weeks every day, two and a half hours a day and tutoring throughout the school year on a one to two ratio.” Also, hiring specialized people who would actually work with the in-class support teachers to make sure that the models that they are using are useful and adaptable and functional in another school was highlighted. Grants were pursued from various entities
including the State of New Jersey, the PTA, and through district personnel hired to garner grants from other sources. This additional component supported by the elementary principal greatly aided schools in supplementing their instructional practices to help explain what factors describe students with disabilities achieving AYP.

PTA/PTO/HSA

Whether it is called a PTA (Parent Teacher Association), a PTO (Parent Teacher Organization), or a HSA (Home School Association), assistance offered by parents to schools supported endeavors to benefit all students. The support ranged from grant opportunities made available to teachers for individual projects to raising money for special equipment and supplies. The first theme that emerged was the close working relationship with the school as evidenced by the targeted activities and materials provided. "They do assemblies including cultural arts activities throughout the year. In addition, they provide support materials such as a new set of books for core literature or Judy Clocks." What the parent organization provides to the schools in terms of meeting its needs aids the elementary principal in supporting students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NIAASK exam.

The second theme that emerged was the offering of grants for different things in the school. The teachers or principal may apply for a grant for a project, a special program or if they are developing something to benefit the students. The third theme that emerged was the willingness of the parent organization to fund special projects such as prizes for a math carnival. Another example was the establishment of a school store where a PTA bought all of the supplies that teachers wanted kids to have. "This was set up right in the school for the parents to come to the school in lieu of going to Staples and
the Wal-Mart because they hated that,” shared the respondent. The PTA was told that the six or so kids on free and reduced lunch might not be able to afford to buy all these things and they put together a whole backpack of school supplies for those kids. Overall, an active parent organization enhances the quality of education provided to all students and contributes to the elementary principal being able to support students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

Special Education PTA

In stark contrast to the views of the general parent organization, two respondents discussed the existence of a Special Education PTA making it a secondary factor. One respondent described this organization as separate a little bit and believed that their existence defeats their purpose. “They do functions, do fundraisers, and belong to the general PTA too. We’re supposed to be all together as one and I think their existence does separate us,” the respondent added. Conversely, the other respondent described the PTA specifically devoted to special needs kids as very active. They have their own monthly meetings. They offer parent workshops at night. The tone of this respondent was more tolerant of their existence and purpose. “They support the school with an After School Social Skills Program where they pay one of the staff members to have bi-monthly interactions with kids who don’t fit in real well — both classified and non-classified.” Although this organization is not present in every school, this quote reflects the impact their presence can have in the educational environment, especially for students with disabilities. “If you don’t do it right, they let you know. They’re not critical. But it’s the way, you know, kids behave better when dad’s watch’n.”
Parent Support

Parental support is not limited to the PTA/PTO/HSA organizations in each elementary school. Parents make themselves available to participate in numerous areas in the school, including volunteering in general and holding special drawings to provide assistance such as copy services to a lucky teacher or snacks during testing time. “Most parents are very good,” remarked one respondent. “Of all the parents that we work with most go along with the program and will support what we’re trying to do. If they know that you care and you’re there for their kid, they’re gonna support you.” So, parental support aides not only the students but the staff. Also note that the special education parents are also ready and willing to serve, but tend to work within the scope of the general education parents role when assisting students and staff members.

Parent Contact

Parent Contact is a primary factor associated with Parent Support. This is a vital component in the education of special education children in particular and general education students in general. Parents are contacted to meet with teachers before school starts in one school while in another “Parent Nights” are held. Individual meetings occur when parents are invited to attend an I&RS (Intervention & Referral Services) meeting where one respondent is always involved. Whether it is via a newsletter or individual contact for the purpose of addressing a programmatic need for a student, parent contact keeps home and school connected for the ultimate benefit of the students. Therefore, the more contact you have with parents the greater the opportunity to enhance the educational experiences of the students in your school.
In the beginning of the year, parent-teacher meetings in one school are held and called “Individual Student Goal Conferences.” The respondent goes on to share, “We found it more important that they meet with parents than they meet with us. The parents and teachers both like meeting together.” A few of the first days of school are half-days to provide additional time for meetings in case a meeting did not take place between the parent and teacher before the start of school.

“So before school even starts, all of our teachers meet with parents before school starts to talk about the child and to develop a plan. Usually, we don’t focus on academics doing that one. It’s more about social or emotional or behavioral things that the parents want us to know about the child and we pick something that we want to work on throughout the year.

All parents — regular and special education — are all involved in that.”

Parent contact has the opportunity to yield additional information for the teacher about the student and to get the parents onboard with the teacher’s plan for the student for the year. The elementary principal’s support of this process supports students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

Parent Desires

A secondary factor associated with Parent Contact is Parent Desires. “When it comes to readiness for the NJASK, a lot of parents want their children involved in the test prep class,” shared one respondent. The extra help desired by many parents as explained by two respondents goes beyond test preparation to support in the classroom. “They see the benefit of having a second teacher in their child’s class.”
Special Services Support

Special Services Support is a primary factor identified by eight respondents as contributing to students with disabilities achieving AYP. The support ranged from involvement in student placement to facilitating workshops to serving on committees/teams with principals and/or teachers. "The support I receive is basically collaborative," shared a respondent, which epitomizes the sentiments of all eight respondents. The distinctions arose in the level of contact respondents described between themselves and Special Services personnel, particularly the Director or Supervisor. "It is almost impossible for them to have direct contact. Certainly if I make a phone call there's some support but is there on a consistent basis, absolutely not."

The collaboration that exists is best described in two separate manners: student-centered and adult-centered. The first theme of Special Services support was student-centered collaboration. This includes, "The Director of Special Services, every month, stressing strategies to help make kids successful on the test." The support was described as tremendous. It's in them calling me, "You have a new student who's coming who needs this kind of program. What's your class size look like? You know, just making sure they bounce things off of me," shared another respondent. This relationship aids elementary principals in supporting students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

The second theme of Special Services support was adult-centered collaboration. This included, "The Director of Special Services in his monthly faculty meetings going over inclusion practices and things like that. We really encourage the inclusion with the team in the building." Additionally, "We've had our special education department
learning consultants speak at faculty meetings." Overall, the communication is characterized as being, "completely open. " "In fact, it's not uncommon for the Special Ed. Director to walk over and bang on my door and say, "'Hey, Can we talk about a kid?"' You know, that's one of the nice things about being small.'

**Special Services Workshop Offerings**

Although only two respondents described Special Services Workshop Offerings, making it a secondary factor, it does describe in greater detail the level of support provided by Special Services. The array of workshops was described as a valuable support for students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam. This was connected directly to meeting the needs of the faculty. Workshops titled, "IEP Writing was designed to prepare special education teachers on writing IEPs. " "Managing Misunderstood Minds was designed to help teachers understand and address the neurodevelopmental constructs that impede learning."

There was a workshop on Using Authentic Assessment to Guide IEP Development for Special Education Teachers and they were able to look at classroom data and use it to inform decision making, communicating with parents and making recommendations for their special education students for the following year.

On occasion workshops occurred which addressed the interaction of teachers and aides in the classroom. The overall sentiment was characterized in the following manner, "Because we have so many kids who are mainstreamed into a general classroom, our Pupil Services Department has workshops throughout the school year and the summer for teachers." “Another workshop that was offered twice was Differentiating Mathematics in
the ICS Classroom and that was run by the Pupil Services Supervisor and our Mathematics Director. They network to come up with a way to address that for those teachers." Overall, support from Special Services was identified as a factor by elementary principals enhancing their support of students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

**Child Study Team**

More specifically, the Child Study Team was described as an integral part of the inclusion process through the various ways in which they support students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam. This included the delivery of quality programming to faculty, establishing and maintaining a positive rapport with parents, effective decision making, and involving the principal in IEP meetings and other pertinent meetings relating to students with disabilities. This primary factor was discussed by all nine respondents who were eager to share their experiences with their respective Child Study Team.

Three themes of Child Study Teams emerged beginning with the respondents' interaction with the Child Study Team. "We have our own Child Study Team right here in our building," stated one respondent. The presence of the Child Study Team in the building allows greater interaction with the team and the building staff, including the principal, as was expressed by multiple respondents. However, an overarching theme was expressed in the following manner: "We felt that our special ed. population has grown and our community has become accustomed to us offering services for everything. Now we focus on making sure we're giving it to the kids who really, really, truly need it." This sentiment was shared by several respondents who highlighted their desire to
attend as many IEP meetings as possible, schedule permitting. "I can walk down and say I need to see you and unless they're testing or in a meeting with a parent, we can deal with something immediately on the spot," was an example of the open communication that exists to permit issues to be addressed quickly to support students with disabilities. Furthermore, due to the high number of student referrals, "Now we have someone from the Child Study Team sit in on our meetings so they can kind of hear what's coming down the pike or what may not be coming down the pike."

The second theme of Child Study Teams centered on the Team's interaction with students with disabilities. An example was, "My LDTC is meeting with two groups of 3rd graders over lunch and recess one day a week, working on developing their writing and how to respond to picture prompts." The third theme of Child Study Team focused on the Team's interaction with teachers for professional growth and development.

My Child Study Team actually has very different backgrounds and teachers at colleges. So my team actually does the training in terms of inclusion for all teachers. For instance, this afternoon the Child Study Team is working with all my special area teachers on how to make sure those children can be mainstreamed into the special areas the best and actually succeed there.

Another respondent shared,

There was also 'Implementing IEPs in the Related Arts Classroom' and that was a building-based request and our Child Study Team sat down with those teachers and went specifically through the IEPs of the kids those teachers had, and said, "Here's what you really need to know."
Here's what you should be doing to help address their IEPs when they're with you."

These two distinct responses capture the essence of the support provided by the direct and indirect efforts of Child Study Teams to assist teachers in aiding students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam.

The last theme Child Study Team that emerged was Child Study Team interaction with parents. A respondent recalled, "Our Child Study Team is very good about calling parents, involving parents, and making decisions. Showing them what the test is going to be about so that they understand." Helping the parents and making decisions in concert with them supports students with disabilities in numerous ways, one of which is academic achievement. In addition, "Sometimes the team will say, 'Let that parent write the letter.' We usually try to avoid it but we try to have all of our referrals in by March 1st to child study. We really work to, at least." This level of interaction describes one of the many roles played by the Child Study Team and provides insight into their areas of influence and direction by informing, communicating, and making effective decisions.

Other Department Support

Other Department Support is a secondary factor that captures and connects three respondents' experiences with the role of other department support in curriculum planning associated with Special Services. "The best way I could put it is just that collaborative relationship and support from other supervisors and administrators is important because students with disabilities do have exposure to the regular education curriculum." An example is, "We get support from most of the special areas like art and
music because even they tie in big ideas from math and literacy into their classes because it's kinesthetic," and benefits students with disabilities.

Other Department Workshop Offerings

Other Department Workshop Offerings is a tertiary factor identified by one respondent who offered workshop opportunities for teachers. "Some of our supervisors and administrators teach the classes. So that's nice, too." Support for students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam comes from an awareness of the principal's involvement in key areas to ensure student needs are addressed by the appropriate party, including teachers, students, and the Child Study Team.

Summary

Overall, principals' high expectations for themselves, teachers, and students translate into students with disabilities achieving AYP under NCLBA. They see themselves responsible for creating an inclusive environment for all students that lends itself to creative ways of delivering instruction. This ranges from (i) offering basic skill instruction after school to (ii) teachers using a professional development day to meet amongst themselves on a grade level to discuss curriculum materials to (iii) teaching writing to students with disabilities within the classroom in an effort to reduce the number of pull-out sections. Whether it is visiting a class, teaching a lesson, or having lunch with students, they understand that their presence enriches the experiences of their students. More specifically, the principals highlight their presence in every classroom on a weekly basis at a minimum. Several principals visit every classroom everyday and describe this experience as invaluable in enabling them to provide meaningful and direct feedback on what is going on in the class immediately. Additionally, the establishment
of practices to include all students with disabilities within a general education homeroom regardless of the severity of their disability exposes every student to some portion of the general education curriculum. Regardless of their views on the accountability component of NCLBA, they do agree that students need as much exposure to the general education curriculum as possible if they are going to demonstrate gains in the area of academic achievement.

Furthermore, the partnerships that principals form are vital to ensuring the success of all students and students with disabilities in particular. The guidepost role of the principal is most evident when interacting with teachers. This may include showing a video to teachers featuring several students with disabilities to broaden their understanding of the importance of their role in preparing these particular children to enter the world as productive citizens. In addition, attending workshops with teachers demonstrates an interest in their activities and helps to enhance the trust and communication that should exist between principal and teacher. Meeting with teachers to review student data either in the form of submitted class work or scored rubrics returned from a test preparation company, also helps to ensure that students' needs are being met in the classroom. The monitoring of student achievement through test preparation activities and the subsequent development of action plans to address student needs is invaluable. Furthermore, support from other departments, including the Child Study Team, directly affects the quality of education received by students. This may take place in the form of monthly meetings to provide additional instructional strategies to teachers for students or in grade level or team meetings where strategies are developed and shared to aid teachers in helping students become more successful. Finally, a major
contributor to students with disabilities achieving AYP under NCLBA is the empowerment of teachers in the areas of professional development by working to meet their needs and the realignment of curriculum to meet the needs of their students. As shown in Figures 4 through 13, several relationships exist between data codes, which provide the researcher with a foundation on which to draw conclusions and make recommendations for policy, practice, and future research.
FIGURE 4. Interview Question 2
FIGURE 5. Interview Question 3
FIGURE 7. Interview Question 5
FIGURE 9. Interview Question 8
FIGURE 10. Interview Question 9
FIGURE 11. Interview Question 10
FIGURE 12. Interview Question 11
FIGURE 13. Interview Question 12
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

This chapter presents the conclusions of the study based on the qualitative analysis of the data. This chapter also provides recommendations for policy, practice, and future study. The main research question and the three subsidiary questions along with the data codes that emerged from the interview questions will help to frame the discussion and analysis in Chapter V. Due to the nature of qualitative research, the data provides rich detail to focus on the study of a sample of New Jersey elementary principals whose students with disabilities population achieved AYP under NCLBA. Each principal's description of their experiences and perceptions aids in providing insight to better understand the phenomenon of inclusion. This is achieved by examining the attitudes and practices towards students with disabilities. Furthermore, this study contributes to the knowledge base in the field of education by describing what contributory factors exist in elementary schools to help students with disabilities achieve AYP.

The advent of NCLBA has expanded the inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education environment by virtue of its accountability system which simply measures student achievement, publicly reports it, and highlights any achievement gap that exists. The attitudes and practices of the principal may be the most powerful force in determining the extent to which schools embrace the inclusion of students with
disabilities. To that end, principals demonstrate to the rest of the school community through their leadership what is important, what requires attention, and what is valued.

The inclusion of students with disabilities in America's schools has intensified the focus on academic achievement for all segments of the population, including any gaps that may exist between groups. The concentration is currently on the school and classroom placement of students with disabilities versus the quality of instruction they receive in these respective schools and classrooms. Specifically, the principal's attitude toward inclusion is critical to the success of insertion of students with disabilities into the general education setting in public schools. Summarily, doing what is right for students with disabilities did not first occur with the advent of NCLB. Instead, students with disabilities have been successful in various educational settings for a multitude of reasons. However, NCLB is designed to focus greater attention on sub-groups within the population to ensure that every child is educated to his or her fullest. Therefore, NCLB has been described as a catalyst for some and a hurdle for others.

Affecting the culture of schools through a system of sanctions is how some describe NCLB. Nevertheless, the role of principal is pivotal in changing this culture. The process must start with that role. The principal is charged with striking a balance between federal and state mandates and the needs of the specific learning environment. Thus, the literature underscores that a more self-reflective principal is better able to make the shift from an instructional leader to a leader of a professional learning community. Building leadership capacity involves the empowerment of others in the learning community and may include several activities to guide the process including: study groups, action research teams, vertical learning communities, and leadership teams.
(Lambert, 2002). Therefore, the empowerment of teachers in their schools best summarizes one of the most effective ways principals can positively affect the culture of learning in schools.

While there are others who believe that NCLBA is turning the focus of schools away from the importance of their culture and climate to data driven assessment, the role of the principal remains pivotal in all of these areas. The principal as change agent remains the linchpin for improvement in any direction. As a change agent, the principal has the ability to narrow the achievement gap through the use of a variety of practices not limited to professional learning opportunities for all professionals in the school.

According to the participants in this study, the engagement of faculty by the principal informs the quality of instruction provided to all students and contributed to students with disabilities achieving AYP under NCLBA. To that end, as progress is being made in addressing the needs of students with disabilities, the participants note that a philosophy centered around the beliefs that all children can learn, all children can pass the NJASK exams, and all children have a right to the least restrictive environment is paramount. This approach, the literature supports, will begin to narrow the achievement gap between students with disabilities and their non-disabled classmates.

The data from this study provided information on the attitudes and practices of New Jersey elementary principals toward students with disabilities who achieved AYP under NCLBA. The attitudes and practices identified totaled 60 data codes which were grouped into three factors: primary, secondary, and tertiary. The remainder of this chapter presents answers to the research questions. These answers will be followed by recommendations for policy, practice, and further study.
Implications for Main Research Question

The most significant factor described by New Jersey elementary school principals that help to explain students with disabilities achieving AYP under NCLBA is Instructional Practices. It is the fundamental cornerstone from which all other identified factors by principals are related. Principal expectations can empower teachers to work together as well as independently to enhance the delivery of instruction to students with disabilities. Meetings to examine student work provide opportunities for teachers to reflect and modify their instructional practices. Student work includes class work periodically reviewed by the principal as well as the formal assessment of students which is tied to test preparation. The use of test preparation materials throughout the school year informs the variety of modifications put into practice to assist students with disabilities in achieving AYP. Once modifications are identified, either through the student’s Individual Education Program (IEP) or teacher established modifications, various interventions are utilized to enhance student success.

Parents are actively engaged in the intervention process. Parental contact is highly regarded and provides an opportunity for teachers to learn of the desires held for their children at meetings which occur throughout the year. Moreover, parent and teacher interaction is greatly valued by principals and highly encouraged. Whether it is a school’s approach to providing days for parents and teachers to meet before the start of school to ensuring parents are present at intervention meetings, dialogue is paramount to ensure an effective approach to educating each child.

The support offered by parents who are valued as partners in the education of students in general and students with disabilities in particular, is invaluable for the school
and the teachers. This is often experienced through the formal organization of parents in a group such as the PTA, PTO, or HSA. On occasion, parents of students with disabilities form their own formal organization to ensure the needs of students with disabilities are met. However, parents who work under the auspices of a formal organization or in a group or as individuals all make meaningful contributions to the school environment by supporting programs and supplementing with grants or giving of their time as volunteers.

The use of tutoring for students is highly beneficial. Garnering grants helps in this area as well as provides additional funding for other interventions. To this end, it is imperative that the teachers understand the various characteristics of each student in order to effectively meet his or her individual needs. Thus, differentiating instruction makes an incredible difference not only in the educational experience of students with disabilities but positively affects all students. Principals described time and again how students in the general education setting greatly benefited from being exposed to the instructional practices designed for students with disabilities. Although many general education students may not qualify for special services; nonetheless, many are not experiencing academic success. So, flex grouping for example allows the special education teacher to meet the needs of students, whether general or special education, by providing small group instruction as needed.

In addition to informing the delivery of instruction, principals described the importance of teacher feedback on a daily basis. Engagement in curricula conversations with teachers as well as providing feedback in all instructional areas on an on-going basis immensely contributes to the achievement of AYP by students with disabilities.
Additionally, meaningful discussions of results from student assessments between the principal and teachers and sometimes a subject supervisor, enhances the teacher's discretion when teaching needed skills to students. Therefore, meeting regularly to discuss student achievement or lack thereof throughout the year can inform effective action planning where teachers are constantly monitoring and addressing their delivery of instruction methods to meet students where they are and plan accordingly to guide them to where they want them to go.

Although all of the populations of students with disabilities in this study previously achieved AYP under NCLBA, the majority characterized NCLBA negatively. The principals feel the pressure to perform and do not take obtaining AYP in any given year for granted. Rather, they describe a passion to improve what is working and find other ways to ensure the success of all of their students. Pressure on students (i.e. where they become ill closer to the test date) and pressure on teachers were disheartening to the principals. They felt a sense of responsibility to do everything within their power to lessen the anxiety for those in their charge. In addition, the pressure felt by students to perform well on the test was in part from their parents who often cannot understand why their child did not do as well as they had hoped based on their academic success in school.

The findings indicate that students with disabilities are benefiting from the accountability component of NCLBA. If educational outputs versus educational inputs are the measure of student success, then students are demonstrating that learning is taking place in their respective classrooms. Principals are no longer satisfied with good practices that are not yielding targeted results. Change is the order of the day and if the
assessment of students demonstrates growth then the school is moving in a positive direction. The principals reveal that the establishment of effective instructional practices is tied to constantly re-evaluating student measured success. This can be through formal or informal assessment; however, self-reflection on the part of the teacher is as important as it is for the principal.

The literature describes the seesaw that exists in today's educational environment where on one side you have the expectations of the federal and state government and on the other side you have the expectations of the parents and school community. The seesaw teeters back and forth, but in the end, parental expectations are encapsulated within the mandates for the least restrictive setting for students with disabilities through the creation of an inclusive educational environment for all students. When parents know that based on the established climate and culture of the school that every child is valued, they see themselves more as partners than as adversaries. This paradigm shift for many parents provides yet another opportunity for the principal to evolve his or her role from instructional leader to a leader of learners. Parents are included in the community of learners and providing effective, clear, and concise communication through various mediums such as newsletters to monthly or quarterly evening school meetings to presentations at Board of Education meetings demonstrates the value you place on their role in the education of their children.

Implications for Subsidiary Questions

Subsidiary Research Question 1

The educational philosophy of New Jersey elementary principals helps to describe their attitudes toward students with disabilities. Addressing the individual needs of each
student is paramount for principals. This approach values each child as a unique learner and creates an environment that is welcoming for students with disabilities as they come to classes with an IEP. They are extremely encouraging of students with disabilities and many go out of their way to interact with the self-contained special education classes. Their positive attitude is demonstrated in the manner in which high goals are set for all students and teachers are held accountable in part for their students’ success. These viewpoints are supported by the literature on accountability which is designed to hold educators accountable for the success or failure of their students. In addition, raising the bar of excellence for students yields better test results because you are constantly seeking additional ways to inform instruction.

Principal self-perception which is an extension of their educational philosophy ties directly into their instructional leadership role which most often characterizes their position in schools. Principals know that to be most effective they must possess a firsthand awareness of the classroom environment and demonstrated knowledge of the curriculum. They need not be a subject matter expert. This melding of roles allows principals to most effectively guide teacher growth and development. Based on this working knowledge, principals are highly respected by their teachers because they can inform discussions as well as receive meaningful and targeted feedback based on the frequency of visits to the classroom. The focus on educational output versus input is also evident in this area. Everyone contributes to these successful school communities and all are valued learners. The principals know that they are no longer the core that everyone comes to seeking answers. Rather, they see themselves as change agents available on a daily basis to work with everyone to provide the best quality of education for all students.
Consistent with the literature is the importance of visibility for the principal. As an instructional leader, a principal's presence solely in the classroom either teaching a lesson or observing a lesson was critical. Shifting to a leader of learners in a community takes on additional responsibilities. This includes time spent with students outside of the classroom. Many of the principals set aside time to dine with students either daily or monthly. It demonstrates to the students that the principal is invested in them and wants to get to know them. Furthermore, informal interaction with students in a conversation in the hallway also demonstrates that they are valued in the learning community. This enhances their experience in this educational setting because of the culture that is enhanced with personal interaction which is student recognition.

Moreover, visibility is also associated with teacher interaction which is a part of teacher feedback. These principals cared what their teachers thought about every aspect of the education of students. Their opinions were valued so much so that the principals scheduled a regular time to meet before, during, or after school with teams of teachers across grade levels or on a particular grade level to discuss inclusive practices, modifications, and adaptive practices for students. This did not exclude test preparation as a regular topic due to the high-stakes nature of NCLBA. In addition, principals valued coordinating time for teachers to meet and discuss inclusion implementation strategies. The cultures in these schools reflect a desire to utilize the resources within the school and district to most effectively retool practices for the benefit of students.

Measures of the attitude of principals is evidenced in the instructional practices they use to help to guide as well as the extent to which modifications are encouraged to support students with disabilities on a daily basis. Test preparation is valued for all, but
for the students with disabilities additional care is taken to ensure the appropriate modifications are in place during testing. The empowerment of teachers to do what is best for their students is not only encouraged but cultivated through the establishment of teams and committees of teachers on an on-going basis.

The perception of students plays a role in the attitude of principals. The principal demonstrates the value of students with disabilities to the school community by providing access to all activities within the school, provided their involvement does not pose a risk of injury. The demonstrated acceptance of students with disabilities by principals gives everyone else in the environment permission to accept and embrace them as equals.

Overall, the attitude of principals towards students with disabilities is extremely positive and it lends itself to an environment that values all students as equal and students with disabilities as having a right to be present in the general education setting. This is consistent with the literature as the principal's attitude directs the principal's behavior. Hence, parents are eager to support the building principal's request for additional materials, supplies, and equipment as they have great confidence in their school leadership.

Subsidiary Research Question 2

Inclusion Models and Inclusion Implementation were the most significant factors identified by elementary principals' contributing to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam. The responses were consistent with the literature which highlights the importance of providing the least restrictive environment for students with disabilities. Many respondents were currently addressing the trend which is to provide as much access as possible for students with disabilities to the general education curriculum,
which most often takes place in the general education classroom. Hence, great attention is paid to the process of preparing teachers as well as pairing teachers for inclusion implementation. A successful inclusion model meets the needs of students with disabilities through a variety of curricula approaches as well as supplemental programs. Curricula planning often occur to ensure that teachers are reflecting on their practices and making changes as needed to most effectively deliver quality instruction. Although the literature highlights the use of thematic units in school districts where high standardized scores exist, the data in this study did not demonstrate such a pattern. Rather, subjects were largely taught individually.

Technology is highly valued and the internet is a welcome tool inside the school and a critical component of curriculum. Varities of student assessments, including test preparation, involve a computer and occur online. All schools utilize their computer laboratories on a regular basis and some have traveling lap top carts for students to share throughout the school. Also, technology is extended into the home to provide students with opportunities for the unsupervised practice of skills. Parents may also engage in the learning process after receiving feedback on their child's progress and being given specific websites to visit to reinforce skills at home. These are factors that support the various inclusion implementation models.

Special Services Support is associated with Other Department Support as both are contributing factors to successful inclusion implementation for the models in place at the various schools. The support offered is tailored to the specific needs of the faculty, most often advocated for by the principal. This is consistent with the literature on instructional
leadership which highlights the role that effective principals play in the acquisition of knowledge by teachers as well as their hands-on approach to educating students.

Support is received by the principal in the area of hiring personnel which is often a joint department venture as many principals prefer to hire dual certificated teachers. This approach provides them with individuals trained in general content areas as well as in the area of effective modification techniques. Support is received in the area of professional development for staff members. This includes teachers as well as aides. The inclusive education model is tremendously enhanced by providing specific workshops to address the general needs of students or the specific needs articulated by teachers.

Child Study Teams (CST) is a part of Special Services and contributes in a number of ways to students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NIAAKS exam. Having CST reside in schools is touted as a major benefit to successful inclusion implementation. CST members are available for consultation with a teacher, parent, or the principal. CST members assume non-traditional roles in school that include working with children during recess an occasion to provide additional academic support and facilitating professional development workshops after school for teachers on a regular basis. Overall, the professional development offerings as well as the time allotted for these activities varied among the schools. However, the development of meaningful activities with inclusion experts or allocating time to meet as a grade level to examine curricula materials enhanced the implementation of inclusion in these environments.

Modifications inform the level of mainstreaming that is possible for students with disabilities within an inclusion model. Providing the least restrictive environment is what
the principals define as the hallmark of their inclusion models and effective use of
modifications to help toward that end. Modification entails more than a focus on student
environment, delivery of instruction, and IEP mandates. It also involves effective
scheduling of students, teachers, and aides to most effectively meet the needs of students.
Principals all describe building an effective schedule around the needs of students with
disabilities first. Then teacher assignment is given consideration to maximize the
effectiveness of the pairing in the delivery of instruction and last, the scheduling of aides
is factored in to ensure specific needs of students are attended while maximizing the
available resources. Taken as a whole, this approach results in students with disabilities
success in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam by virtue of the focus being placed upon
the most needy members of the student population. Students with disabilities, you are
actively making strides in closing the achievement gap.

*Subsidiary Research Question 3*

Principals support students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK
exam primarily by working to bridge the gap between the existence of special and general
education programs in the school. This is paramount to principals and evidenced in their
school districts in the consolidation of area supervisors. For example, special services
and general education are merging to form an instructional leadership department or
position, depending on what the extent of the need is in the respective school district.

The support for students with disabilities is most evident in the interaction
between instructional practices, assessment of students, and teacher feedback. This is an
equilateral triangle where all parts equally influence the whole in terms of supporting
students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam. This is the process of
principals observing what is being taught in the classroom, providing feedback to teachers on how it is being taught, then using student data to examine student achievement through the use of a variety of assessments. These three factors all inform a discussion of student results with teachers and begin the cycle of principal observation, assessment of students, and teacher feedback all over again.

Bridging the two worlds of special education and general education is no easy feat. As the literature states, historically students with disabilities were excluded from mainstream activity, but through legislative advances, students with disabilities are held to the same high expectations as all other students. The willingness on the part of the principal to work hand in hand with special services as well as other departments greatly supports students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam by providing teachers with additional resources for professional development.

Lastly, without an understanding of the important role of the parent in the process of students with disabilities achieving AYP on the NJASK exam, students would be less successful. From providing snacks during the testing period to providing prizes for a math carnival, parents working in groups are an incredible source of support for students with disabilities.

Overall, principals' views of inclusion are consistent with the literature which highlights a global shift in perspective: the inclusion of students with disabilities is no longer relegated solely to special education. Rather, it is a school restructuring effort for the benefit of all members of society. Therefore, incorporating all stakeholders in the process of change affects the attitudes and practices of everyone within the school house.
Recommendations for Policy

Conclusions from this study lead to recommendations to shape policy in education. Given the findings in this study, certain recommendations are made to state and federal policy makers as well as school districts.

1. Certification of teachers needs to be reexamined with a focus on one certification instead of a special education and general education certification. This may lead institutions of higher learning who prepare teachers in their education programs to work toward merging the two certificate programs based on the fact that teachers teach all kinds of students; not either special education or general education students alone anymore, but a vast majority of both.

2. Every teacher currently employed in a school must add special education professional development opportunities in his or her Professional Improvement Plan (PIP). This would help to bridge the gap that principals describe between the willing teacher participants for inclusion and the unwilling teacher participants.

3. Accountability measurements should follow the students. Under the current system, the AYP benchmark is set the first year of testing. Subsequent grades of 3rd grade students for example are held to the benchmark scores of their predecessors. This is not a true measure of the achievement levels of each 3rd grade class taking the NJASK. Rather, it is a comparison of each 3rd grade class to its predecessor. Since all students are not considered equal, a high scoring proficient class will unduly skew
the results for the subsequent "typical" performing class. Therefore, students test scores by grade should follow them and be their measure for achieving AYP.

4. Schools that are traditionally underachieving should be monitored yearly whereas schools that are not underachieving should be monitored every two years. This rewards schools for achievement and provides a respite for schools that have demonstrated the ability to make AYP.

Recommendations for Practice

Conclusions from this study lead to recommendations to shape practice in education. Given the findings in this study, certain recommendations are made to individuals including teachers, principals, and district level administrators including supervisors and superintendents.

1. As many of the principals shared in this study, a devoted time was allocated with teachers to review and analyze student test performance, as well as develop action plans to remediate any problems that exist. "Research shows that teachers who use student test performance to guide and improve their teaching are more effective than teachers who do not use such information," (Harvey, 2004, p. 68). Therefore, guiding teacher use of test performance data through a structured process will make their teaching practices more effective.

2. The visibility of the principal plays an integral role in students with disabilities achieving AYP. Seeing the principal conveys a message of, "I care about you and what you are doing," to students as well as teachers.
Furthermore, it informs the perception of the principal in the eyes of those in his or her charge. For example, the principal who speaks to children by name in the hallway or eats lunch with students on a regular basis is seen as more than a disciplinarian.

3. Principal feedback to teachers informs the quality of the delivery of instruction. This includes visiting classrooms on a frequent and regular basis and providing feedback in the form of a note or checklist. Therefore, it is recommended that principals employ the practice of providing feedback to teachers on a weekly basis at a minimum based on classroom visits.

4. When scheduling for the entire school, it is recommended that principals start with students with disabilities then assign teachers and finally aides. This approach will inform the success or failure of the implementation model as the principal's values become the values of the school.

5. It is recommended that principals interact with their school's respective Child Study Team on a regular basis and discuss additional uses of their expertise with students and staff. This approach may enhance the culture, climate and instructional practices provided to students in general and students with disabilities in particular.

6. It is recommended that the job description of the elementary principal be retooled to include duties and responsibilities consistent with the findings of this study. This incorporates the principal as a leader of a community of learners, principal as a change agent, principal as a leader of an
inclusive environment, and accountability measures for ensuring the least restrictive environment for students with disabilities.

Recommendations for Future Study

1. This study was limited to elementary schools. There is a need to replicate this type of qualitative study on the middle school and high school levels. Are the attitudes and practices of principals similar or are they unique to the educational level of the students?

2. There is a need to replicate this type of study to examine the attitudes and practices of elementary principals towards students with disabilities who do not achieve AYP. This may have an implication for comparing the educational environment of these students and making policy and practice recommendations based upon these findings.

3. There is a need to broaden the scope of this study to explore the attitudes and practices of elementary principals towards students who achieve AYP who are not categorized in a subgroup according to NCLBA criteria. What differences if any emerge in the findings and what policy and practice implications come forward?

4. Research needs to be done to explore the attitudes and practices of elementary principals toward the remaining subgroups of students as defined by NCLBA who achieved AYP under NCLBA. This includes economically disadvantaged students, students from major ethnic and racial groups, and limited English proficiency students. Since states are now required to develop separate progress goals for subgroups of students,
a comparison of these findings would be insightful and may possibly inform policy and practice in schools.

5. There is a need for research to explore the relationship between the attitudes and practices of elementary principals toward students without disabilities and students with disabilities.

6. This study was confined to New Jersey schools. There is a need to replicate this study in different states and in different regions to see if the same results emerge.
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Appendix A

Letter of Solicitation
Dear (Elementary Principal),

I am a doctoral student in the Executive Ed.D. Program in the College of Education and Human Services' Department of Education Leadership, Management, and Policy at Seton Hall University in South Orange, New Jersey.

I am working on my dissertation titled: The attitudes and practices of New Jersey Elementary Principals toward students with disabilities who achieved adequate yearly progress under the No Child Left Behind Act. This study is designed to promote the understanding of inclusion from the perspective of the elementary principal.

I would like to invite you to be a part of this research by being interviewed by me. The interview will take approximately a half an hour to complete, and it will be conducted at a school site that is convenient for you, and at a time that is convenient for you. If a sit down interview is not convenient for you, then I invite you to participate in a telephone interview.

If you choose to participate by returning this signed consent form, I will contact you by telephone to set up an interview time. The interview questions are attached for your review. With your permission, the interview will be audio taped. I will also take notes. I will transcribe the audiotape. You have a right to review all or a portion of the tape, and to request that it be destroyed before it is transcribed. I will conduct a post interview review of my notes and the transcripts, and will check back with you via telephone if something is unclear. The responses of the participants will be combined, and will be analyzed to see if patterns emerge.

Your participation in the interview is completely voluntary. A refusal to participate does not involve any penalty or loss of benefit to which you are entitled. There is no expected personal benefit from your involvement. There is an expected benefit to the field of education; however, in that what is anticipated from this study is an increased understanding of inclusion from the perspective of the elementary principal. You may discontinue participating at any time without penalty. If you choose not to participate, disregard this letter. You will not be contacted.

Your name will never be used in the study. At no time will your identity be revealed.
Your responses will remain confidential. Only the researcher will have access to the data. All information, including transcripts, tapes, and notes, will be stored in a locked cabinet in my home for three years after the study. At that time, all data will be destroyed.

If you wish to participate, please sign the attached Informed Consent Form and return it to me in the enclosed envelope within one week of receiving this letter.

Sincerely,

Angelica Allen
Doctoral Candidate, Seton Hall University
Appendix B

Letter of Consent
Informed Consent Form

Researcher’s Affiliation with the University
By agreeing to be interviewed for this study, the research subject is voluntarily participating in research conducted by Angelica L. Allen, a doctoral candidate in the Executive Ed.D. Program in the Department of Education Leadership, Management and Policy in the College of Education and Human Services at Seton Hall University in South Orange, NJ.

Purpose of the Research and Duration of Participation
The purpose of this study is to explore the attitudes and practices of elementary principals toward students with disabilities who achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA) on the 4th grade New Jersey ASK exam. The interview will take approximately a half an hour to complete, and it will be conducted at a site that is convenient for the research subject, and at a time that is convenient for the research subject. If a sit-down interview is not convenient for the research subject, then the researcher will invite the prospective research subject to participate in a telephone interview.

Description of Procedures
The researcher will interview the research subject and the research subject will have the opportunity to review the attached guiding questions. The research subject will be asked for permission to have the research subject’s responses audio taped. The researcher will also take notes. The researcher will transcribe the audiotape. The research subject has a right to review all or any portion of the tape, and to request that it be destroyed before it is transcribed. The researcher will conduct a post interview review of her notes and the transcripts, and will check back with the research subject via telephone if something is unclear. The researcher will combine and analyze the responses of the research subject to see if patterns emerge.

Instruments
A copy of the introduction to the interview and the interview questions is attached. The structured interview will consist of twelve questions, asked of all research subjects in the same order. The final question is open-ended to allow the research subject to have the final word.

Voluntary Nature
The research subject’s participation in this interview is completely voluntary. The research subject’s refusal to participate does not involve any penalty or loss of benefit to which the research subject is entitled. There are no expected personal benefits for the research subject’s involvement. The study is anticipated to benefit the field of education; however, in fact what is anticipated from this study is an increased understanding of inclusion from the perspective of the elementary principal. The research subject may discontinue participating at any time without penalty. If the research subject chooses not to participate, disregard this letter. The research subject will not be contacted.
Anonymity
The researcher will know your identity. However, at no time will the research subject's identity be revealed in the study. The research subject's name will never be used.

Confidentiality
Information gathered through individual interviews will be kept strictly confidential. All data will be kept in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home for a period of three years following the study.

Confidentiality of Records
The research subject's responses will remain confidential. The data will be accessible only to the researcher.

Risks or Discomforts
There are no anticipated risks or discomforts to research subjects.

Benefits from Research
There are no personal benefits to come from the research subject's participation in this research. The study is anticipated however to benefit the field of education by adding to the understanding of the phenomenon of inclusion from the perspective of the elementary principal.

Remuneration or Payment
There are no personal benefits or compensation to the research subjects as a result of this research study.

Compensation for Injured Subjects
This research does not pose a risk of a research-related injury.

Alternative Procedures
A disclosure of appropriate alternative procedures or courses of treatment that might be advantageous to the subject is not applicable to this study.

Contact Information
Should the research subject have pertinent questions about the research, the research subject may contact the following individuals:

1. researcher of the study at the office (973-378-7699), or write to the researcher at Marshall School, 262 Grove Road, South Orange, NJ 07079, or by email (allenl@somd.k12.nj.us).
2. the researcher's mentor, Dr. Anthony Colella, at Seton Hall University (973-761-9389) or
3. the Office of the Institutional Review Board, Presidents Hall, Seton Hall University (973-313-6314), 400 South Orange Avenue, South Orange, NJ 07079.
Video or Audio-Tapes
The research subject is being asked for permission for the interview to be audio taped. By signing this form, the research subject is granting permission for such taping. The research subject will be identified on tape by a code number. You have a right to review all or a portion of the tape, and to request that it be destroyed before it is transcribed.

Copy of Informed Consent Form
A copy of this signed and dated Informed Consent Form will be provided to the research subject before participation begins in the study. A stamped, self-addressed envelope for the return of the Informed Consent Form to the researcher will be enclosed for mailing convenience.

-----------------------------------------------------
Research Subject’s Signature Date

-----------------------------------------------------
Printed Name
Appendix C

Interview Introduction and Questions
Introduction:
The purpose of this study is to explore the attitudes and practices of elementary school principals toward students with disabilities who achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA) on the 4th grade NJASK exam. This study is designed to promote the understanding of the phenomenon of inclusion from the perspective of the elementary principal. As an elementary principal whose students with disabilities population are achieving AYP, you are in a unique position to describe contributing factors to the students' success.

The answers from the 10 elementary principals I interview will be aggregated so that no one school can be identified. Nothing you say will be identified with you personally. As we go through the interview, if you have any questions about why I'm asking something, please feel free to ask. If there is anything that you do not want to answer, just say so.

The purpose of this study is to develop an understanding of the attitudes and practices which lead students with disabilities to be successful on the state assessment in your building.

Do you have any questions before we begin?
Interview Questions:

1. Can you describe your students with disabilities population, including the range of disabilities and ethnic breakdown?

2. Can you describe the programs you have for students with disabilities in your school?

3. Describe what interaction(s) you have, as a principal, with students with disabilities in your school?

4. Describe how your school implements inclusion for students with disabilities?
   Have your teachers been trained in inclusion? If yes, what training have they had?

5. Are all students with disabilities included in the general education setting? Why or why not?

6. Describe your educational philosophy in terms of students with disabilities in the general education settings.

7. Can you tell me what factors led to students with disabilities in your school achieving AYP on the NJASK exam? What role do you play in the implementation of these factors?

8. How do you support students with disabilities in achieving AYP on the NJASK exam?

9. Describe the type of support you receive from various departments in the school district, including Special Services, for students with disabilities in your school?

10. Describe the type of support you receive from parents, including the PTA, for students with disabilities in your school?
11. How do you view the student accountability component of the No Child Left Behind Act? What effect do you believe this accountability component has on the achievement of students with disabilities?

12. What other information do you think I need to know in order to better understand how your school helps students with disabilities succeed?
Appendix D

Transcripts of Interviews
I think of think that the accountability to be addressed based on a percentage cause it seems that larger schools with larger populations are the ones being targeted. We have a large school, a large population in third and fourth grade. Therefore the likelihood that our special ed population will be larger and we’ll meet that number 35 is greater. Other schools may not have that number and therefore it’s not calculated. You know, it’s not held against them.

I don’t think it’s a true reflection on the child, so I don’t really see it’s helping or benefiting the kids at all. I just don’t find it to be very accurate for a lot of the children and those who pass, you know, that’s wonderful, that’s great. We don’t make a big deal of it, but a lot of the parents, you know, they all they see is their kid, you know, these special education students. They see we’re giving them all the help we can. We’re doing - our reports cards are based on what their IEP says.

I think of think that it - the whole student accountability, it - it bothers me a little bit is terms of if I have a first grader who needs to take a fourth grade test and it’s not really a fourth grade test, ‘cause you’ve seen that test, that bothers me that they would expect a child to take that test. What my job is to make sure that the child is not… I mean, the for… I can tell you, the first time we actually administered the test, everybody was in an uproar, nervous and these children looked at those tests and it’s work that they can’t do.

I think that there needs to be…
I think that there needs to be alternatives for these children who, you know, there are some children who don’t take test well. There are some children who, you know, aren’t going to be able to achieve that. Like, for instance, I had a multi-handicapped child-he wasn’t ours, he’s an out of district, so we didn’t actually make the decision. ...multi-handicapped child, when it came to the writing prompt, ‘cause we got the writing prompts back this year, when he took the test, all he wrote for his picture prompt was his name and you know what, he was so excited that he took the test and - but there’s no way that child is ever gonna pass that test.

P 3: INTERVIEW 43.mf - 3:58 [You know, personally I don’t f....] (88:88) (Angelica) Codes: [Accountability - Negative]

You know, personally I don’t feel that we should be asking students in a self-contained class who are chronologically in the 4th grade but are two year... They’re in a self-contained class because they’re two or more years behind in reading. I think that’s a very difficult thing to ask those students. It’s frustrating for those students...to ask those students to be at the same level. But by nature of their IEP we’re saying they’re individual... They need an individual program. They’re not where they’re supposed to be. So, I have deep concerns about what we’re asking of some of our special ed. students. Mostly self-contained. If it’s in an in-class support and they’re six months behind, I think we can work on that. But to ask a child two years behind 4th grade reading levels, they’re on a 2nd grade, to take the 4th grade test, I disagree with it.

P 4: INTERVIEW #47.mf - 4:53 [Well, I think, you know, the a....] (116:116) (Angelica) Codes: [Accountability - Negative]

Well, I think, you know, the accountability would be AYP. We have the special programs that are put into place. I do feel there is a negative effect by consistently raising the bar on the achievement levels. I worry about it depleting students’ self-esteem and I think it does them more harm than good, in raising that bar. And I think it - it kind of puts this projection of - I’m not sure the exact year, if it’s 2013 or 2011 - that they’re supposed to be 100% proficient. It’s almost unrealistic and it’s also giving the message that we want all of our kids to be super perfect. Me, I, you know, I think they need to do a little bit more investigation and discussions with - with educators on the effect of this high accountability of raising that bar. And I’m sure, as a principal, you have your viewpoints with it, but those are my personal and professional feelings about it.

P 4: INTERVIEW #47.mf - 4:54 [But to consistently raise that... ] (118:118) (Angelica) Codes: [Accountability - Negative]

But to consistently raise that bar for special needs kids as well is gonna be tough. I’m just looking at the special ed. kids and even regular ed. kids, to have them all be 100% proficient is a bit much.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.mf - 5:67 [What effect do you believe thi... ] (189:189) (Angelica) Codes: [Accountability - Negative]
What effect do you believe this accountability component has on the achievement of students with disabilities? A negative one, because we missed AYP last year, I think it was in language arts. We had 7 disabled students not make AYP for - for this past school year, '05-'06, and the same in maths. There was a minimum number again for maths. Like, it was 9 percent. I think, who missed it in language arts. So it's - it's... you know... They don't consider the needs of these really disabled children who have - who are - who have to take the test anyway. There's no accommodation for them and we only have about two or three who take the alternative assessment. Only two do not. Yeah, there are two in the Language Learning Disabled class who take an alternative assessment. All the others are required to take the - the NJASK. It's criminal.

P 5: INTERVIEW 85 rf - 5:68 [We feel it's too rigid and it.] (177:177) (Angelica) Codes: [Accountability - Negative]

We feel it's too rigid and it doesn't accommodate for individual differences.

P 6: INTERVIEW 86 rf - 5:55 [laughs] You want my honest opinion? It is absolutely...and I've written letters and... the president of the state board is... I know him. He lives near me and I've told him... I said, "This is absolutely the most ridiculous system of accountability there is." And I said, "I've submitted the... If I did the statistical part of it and submitted it as an undergraduate paper I'd get an F on it." [laughs] It stinks because of the fact that you know, they don't study the same students. You know, we made progress. My biggest concern is our special ed. population improved by like 17% and the AYP for this year is based for 4th grade on that fact. Well my 3rd grade which is now my 4th grade didn't do real well but because those kids did so well in order to make AYP the kids from 3rd grade are gonna have to go up like 25%. So it's not a true measure. They didn't know, they should use how they did in 3rd grade to determine their 4th grade AYP; not what the class before them did because it's a totally different group of students. It's just... it's flawed. The whole accountability part of it is flawed. The whole system is flawed.

P 7: INTERVIEW 77 rf - 7:59 [Well, you know, given that the... (268:268) (Angelica) Codes: [Accountability - Negative]

Well, you know, given that the senate and congress amidst democrats and republicans can't agree on what shade of green to paint the lavatory and whether they're gonna use Chamin or Bounty, to get unanimous support for such a stupendous bill is remarkable. In other words, I hate this thing. I don't see that it's holding kids accountable for much of anything different from what we've always held them accountable for. I think what it is doing in some ways is probably - if you ask me do like NCLB or an I more of a proponent of Alphie Kohn. I don't know if you ever heard Alphie. I kind of like Alphie. He says, "Don't play." He says the day the state gives the test, have a sickout.
P 7: INTERVIEW 97.rtf - 7:61 [I don't see it as helping me b.] (278:270) (Angelica) Codes: [Accountability - Negative]

I don't see it as helping me be a better administrator than I was before hand. I certainly don't think it's helping my teachers be better teachers. I think it's giving kids and parents ulcers. In a town like [redacted] where we do our own internal standardized norm referenced testing anyway, I don't see what the criteria referenced test that they're giving us here is going to do to improve anything about what goes on in our school.


[Sighs] Umm. That depends on what we're saying by "achievement." If it's achievement on the test, is the NCLB going to help us over time have kids do better on a test? The answer is categorically yes. You spend more time prepping for a test, you're gonna do better on a test. If everybody is all concerned about how someone is doing on the test, you're gonna do even better on the test anyway. But in terms of long-term achievement, in terms of success in life, in terms of what school, if any, they're going to go to and what their earning potential over time is going to be, I don't think it makes a whole hill of beans worth a difference.

P 7: INTERVIEW 97.rtf - 7:89 [I say to myself, Mr. Bush when.] (270:270) (Angelica) Codes: [Accountability - Negative]

I say to myself, Mr. Bush when you can pass the NPSA then you come and tell me to test my kids; but, I don't think you and your whole damn congress can pass that test.


[laughs] Boy oh boy. I have been pretty nice so far. [laughs] However... I think they're too the state sees a discriminatory tone with the certification program. I think the federal government and of course then the state government has to follow suit. I think that they're just creating a situation that will be an impossible situation to maintain. On the one hand they have IDEA laws that say you have to treat people differently because they're disabled, they're handicapped. They can't do the same thing as other people. Now, in some cases you have to help them as much as you can. But they wouldn't give a blind person for instance a driver's license. You know, that's an understandable thing. There's certain things that some of our kids are gonna not be able to do.

P 9: INTERVIEW 99.rtf - 9:53 [I kind of feel, well I don't k.] (76:76) (Angelica) Codes: [Accountability - Negative]
I kind of feel, well I don't know that, it's just an opinion, but I think they built it really for a minority of school districts. Most school districts I think were probably working toward the right goals. At any rate, and I'm not real keen on the whole idea.

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Code: Accountability - Positive (7-1)

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.pdf - 6:52 [What effect do you believe this has on the achievement of students with disabilities? Well, as I said, I feel that, as we progress through the years, it is raising the bar, but it is force - forcing districts, if they don't reach that proficiency level, it is forcing them to put programs in place, you know, to help students. That to me is the good part of it]


But I do think, you know, that the accountability of it, that part of it has, I think, heightened awareness of many districts throughout the United States to really look at, you know, kids that do have difficulty with what programs and what interventions are they putting into place.


I really am supportive of its goal to increase the level of achievement for the special needs and the regular education population. Umm, I -- I, you know I mean, I believe -- I wish that it would give us the information a bit sooner. I think that most of what it reports back is pretty accurate and I -- I don't really know, Angelica, how they score the special needs population's work. Do you know what I mean? I don't know how they do that holistic scoring. Although, my understanding is that they do take into consideration their special needs and that, you know, they -- score it accordingly. So, umm, I feel that it's a fair accountability overall. I really do. Even though my teachers like about it. You know, the classes change every year. And how can they say this class is like that class. But I believe that it's made us be far more attentive to students with different types of learning and forced us to find the answer through differentiation. And I believe far more of us fall into the those areas of differentiation and therefore it in turn helps the regular ed. learner, as well. Because most of the strategies that works for the special needs population through differentiation also help some of the at-risk borderline regular ed. children as well. So I think what it's done is the No Child Left Behind has made us turn around and look at these children and say, "We are responsible for them," which in turn has helped a lot of other at-risk children who are kind of close by supporting them even more. So, you know, I -- I -- it has goods and bad, but I would say the good outweigh the bad.
P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:54 [What effect do you believe this has on the achievement of students with disabilities?] I think that it makes them feel a greater part of the learning community. I — I think they feel that we're included and -- and that we matter and that we're expected to achieve, and it raises those expectations, and I believe they're meeting them. Now, will they meet 100 percent? I don't know about that. I just think in the psychology of I'm in here and I'm important enough to be included makes a difference for the students who have different ways of learning or learn at different developmental increments. So, umm, I — I believe it's, umm, you know it's made educators look at it more closely and find out answers and within a better time period, too. I mean it worried me years ago when I would see children in our special needs program come down with things from the first grade. I mean even as a disciplinary, as a vice principal, which I did that for four years and I loved it — loved that job as well, and, -- but a lot of -- being vice principal let you really see sometimes more than being a principal because you can see when you send Johnny down for acting up in class what he is doing in special needs. Well, why is he in fourth grade still doing preschool work? So what No Child Left Behind has made us do is raise that level of accountability by saying, no he can't be doing preschool [work] because he's going to take the New Jersey ASK along with everybody else.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:47 [I think the standards they've set for regular ed., kids is very good. I think our goal has to be, for every kid, really has to be 100%. How can you say you don't want every child to achieve?]

I think the standards they've set for regular ed., kids is very good. I think our goal has to be, for every kid, really has to be 100%. How can you say you don't want every child to achieve?

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:52 [Now, does it, does the legisla...]

Now, does it, does the legislation force you to be more accountable for your teaching and your training of teachers? That's a positive thing. You now, as far as saying hey look, all districts have to be doing and working towards, you know, certain standards and certain goals. But to think that every kid is gonna make AYP, I wish we could, but we're not going to and I think it's just not attainable. But I don't know where the... By the same token, I don't know where the mid point is where you say, all right what is achievable for kids and lets meet that goal. I look at it in a couple of ways. I don't know that that legislation was made for all the districts that have really worked hard to provide the right programs for their kids, I think it has been created for those areas that they did not provide for their kids, for their special ed. kids. That they did not follow special ed. laws and try to get the kids into the programs, the mainstream and whatever.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:54 [I don't want to be taken wrong...]

[Angelica]
I don't want to be taken wrong that I think it's a bad idea because like I said, I think it's forcing everyone to be more accountable and I think it's forcing people to say hey, we need to prepare certain types of instruction. We need to get the kids mainstreamed into regular classes more for what they can do. I think that that's all positive and I think the total effect is going to be a good effect. I think that the kids will achieve more. But the whole school is accountable for, you know, a group of kids that may not, you know, you can do everything for some kids but you're just not going to be able to achieve as much. But again, I'm pretty good with the criticism but I'm not real good at the solutions either. (laughs) What do you do to make sure all schools maintain the right standards? I think I'll just put a summary on it. It will have a good effect. I think it will help districts to think about what they're doing with kids and train their teachers better. I would say the overall affect would be positive.

Q11: Thank

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Code: Accountability - Unfair (5-1)

P1: INTERVIEW #1, rtf - 1:55 [So, in my opinion I think it p.] (65:65) (Angelica)

Codes: [Accountability - Unfair]

So, in my opinion I think it possibly could be made more fair.

P1: INTERVIEW #1, rtf - 1:54 [laughs] Well, I just think p-e- (65:65) (Angelica)

Codes: [Accountability - Unfair]

[laughs] Well, I just think personally, that it may be unfair based on strictly numbers.

P2: INTERVIEW #2, rtf - 2:110 [They're used to getting help too] (153:153) (Angelica)

Codes: [Accountability - Unfair]

They're used to getting help to complete work and complete tasks, and they completely fall apart. I mean, it's just not fair. So, you know, I... You know, I don't know that the test is an actual fair test and that every child should. you know, every child can't be proficient on that exact test.

P2: INTERVIEW #2, rtf - 2:111 [So I, you know...and then the wh.] (155:155) (Angelica)

Codes: [Accountability - Unfair]

So I, you know...and then the whole idea of as long as they're being instructed in the contents standards, they must take that test, you know, I - I have a hard time with that. I have a really hard time with that, because I love my kids. I can help them be successful by showing the text format, making it relaxing it for them, and, you know, helping them. But, you know, I - sometimes, I think it's just unfair. So I hope that helps with that one.
P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:36 [Well, I... we try to keep that p.] (53:53) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Accountability - Unfair]

Well, I... We try to keep that piece kind of from the kids. We just focus on developing their skills. I think it's... it's unfair to place that kind of burden on the kids because it, as I said, it's a totally flawed system of accountability. It doesn't truly measure, you know... You're not measuring the same kids. If you measured the same groups of kids, yeah, then I can see it being used as a measure of the school or the kids but you're not. You're measuring totally different populations and holding you accountable with that regard. So, you know it's just... it's ridiculous.

Code: Additional Factors - Diversity (2-3)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:66 [Well, basically our school the... ] (76:70) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Additional Factors - Diversity]

Well, basically our school theme this year is to embrace diversity in the classroom because our classrooms here in Hamilton Park are becoming more and more diverse and that's something that we haven't had traditionally here.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:64 [So, we want to recognize diver...] (76:70) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Additional Factors - Diversity]

So, we want to recognize diversity, embrace diversity. We want to make sure we are meeting the needs of all of our learners because we want them to be able to function independently in the real world. We want them to be successful and we want them to be problem solvers and independent thinkers and critical thinkers and give them the skills they need to be successful so, that's what we're trying to do.

Code: Additional Factors - Perceptions (4-3)

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:115 [We believe all children learn... ] (161:161) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Additional Factors - Perceptions]

We believe all children learn. All children can learn. All children will learn. They just do differently at different times in different ways and different days. As long as I can get everybody to understand that, including the staff, to show as long as our students are showing progress and growing year to year that I think that's - that's a phenomenal thing.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:103 [I think I've covered all of it... ] (184:184) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Additional Factors - Perceptions]
I think I've covered all of it. I think it's just a combination of schools providing the best programming. We've learned over the - or I've learned over the years here in my district that a lot of parents have moved here because of the special education programs that the district provides. I really do think - I mean, honestly, just from what I have seen and comparing it to other places, I've been, it really is good, especially at the elementary level. I don't know about the secondary but I think there's are good too. But it really is specific to individual kids.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6, rtF - 6:33 [Well, I just think a lot of it.] (58:58) (Angelica)
Codes: [Additional Factors - Perceptions]

Well, I just think a lot of it has to do with our attitude and approach. I think that's kind of a top down type thing. If you believe kids can learn they'll learn. I think those are characteristics that we really, you know, you can be successful. I look back a number of years ago. I was transferred into a inter-city school that you know, the worst in the city. We went in and just developed an attitude and we had 100% poverty. Our population was about 96% minority and it was just a really tough situation. I mean I went in there with a... the 9th principal in 7 years [laughs] and we were able to change it just by the attitude and by the time I left we were identifying more kids for gifted and talented that we were in special education within the school because we had the attitude that kids could learn and we did what we needed to do in order to make them successful. I think that's a key component in this.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7, rtF - 7:63 [We are called "lighthouse dist... [57:57] (Angelica)
Codes: [Additional Factors - Perceptions]

We are called "lighthouse districts" because our special services are so good. They just keep moving, and they're killing our budget. I guess they were whatever percent of the population, but it was two and a half times the percent of the budget. So if they were 10 percent of the population, they were 25 percent of the budget and the state is not helping us because of our DFG (district factor group).

Code: Additional Factors - Responsibility (2-3)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1, rtF - 1:84 [Our special ed. population is ..] (70:70) (Angelica)
Codes: [Additional Factors - Responsibility]

Our special ed. population is growing and the need to have these students' needs addressed in the classroom is rising and it's my job to provide the resources and then there's the teaching staff to make sure it's, you know, it's implemented.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8, rtF - 8:60 [Well, you know, you have to be..] (195:195) (Angelica)
Codes: [Additional Factors - Responsibility]
Well, you know, you have to be humble... to say that worked and that didn't. Well, you know, I always tell my staff, I'm not a person that, you know, I won ashamed to fail because there's not shame in failing. Every failure is an opportunity to learn.

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**Code: Additional Factors - Spotlighted (3-3)**

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:85 [Just because you're a larger s.] (72:72) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Additional Factors - Spotlighted]

Just because you're a larger school, you're being penalized and sanctioned where other schools are flying under the radar. You can put that in [laughs]... flying under the radar and that's just aggravating.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:86 [You see, you know, on the news... ] (74:74) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Additional Factors - Spotlighted]

You see, you know, on the news and their reports on a school in need of improvement, it sounds like we're horrible but it may be that we're better than a thousand other schools here.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:62 [To leave and go to a different...] (187:187) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Additional Factors - Spotlighted]

To leave and go to a different reading room or go to a different math room, the [other] kids know and you're fooling yourself if you tell yourself they don't. So, I think you have to look at broadly your whole population.

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**Code: Additional Programs (14-2)**

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:35 [The children with disabilities...] (65:66) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Additional Programs]

The children with disabilities, they're in the band. They're in the chorus. Yesterday, we had that. So they're involved at - like I said, everything that... We have transcripts for them to participate in. We have an academically talented program and an extra help program after school. They participate in both of those if they qualify. The academically talented is based on an IQ test that they are given in second grade. There are certain cut-off scores and then the extra help is based on either the NAISK scores or teacher recommendation.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:83 [Are the Rally materials are ju...] (127:127) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Additional Programs]
Are the Rally materials are just something in addition the teacher uses and filters in to supplement the curriculum? Correct. Yes. Yes, to supplement.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:29 [We also do Dibbles. We're using... (Angelica) Codes: [Additional Programs] [Assessment of Students]

We also do Dibbles. We're using Dibbles and this is our second year and what that's helping us do is identify even our special needs children. Where the areas... is it a fluency problem? Is it, you know, a decoding problem? Where the problem is. So that's helping us tremendously.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:42 [The supplements... they're allowed... (Angelica) Codes: [Additional Programs]

The supplements... they're allowed to use what they think can help as long as they're still doing core curriculum.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:73 [We do... We'll supplement with... (Angelica) Codes: [Additional Programs]

We do... We'll supplement with techniques from Stevenson, or other programs but they're all using core curriculum. The techniques of Stevenson, what is that? Stevenson is reading... Their reading program is very specific and a lot of self-contained... It's used for a lot of special ed. because it's, it's visual. They have what you call peanut butter and jelly sandwiches talking about the vowels, two vowels. One is the peanut butter. One's the jelly. They have clues that they use for that so they just use techniques from that.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:74 [Currently we're using Project... (Angelica) Codes: [Additional Programs]

Currently we're using Project Read in some of our classes, which is a very tactile visual. We like Project Read. We just started it this year and our teachers are happy with it. We've really seen success.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:30 [Please elaborate on your chara. (Angelica) Codes: [Additional Programs]

Please elaborate on your character education program? Well, we have a program that we've just started this year and our guidance counselor, she's the one that has been really active with it. She's been getting into the classes and she has, like, a regular rotation schedule that she goes in and she'll teach and talk about different - different themes for the month. And she'll focus on social skills and this has been a real, real big help this year. I think when I have issues with discipline or with any kind of problem because sometimes you have social skill problem, she has been so helpful because she can just hone right into the class to whatever the issue is and work it through with the teachers.
I'm just trying to get this title of this new program. I know we... I think it's Teach Them Young.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:32 [We also have an extended school-] (61:61) (Angelica) Codes: [Additional Programs]

We also have an extended school year program for our special needs kids, which last about ten hours during the summer months and this year, I understand, they're going to increase that.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:69 [Okay. I just remembered the gu-] (125:125) (Angelica) Codes: [Additional Programs]

Okay. I just remembered the guidance program: I Can Problem Solve. That's a purchased program. You probably could find it on the Internet somewhere.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:14 [It's a Study Island] usually pa-] (90:90) (Angelica) Codes: [Additional Programs]

It's [Study Island] usually part of their reading, writing, or math lesson. But, you know, it's only when appropriate. You know, if the - if the - if the classroom teachers are teaching an important lesson, they don't - they're not excluded from those lessons to go sit at the computer and do Study Island. It's just an extra. It happens in the classroom.

Or with the basic skills piece, it may happen outside the classroom.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:74 [Has the feedback from the teach-] (88:88) (Angelica) Codes: [Additional Programs]

Has the feedback from the teachers been positive? Pretty positive. And they use it [Study Island] as needed. They don't just sit at the computer, you know, for the whole lesson. You know, they still give the general instruction, this is just an added support.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:1 [The ICS[in-class support] and ..] (51:51) (Angelica) Codes: [Additional Programs] [Test Preparation]

The ICS[In-class support] and the Resource both also combine, in so much as it's possible within the framework of the curriculum, a study skills component, so that we work on organization, test-taking skills, other things of that nature.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:24 [A piece of software called "Sk..] (118:118) (Angelica) Codes: [Additional Programs] [Technology]

A piece of software called "Skills Tutor" which is an on-line skill development program that pre-assesses kids and then puts them into a program prescribed by what their needs are and then tracks their progress electronically over the internet. What we have found is that the software will adjust to the ability of the kid. Every student has access to it from
home. We've trained the entire staff at this point and they... We sent a letter home and they and their parents are encouraged to work together using a computer at home. It's not an interactive one between grown ups but if you're just looking to afford kids practice, and there is some merit to practice without supervision, then this is something that lets us do that as well as do some diagnostic stuff.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.pdf - 8:56 [So the leader has to commin.] (182:182) (Angelica) Codes: [Additional Programs]

So the leader has to continually reinforce and believe not only through, you know, through voicing their position, but also through programs. After school programs, include them. We have after school programs that unfortunately at one point these after school programs in reading and math were only for children that the teacher recommended and they were not special education. Well, when we were put "In Need of Improvement," we had to start with the special education children in that after school program first. Well that changes our whole philosophy. Now, they're in there.

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Code: Assessment of Students {10-4}

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.pdf - 1:21 [We have benchmark assessments ...] (34:34) (Angelica) Codes: [Assessment of Students]

We have benchmark assessments that we do a pre, mid, and post done on Edu-Test. I don't know if you're familiar with that. That program, we have... after each assessment now the benchmarking for the school year. We do... We have instructional management team leaders, which have been very effective. The department leaders, they take that information and we work as a group to see where the weaknesses maybe and we develop an action plan based on that analysis. So then that action plan then is put into affect for the next trimester before we do the next benchmark assessment and of course we pay close attention for students with disabilities to follow the IEP but make in our goals and objectives specific to each student and not generalize. We think that's been effective.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.pdf - 1:74 [The Edu-Test, can you tell me ...] (35:35) (Angelica) Codes: [Assessment of Students]

The Edu-Test, can you tell me a little bit more about that? It is put out by Plato Learning and Edu-Test is basically a computer-generated assessment for students. It can, you know, provide like a snap shot of learning. The teachers can make up the questions and put them into this assessment and the test itself-the computer program, will then analyze it for the teacher for each student. We have some grade levels that use that and I have one, second grade did not choose to use it. They felt that it was too high of a level for our second grade students. So they did... made their own assessment and then they have to do their own analysis using a spreadsheet. Well, it's been successful. What we learned, this is my second year using it. What we learned after the first year was that some of the concerns of the teachers were that the questions on the Edu-Test did not reflect what we
wanted them to be assessed on. But the second year we found that we could make our own questions administratively and then put them into the test and that worked much better.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1.88 [Edu-Test] (34:34) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Assessment of Students] [Technology]

Edu-Test

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:61 [In January, what we're doing n..] (87:87) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Assessment of Students]

In January, what we're doing now is we - one of the things we do here, we just started it last year, is we get several tests throughout the year to kind of see how the children are progressing, kind of try to predict how they're going to do on New Jersey Ask. So we give a writing test, a math test, and a reading test in September. We give it again in November. We give it again in February and then we'll do it at the end of the year, just as a wrap-up. And you know, what we do is we - it's... The math test is online, the reading test we actually send it out to be scored, and the writing test is online, which will give us a score back. And we look at those scores and all of them will give strengths and weaknesses and, you know, I sit down with the teacher, regular and special.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:29 [We also do Dibbles. We're using] (56:56) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Additional Programs] [Assessment of Students]

We also do Dibbles. We're using Dibbles and this is our second year and what that's helping us do is identify even our special needs children. Where the areas... Is it a fluency problem? Is it, you know, a decoding problem? Where the problem is. So that's helping us tremendously.

Codes: [Assessment of Students] [Test Preparation]

I'll collect what the children did. I'll go into a class and I'll say submit your problem of the day this week so that I can look at how the children responded. Are they writing the answers? Did the teacher mark them with a rule connected to what the [NJ] ASK is looking for? So, we collect them and look at what they are doing.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:80 [We're not doing unit tests now..] (73:73) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Assessment of Students]

We're not doing unit tests much with the Dibbles but we would constantly take their unit test and look at the unit test is any given class and even with our special ed. and look at individual children that didn't succeed and what are you doing?

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:59 [We also tried last year an ele..] (66:66) (Angelica)
We also tried last year an electronic assessment called the "i-KNOWS". This is an electronic assessment for language, arts, reading and math. And the kids would take it individually. It was about one hour. It gave the teachers immediate feedback. They also used that last year. We did not use that this year. We ran into some glitches with the program itself not giving an accurate assessment in the pre- and post-. But we did last year. We wanted to use the "i-KNOWS" as the pre- and post-assessment. The company itself, when they went to do the post gave us a completely different test and we felt that it should be the same pre- and post-. So, we ran into some glitches with that. But they've used all these assessments as ways to, you know, really identify the needs of the kids and where they're at.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:76 [I think we look very critical... ] (53:63) (Angelica) Codes: [Assessment of Students]

I think we look very critically, too, at how our kids learn. We try to collect data on their - their - the different assessments, a multitude of assessments or multiple assessments that we use. Well, we use a New Jersey Ask and the TerraNova as well.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:77 [The rubrics the teachers use... ] (64:64) (Angelica) Codes: [Assessment of Students]

The rubrics the teachers use were self-created or purchased? Some of them - yes. Some of them were teacher-created. On their writing assessment, they developed a rubric. We have - we have connected that also to our school goal.

Code: Child Study Team (22-3)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:08 [Participating in IEP meeting o... ] (22:52) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team]

Participating in IEP meeting or manifestation meetings. Developing goals and objectives.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:69 [Specifically to attend every L... ] (61:61) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team]

Specifically to attend every IEP meeting, no I don't. But between myself and the Director of Special Ed. you know, the ones that we need to attend we attend either together or separately to ensure that the appropriate thing is going on.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:36 [My Child Study Team actually h... ] (71:71) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team]
My Child Study Team actually has very different backgrounds and teaches at colleges and teaches all those different settings. So my team is actually...does the training in terms of inclusion for all teachers. Like, for instance, this afternoon the Child Study Team is working with all my special area teachers on how to make sure that children can be mainstreamed into the special areas the best and actually succeed there.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.txt - 2:07 [Basically, I work very closely..] (143:143) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Child Study Team]

Basically, I work very closely with my Child Study Team

Codes: [Child Study Team]

But our - our special ed. - our, you know, Child Study Team is very good about, you know, calling parents, involving parents and making decisions. Showing them what the test is going to be about so that they understand.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.txt - 3:5 [My Child Study Team and I have..] (26:26) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Child Study Team]

My Child Study Team and I have great communication. I sit in on or at least visit almost every IEP meeting that I possibly could, especially if there's a change in placement or if it's a initial staffing. So from the get go we're involved with Child Study Team

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.txt - 4:08 [Well, I'm part of every meeting..] (27:27) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Child Study Team]

Well, I'm part of every meeting that takes place with their IEPs and the I&RS team.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.txt - 4:50 [Well, I work closely with the ..] (109:109) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Child Study Team]

Well, I work closely with the Child Study Team

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.txt - 5:53 [Then there was also Implement..] (136:136) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Child Study Team]

Then there was also 'Implementing IEPs in the Related Arts Classroom' and that was a building-based request and our Child Study Team sat down with those teachers and went specifically through the IEPs of the kids those teachers had, and said, "Here's what you really need to know. Here's what you should be doing to help address their IEPs when they're with you."

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.txt - 5:59 [The other thing that we did wi..] (147:147) (Angelica)
The other thing that we did with the I&R meetings, Interventional & Referral Service meetings, we revamped our whole program as a result of those high numbers of kids being referred. Now we have someone from the Child Study Team sit in on our meetings so they can kind of hear who's coming down the pipe or what may not be coming down the pipe. So the whole structure of I&R has changed with our Pupil Services Department, even though it's not a pupil services item. The I&R is very general. They're still communicating with us when we go through that process. So our I&R team includes our guidance counselor. It includes me. It includes a teacher who is Schools Asserted trained to recommend strategies to the classroom teacher who's coming there presenting an issue on a student. Then our learning consultants on the Child Study Team, she sits in on the meeting. That way she hears everything and it may - it may by a child that's not even coming to them and maybe it would be a child where we need more strategies. But sometimes the she can hear right away, "That sounds like a child that's gonna end up coming our way. Let's put these things in place. Let's keep an eye on this. And then when, she'll she'll sort of advise. Then we'll get to a point where when it's time to refer them, we are in a good position to make that happen. So... That's a great support for us as well and they are not in the dark anymore when they get these referrals piling up on their desk and they have so idea what the background or history is. Now they know. So I found that relationships to be very helpful.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5, rf - 5:62 [Sometimes the [child study] te.,] (108:168) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team]

Sometimes the [child study] team will say, "Let that parent write the letter." We usually try to avoid it but we try to have all of our referrals in by March 1st to child study. We really work to, at least.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5, rf - 5:75 [Oh, and I also sit at the chil.] (95:95) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team]

Oh, and I also sit on the Child Study Team meetings on occasion. You know, when they have IEP meetings or identification meetings with parents, I go to those meetings when when my schedule permits.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5, rf - 5:82 [If we can let them know in the..] (105:105) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team]

If we can let them know in the spring, we do, but with all the work that the - the Child Study Team is doing, at the end of the year and into the summer, we still aren't always sure until, you know, the end of the year, early summer.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5, rf - 5:94 [We always find that the 3rd-gr..] (118:118) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team]
We always find that the 3rd-grade teacher say, "Oh, my God, what did I get from 2nd grade? This child needs..." you know? We think that was part of the problem. There was a lot of disconnect, because once they got to the Child Study Team, the parents were all upset. So, they felt something was wrong with their kid and then when the Child Study Team would get them, inevitably you find something there and it may not have really been a true disability. So, we felt that our special ed. population has grown and our community has become accustomed to us offering services for everything. So we were trying to work on, "Let's make sure we're giving it to kids who really, really truly need it."

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rdf - 5:97 [The fact that I and the child...] (134:134) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team] [Special Services Support]

The fact that I and the Child Study Team and the Pupil Services Department, we work so closely together. I could talk to them every day. In fact, think week, I think, I've spoken to somebody from those departments every day. We have our own Child Study Team right here in our building.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rdf - 6:41 [He has a lot of abilities. It....] (26:26) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team]

He has a lot of abilities. It's just he really, you know, lacks self-confidence and things and it's just one of those things. He was kind of one of those special kids you kind of feel for and want to do something special with him and try to help him out. You know, we discussed it with the Child Study Team and you know, with the parents and just, you know, really working with him to help him succeed. And it's paying off. He was down today and got a 95 on his math test, his least favorite subject.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rdf - 6:50 [My LDTC is meeting with two gr....] (40:40) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team]

My LDTC is meeting with two groups of 3rd graders over lunch and recess one day a week, working on developing their writing and how to respond to picture prompts.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rdf - 6:52 [I have a, my own child study t.] (44:44) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team]

I have a, my own Child Study Team in the building. So, I meet with them really on a daily basis. knowing what's going on with kids and brainstorming ideas of, you know, how we can best meet the needs of students and just really, you know, we work extremely well together.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rdf - 7:48 [Umm, I will tell you honestly....] (229:229) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team]
Uhm, I will tell you honestly we’re thoughtful when we develop kids’ IEPs. We don’t over burden the kids’ IEPs with things.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:44 [We received funding for materials.] (142:142) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team]

We received funding for materials. Say for instance, if they need extra books or they need math materials or they may need specific modified materials they – we are able to get that from the Child Study Team.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:5 [Once the Child Study Team take.] (36:36) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team]

Once the Child Study Team takes over I have more of an occasional contact with them unless there is a problem. Then when there is a problem such as, well we have one child now who is in the referral process who… has continued to have behavioral problems and we’re looking at an alternate type of program for him within the school.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:42 [Now, the support we get is alm.] (72:72) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team]

Now, the support we get is almost on a personal level because I can get in touch with a Child Study Team basically with a snap of my fingers. I can walk down and say I need to see ya and unless they’re testing or in a meeting with a parent, we can deal with something immediately on the spot.

Code: Community Support {1-0}

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:30 [But I do have a school advisor.] (63:63) (Angelica) Codes: [Community Support]

But I do have a school advisory council that is made up of community members and parents on the PTA and there is at least one parent than has a special needs student. They provide our students and those students with disabilities benefit from the monies that are generated from that group also.

Code: Curriculum {18-2}

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:19 [Well we do have certain things.] (34:34) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum]

Well we do have certain things that we definitely put into place. One being, of course, making sure our curricula is in line with the standards.
P 2: INTERVIEW #2,rt - 2:5 [We use mostly Fountas & Pinnel.] (37:37) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum]

We use mostly Fountas & Pinnel and then they're doing - they're doing writing every day, basically in their journals and then we give them a bunch of different materials, you know, just on different writing lessons. So for language arts it's a little odd, because we do balanced literacy and give the teachers a lot of different materials. Give them certain topics they have to do monthly and then they kind of pick and choose what they wanna do from there.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2,rt - 2:12 [For math we use Everyday Math... ] (47:47) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum]

For math, we use Everyday Math. Social Studies, we're piloting several different programs, but it appears as we're going to be using the McGraw-Hill MacMillan series for social studies. Science, we have a Discovery Lab and what we did was we looked at the content standards and really what each grade level needs to do and we have hands-on kits that one of our teachers, actually, is responsible for and they order the materials so, basically, every week they do one lesson in the lab, doing some kind of experiment and then follow up in their classroom for a second lesson. We have some textbooks for reference, but it's really the textbooks are truly just reference materials. Then for health we have the Great Body Shop, which is basically like a little Scholastic-type magazine on different health topics and that comes out monthly. And that's what they use in the regular ed. classes and that would also be used for in-class support and team teaching classes.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2,rt - 2:16 [And then for math, they’re - t...] (51:51) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum]

And then for math, they're - they're using the Everyday Math in those classes also, because Everyday Math does have built into it ways to help children who are working below grade level and it's a lot of hands-on. So they - they use the Everyday Math. It just might take them longer to get through the book because they'll be doing manipulatives and trying it from all different angles. Everyday Math is nice because they teach several different ways to approach a problem. So, it really does lend itself to special education, too. We have the Everyday Math online games that the children can play in class or they can sign on - go online from home and play the games also.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2,rt - 2:78 [For the test prep we actually ..] (114:114) (Angelisa) Codes: [Curriculum] [Other Department Support]

For the test prep we actually created the curriculum, the two supervisors and the two principals - my, myself and the 5th-6th principals.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2,rt - 2:118 [For those who are in team teach..] (33:33) (Angeliza) Codes: [Curriculum]
For those who are in team teaching and in-class support, they use the regular curriculum materials that the general population uses, which basically would include for language arts a Balanced Literacy approach. So basically they have independent reading and we pull all different - we don't have a set series for language arts. What we do is we look at the four blocks of Balanced Literacy and we have different materials they can choose. So, for instance, for the teacher does read alouds. We have fiction, non-fiction books and some basic books that everybody has to read to the class. But then they can choose their own. We have scholastic anthologies that everybody is required to read two stories from each of the units, but then they can kind of pick and choose themselves.

Independent reading, we kind of follow the 100 Book Challenge program which is what is the reason why we've gone with that company is because they already level all the different books for you already based on ... They color code the program and then they match it to Fountas & Pinnell levels and guided reading levels so you can kind of match it. The 100 Book Challenge is the name of the company. It's a - it's a neat program.

They're out of Philadelphia. Probably you really should go and check it out, 'cause it's - if you have money to spend, it's beautiful, because you can pick themes and they give you leveled readers based on the theme. Yeah, it matches Fountas & Pinnell.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.pdf - 2:122 [What we're doing now is we sti... (49:48) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum]

What we're doing now is we still do the Balanced Literacy approach. So, they're still doing independent reading with the 100 Book Challenge because it is kind of lends itself to that, you know 'cause the children are reading at their just right level, their independent level, so that works. We have guided reading materials, so, again, we can adjust that to their level.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:31 [Problem of the day is somethin... (62:63) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum]

Problem of the day is something that is connected with our reading program but I'll collect it.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:78 [Our reading program is McMillan,] (65:65) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum]

Our reading program is McMillan. Our math program is Scott Foresman. We're doing Spotlight on Literacy. You know they have all different, each of them have different types, different programs. It's McMillan, McGraw Hill but it's the Spotlight on Literacy part of it.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:79 [In all of our IEPs we put core,] (71:71) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum]
In all of our IEPs we put core curriculum. We don’t designate another program. It’s all the McMillan Spotlight and again we can use other multi-modality techniques.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rf - 4:4 [We have Project Read. We have ...] (16:16) (Angelica)
Codes: [Curriculum]

We have Project Read. We have Great Leaps. We have SRA with Project Read. We have Fleming Your Thoughts, which are - which is also used in some of the resource rooms. All of these programs address different learning styles. You know, the child that has maybe has phonemic difficulties. They’re excellent, excellent programs. I don’t know if you’ve had Project Read in your building? It uses the kinesthetic approach to teaching these kids. It’s absolutely awesome to see it.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rf - 5:1 [Wilson Reading Program or Orto... ] (75:75) (Angelica)
Codes: [Curriculum]

Wilson Reading Program or Orton Gillingham

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rf - 5:90 [We have the Everyday Math prog... ] (110:110) (Angelica)
Codes: [Curriculum]

We have the Everyday Math program which is a challenge for special ed. students.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rf - 7:58 [I don’t like high-stakes testi... ] (268:268) (Angelica)
Codes: [Curriculum]

I don’t like high-stakes testing. I think it has us covering curriculum a mile wide but only an inch deep.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rf - 7:76 [Project Read is the one big on... ] (147:147) (Angelica)
Codes: [Curriculum]

Project Read is the one big one right now. That’s huge. We are really looking, and I’ve - I’ve observed a couple of classes, and I like it a lot. I like it because it’s - it’s highly graphical with kids in terms of base-bones sentences and predicate expanders and what do these symbols mean, and what do those underlines mean, and two dots or three dots. It’s really a pretty focused, pretty visual approach for kids to learn how to read and to write better. It’s not like an “Everyday Math” kind of thing which prescribes the daily instructions. It’s a research-based, language arts program.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rf - 8:29 [Now this year we’ve been kind... ] (89:99) (Angelica)
Codes: [Curriculum]

Now this year we’ve been kind of working on Balanced Literacy because this is our first year of full implementation of Balanced Literacy. So we’re kind of right now caught up
and trying to get our special needs teachers to understand the role of the basal versus the Balanced Literacy. That's a journey in itself.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rf - 8:69 [We do Balanced Literacy. So, g.] (89:89) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum]

We do Balanced Literacy. So, guided reading and/or core literature, what we call novel study.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rf - 9:63 [We developed, got involved w.] (53:53) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum]

We developed, got involved with a very specific, in a way a skills driven type of a reading program that's very prescribed that teaches kids at their learning level and their skill level. So, that was a big factor that you know, we brought in a program at that time. [What's the name of the program?] Literacy First. It's a... what it basically is... I graduated from Kean in 1975 and I had a bunch of reading classes and special ed, classes on how to teach reading. Basically it's a Literacy First is a program that probably accumulated all the functional good practices that I learned 30, 35 years ago and today's researched based practices.

Code: Curriculum Planning (6-0)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rf - 1:20 [I wish I could. [laughs] I gue..] (34:34) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum Planning]

I wish I could. [laughs] I guess I'll do it again this year. We'll we do have certain things that we definitely put into place. One being, of course, making sure our curriculum is in line with the standards. We have benchmark assessments that we do a pre, mid, and post done on Edu-Test. I don't know if you're familiar with that. That program, we have... after each assessment now the benchmarking for the school year. We do... We have instructional management team leaders, which have been very effective. The department leaders, they take that information and we work as a group to see where the weaknesses may be and we develop an action plan based on that analysis. So then that action plan then is put into effect for the next trimester before we do the next benchmark assessment and of course we pay close attention for students with disabilities to follow the IEP but make its goals and objectives specific to each student and not generalize. We think that's been effective.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rf - 2:6 [Now, who decides the topics? W.] (38:38) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum Planning] [Internal Organization (teams/committees)]

[Now, who decides the topics?] We have committees as the summer that kind of review what should be covered at the grade - the content standards - and then look at, you know, what things we have and they kind of match what happens. So ba... basically every
summer we look at - we call it our "Monthly Pacing Guide." We look at it and make sure it’s covered by the content standards to make sure we have materials that can cover that and, you know, maintain, you know, those that we need to do, you know, if something needs to happen earlier or later, kind of move it around.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2, rf: 2:8 [Basically, what they do is, ya. ] (43:43) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum Planning]

Basically, what they do is, say, they’re - they’re looking at the writing curriculum, for instance. They’d be these ten - nine or ten people that sit down. Everybody together talks about the contents standards, make sure they’re familiar with it, what they have to do at every grade level, and then they look at the previous years’ pacing guides and then they make sure that there’s different writing tasks at every grade level. So they make sure nothing is overlapping with each other and then individually the grade-level teacher would have a committee meeting with everybody at their grade level on their own time and show them what they’re doing and get their “buy in,” and then they come back as a committee to finalize it.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4, rf: 4:35 [In our programs that we use wi..] (63:63) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum Planning]

In our programs that we use with the Everyday Math program, our teachers have developed their own assessments. For the past three years, they’ve felt that the program wasn’t as - wasn’t really adequately identifying how kids were progressing and how they were achieving. So, these teachers pulled that whole program apart and they developed their own assessments. That has been really, really effective, because, I don’t know if you know anything about that program. A child could get two answers correct on a secure goal and they get mastery. Meanwhile, the teachers find in their daily performance, they’re really not mastering those concepts. So they pulled it apart. They developed all kinds of assessments for every three units and they developed remediation activities because that program actually lacks those reinforcement basic skills for addition, subtraction, multiplication. I think they look - you know, they use a rubric. They’ve been using a rubric for the writing and the language arts. So I think all of that has really, you know, helped us.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4, rf: 4:41 [Curriculum mapping, backward d..] (71:71) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum Planning]

Curriculum mapping and backward design we’ve done with the curriculum. Benchmarks, core curriculum, and content standards - they’ve linked all of that.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8, rf: 8:41 [You know, we -- I told you we ..] (127:137) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum Planning]

You know, we -- I told you we moved from the basal to the Balanced Literacy. I think that helped them because before the special needs population was really struggling to be
able to read a larger piece of material and with the Balanced Literacy you start off with - with the Reader's Workshop and reading to gain stamina. So we did programmatic changes that way as well to gain AYP.

Code: Educational Philosophy (Principal) (18:9)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1 ref- 1:15 [Well my philosophy is that sch.] (22:32) (Angelica) Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]

Well my philosophy is that school is basically my microcosm of the real world. So, what we need to do is expose them to general education curriculum with their modifications that are set forth in their IEP. We definitely follow the IDEA. We follow FAPE and we educate them in the least restrictive environment and we try to meet the needs of all, all the different learners.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2 ref- 2:142 [I believe that all children... ] (84:84) (Angelica) Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]

I believe that all children - all special education students need to have the same expectations that they can grow. I think that we need to look at every child in September and see what can we do to get them to grow and I think that they need to be included with the general education population as much as possible because that is who they're going to be with for the rest of their life. And you can't pretend that they're going to be living in another world, somewhere else. So, they need to be included with the general education population, as much as possible, see what those expectations are and help - and, again, help them get as far as they can go.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3 ref- 3:6 [Well you know, that's important.] (16:26) (Angelica) Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]

Well you know, that's important. That's extremely important that the children see you, that the teachers see you because it is so big, there has to be some kind of... there has to be that connection.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3 ref- 5:21 [Well I think it's important th.] (54:54) (Angelica) Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]

Well I think it's important that, again if you look at our model that they [students with disabilities] are with all different children. Children have to be paired with... We have classes where we'll have resource, regular and our excelled - gifted students all in one class. It is important and I believe that they are throughout the day, throughout the week exposed to all different children of all different abilities. So, our in-class model does provide for that.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4 ref- 4:75 [Well, we recognize and accept... ] (52:52) (Angelica)
Well, we recognize and accept that all kids have different learning styles, even our special needs kids. We give them the same opportunities as regular education. We want them to be successful, promote their self-esteem even... it goes along with our philosophy and belief. Our mission statement for the school sums that up. Our 4th and 5th grades also have their own individual mission statements and it talks about individual learning styles. I think through our character education program, we promote acceptance through - through that and it's, as you can see from our philosophy and mission statement, fostering respect for diversity. Diversity and we do maintain confidentiality about our kids. You can't distinguish special ed. from regular ed. when you go into these classes. I mean, it's just amazing when I do my observations. They just do - they just blend in so well and the kids themselves, I don't - I think they - they work together and there's no difference from special ed. to regular ed.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5 ref. - 5:47 [So our philosophy is to really..] (131:131) (Angelica)

Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]

So our philosophy is to really make sure our differ - our instructions are differentiated and that children are given every opportunity to be in - in a general ed. environment as often as possible.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6 ref. - 6:13 [coughs] Well my, my basic app.-] (35:35) (Angelica)

Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]

[coughs] Well my, my basic approach is that, you know, all kids can learn and I try to involve the kids in as much as of the regular ed. program, general ed. program as we can. I guess really my philosophy and approach kind of got developed out of my first couple years of teaching. Back 30 years ago when I started, I hadn't had a single special ed. class in any of my undergraduate work and my first teaching job I got thrown into a classroom that had 32 kids and about 19 of them came back from special ed. classes. In the early 70's when they just, you know, they passed you know, 94 142 and boom they ended up back in the regular ed. setting. You know, I kind of had trial by fire and really developed the ability to work with kids and try to build on the positives. So that by modifying and adapting and using positive reinforcement with the kids, they really could achieve anything under the right circumstances. You know, and I, I've always used my example of my buddy. One of these kids I had was a special ed. kid. He came in from a poor home and he was always disheveled and his hair... He had severe communication handicapped and things and this kid just... he would do anything I asked him to, you know. If I told him to try to, you know, run into a brick wall he'd try. He really grew in that year that I had him as a student. I looked at him and tried to pattern my approach to working with kids with disabilities cause he was like the prime example of the kid that had nothing going for him and he could learn. It was kind of interesting cause I always wondered what happened to him. About probably 5 or 6 years ago, I ran into him one morning at the deli that I stop at in the morning and he was the paper delivery guy that brought in all of the newspapers from the, the publisher and dropped them off at this deli
you know. The guy who owns it was a friend of mine. I said, what’s that guy’s name? He said, I don’t know. You know, a couple of mornings I saw him and there was you know, my Herby. [laughs] You know, he’s been married and you know, he was successful in what he was doing and happy and it was really neat to see that. He did grow up into an adult and, you know, to a degree was successful even with his limited ability. So it was a, you know, a neat thing for me.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:25 [I think being positive with th..] (Angelica) Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]

I think being positive with the kids and stressing with them that hey, you can do this and really working with that.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:44 [You know, I kind of have a bel..] (29:29) (Angelica) Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]

You know, I kind of have a belief that they can, you know, they can succeed in the classroom with modifications and adaptations and just really focusing on that and, you know, doing that.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:37 [I can tell you we -- I believe..] (203:263) (Angelica) Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]

I can tell you we -- I believe deeply in not teaching to the test but in teaching kids how to take the test.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:39 [[Sighing.] Ahh. Goodness. We c..] (178:178) (Angelica)

Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]

[Sighing.] Ahh. Goodness. We could have a long -- I don’t know if I told you the other night that my wife and I taught in the same classroom. At the high school I graduated from, which was Manalapan High School. I guess we met there in my third year. We started dating. We got married and then I completed came to New Jersey. We pitched the idea of working together to my supervisor who said, "Absolutely not. You’ll be divorced." A long story short, we begged him. And he gave us one. He came in, observed it and said, "How many you want to do together next year?" So we did three classes together a year for about nine years. Adored it. So you can -- my philosophical orientation which was always at the lower end of the spectrum. They always asked me to teach upper-level kids and honor’s kids and I always refused. I said, "You stick anybody in that class and those kids are gonna be fine." "Give me the slowest, most worst behaved kids in the building and I’ll be a happy camper. So that’s where my orientation comes from. My orientation comes from where can we do the greatest good for kids who need us the most. And when it comes to kids with disabilities -- I don’t know if it was Jonathan Bach in his book Illusions: "Ask for your limitations and they are yours." You know, kids will often rise beyond their potential. I call it "EYP," Exceed Your Potential.
because we believe in them, because we spiral and tier our lessons in such a way that we allow them to be successful without lowering the high-bar, but that we offer them gradually increasingly difficult challenges which make them reach but never so far that it hits that frustration level. Not every child is going to a four-year college. Not every child should. In fact, I think I'd be much worse off if everyone did because then I couldn't get my car fixed or I couldn't get a plumber. We need to have need to have people who -- who go to trade schools, vocational schools, who even take on work right out of high school. But we need never to limit their opportunities. Their future should be limited only by the degree to which we can push them as far they can possibly go. I'm not a real proponent of leveling, tracking kids because when we track them in fourth grade they wind up in that same track in twelfth. We used to call that remedial and yet the word remediate means to like, to make better. It becomes tracked for disaster and tracked for failure because the behavior problems that those few kids who are lowly tracked bring on limit your ability to teach the rest of the kids. I've seen really low level kids do amazing things. In fact, I used to do some things in class that with my brightest class that they wouldn't get and with my lowest class they would get it just fine.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:08 [Jonathan Bach, B-A-C-H, and th..] (194:194) (Angelica) Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]

Jonathan Bach, B-A-C-H, and the guy who wrote Jonathan Livingston Segal wrote another book called, Illusions. Oh, it's really good. If you want one of Oprah's books that's outstanding there's a novel out there called The Kite Runner. Oh. It is so good. It's written by an Afghan. It's his first novel and it's about that clashing of cultures between Afghanistan and America when his very wealthy family is forced to come to America when the Taliban moves in. Very well done.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:26 [Another part of my philosophy .] (117:117) (Angelica) Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]

Another part of my philosophy has always been that every child has a right to grade-level material. But it's how you deliver it. I've always felt that. Like the best way I can segregate you, Angelica, is to find out whether you know Julius Caesar or not. If you don't know Julius Caesar, I can segregate you immediately because that tells me you are not in College Prep. I believe that's a subtle segregation when we do not allow special needs children to have accessibly to grade-level literature. Now, it might be delivered on tape. It might be read to them. They might have to, you know, hear it in chunks. But, they know the book How to Be Cool in Third Grade because every third grader knows it.

So I can't get on the bus and figure out who you are. So that has been the core. It's pretty controversial because not everybody agrees with it but that's what I believe.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:57 [I think it begins with really .] (182:182) (Angelica) Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]
I think it begins with really looking at the - the details and -- and understanding that it begins with a general philosophy that has to continually be reinforced by the leader throughout the year because we start off in September with... We know that everyone belongs in a learning community but as the year moves along, we kind of move away from it. So the leader has to continually reinforce and believe not only through, you know, through voicing their position, but also through programs. After school programs, include them. We have after school programs that unfortunately at one point these after school programs in reading and math were only for children that the teacher recommended and they were not special education. Well, when we were put "In Need of Improvement," we had to start with the special education children in that after school program first. Well that changes our whole philosophy. Now, they're in there. So, you know, I think that you have to not only say you believe but you also have to look at all your programs and all your decisions and say, "Does it really -- does it include everyone?"

P 8: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 8:70 [I believe that these special n...] (89:89) (Angelica) Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]

I believe that these special needs students should be in the community of learners but saying it is a lot easier than doing it.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:12 [In fact, I don't know if this...] (38:38) (Angelica) Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]

In fact, I don't know if this means anything to your report but my philosophy has always been that there should not be separate teaching certifications. Teaching certifications should be one and everyone should know how to be a special ed. teacher and everyone should know how to be a regular ed. teacher because inclusion and in-class support is what I believe that we have to have and what we are having. So, [laughing] out of survival people ought to be just a teacher. They shouldn't specialize like that. That's my editorial.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:40 [I'm a firm believer that if you...] (63:63) (Angelica) Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]

I'm a firm believer that if you want good learners you have to have good teachers and the teachers, the good teachers have to be using good practices. Well, if they didn't use good practices I guess they wouldn't be good teachers but... I think really making sure that teachers are just teaching the right way and making sure that they're teaching what the kids need and meeting whatever the, you know, of course the standards are always there [laughs]... we have to shoot for.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:57 [I don't like to treat kids dif...] (98:98) (Angelica) Codes: [Educational Philosophy (Principal)]
I don’t like to treat kids differently, I obviously have to take into consideration their individual disabilities, you know, that’s part of the game. But by the same token all kids should have certain experiences that are the same as the others. A lot of times their social experiences, sometimes academic but I, I’ve never been known as a person to discriminate in any way. A kid is a kid. You know, just let me deal with them and when I taught, I taught emotionally disturbed kids. One of the things I learned is that you better have a lot of tolerance because the kid that was driving you nuts yesterday and you might have had a retraisher, you might have had a meeting with the parent. That same kid is gonna come in the following day and you better forget what just happened the day before because guess what if you hold grudges your not gonna make it.

Code: Empowerment of Teachers (7-1)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:31 [So we’re trying to switch or s..] (40:40) (Angelica) Codes: [Empowerment of Teachers]

So we’re trying to switch or shift the emphasis from the administration to the educators because they’re the ones in the trenches and they’re the ones that see day in and day out what’s going on in the classroom. So, empowering them to become responsible for partially a leadership role I think had really provided them with the opportunity to feel more ownership of the whole process and I think it’s been becoming more successful for us as a school.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:7 [Who sits on the committees? It..] (39:39) (Angelica) Codes: [Empowerment of Teachers] [Other Department Support]

Who sits on the committees? It is one of our curriculum supervisors, the Assistant Superintendent, and then teachers from each grade level. Usually, there are seven teachers, one from each grade level and then, you know, at least two administrators. Usually, about nine or ten.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:119 [So they make sure nothing is o..] (43:43) (Angelica) Codes: [Empowerment of Teachers] [Teacher Interaction]

So they make sure nothing is overlapping with each other and then individually the grade-level teacher would have a committee meeting with everybody at their grade level on their own time and show them what they’re doing and get their buy in, and then they come back as a committee to finalize it.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:60 [Absolutely. Absolutely. And 1 -] (122:122) (Angelica) Codes: [Empowerment of Teachers]

Absolutely. Absolutely. And I think that’s that’s important. Last last faculty meeting, the library media specialist took ownership and she’s a first-year librarian, too. She contacted World Book and World Book came with the representative and the two of them.
presented on how to use the Internet for research skills. You know, as I said before, my special ed. teachers have gotten up and have shared. Teachers have facilitated on the writing workshop. They've been working on guided reading. They've gotten up and they've shared their guided reading centers and how they make it work. The guidance counselor will talk about character education and - and follow up on the Responsive Classroom. So, there's a - yeah, they do it all the time.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:67 [I think I also feel that empow...] (120:126) (Angelica) Codes: [Empowerment of Teachers]

I think I also feel that empowering our teachers in the process, putting them on teams as team leaders, facilitating and leading faculty meetings, courses that we hold - hold after school, we do have a lot of professional training that we hold after school for these teachers and on those curriculum days, where they - they get the training, is all critical.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:102 [We just - we all talk. We talk...] (136:136) (Angelica) Codes: [Empowerment of Teachers]

We just - we all talk. We talk about the kids; it's not, like, their kids and my kids. And then whenever we plan staff development, I'll go to them. I'll go to the whole staff. I'll go to everyone and say, "What are your needs?" And on ye - last year, in fact, the general ed. teachers who had the mainstream kids specifically requested a workshop on how to implement the IEPs of those kids who were with them, just for science. They wanted to know how can I best meet that kid's need and how can I read the IEP and make sure I'm implementing it when they're with me for one class. Related art teachers got the same thing because they see the kids in the related arts classes. So, they wanted to know how is their IEP going to affect what I'm teaching in music when they're with me.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:85 [I - I support near about anyt...] (215:215) (Angelica) Codes: [Empowerment of Teachers]

I - I support near about anything teachers want to do. I have a group of teachers who said, "Can we burn one of our Professional Days and just spend the entire day reviewing our new anthology, designing lessons, writing down activities we want to do, laying out a scope and sequence?" I said, "You bet your ass, you can." Then my boss said, "No." That just was not going to fly. So I said, "How about I just take all four of their classes for the day and I'll do a lecture hall and I'll free them up and do nothing." He said, "Well, what if a kid gets hurt." I said, "That's why I want you to approve the Professional Day." So he did.

Code: Grants (6-1)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:42 [This would be something you wo...] (57:57) (Angelica) Codes: [Grants]
This would be something you would need to know. We received a grant from the State of New Jersey. It’s the Governor’s Intervention Grant. We… we received… we applied for and received the Governor’s Intervention Grant and the basic premise behind that was intensive instruction to reduce or eliminate social promotion. And with that grant the students that performed partially proficient on the ASK test grade three into four, so our current fourth graders are eligible for, we have a summer program in August that ran for five weeks every day, two and a half hours a day and tutoring throughout the school year on a one to two ratio.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:45 [We were a recipient of the New…] (57:57) (Angelica) Codes: [Grants] [Interventions] [Tutoring]

We were a recipient of the New Jersey After Three Program Grant and along with that program is a component for tutoring for students that were partially proficient on the ASK test so we’re definitely [laughing] stepping up our intervention.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:23 [Was this Star W grant written …] (58:58) (Angelica) Codes: [Grants]

Was this Star W grant written for your district or just for your building? For the district. It’s basically - when it started, it was for - it - it started for 3rd grade, the first year, and then you included 4th grade, then it went to 5th grade. So it’s 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade now in the 3rd year of the grant. We had a grant writer at the time. We had a position that was supervisor of grants, and her job was to bring in as many grants as she could. So she brought this one in, like I said, three years ago. Since then we don’t have this position anymore, but she did bring it in when she was here.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:123 [There is - every classroom has…] (55:55) (Angelica) Codes: [Grants]

There is - every classroom has a flat-screen and then the majority of them have three to four laptops in every classroom, because we had the Star W Grant. We received that three years ago. So we’ve been receiving funding for the last three years to have technology. So, I probably have 15 classes that actually have plasma screens in the classrooms, yes, I know, it’s great. They have plasma, they have scanners, they have digital cameras and they’re trained monthly on how to infuse technology into literacy, which is what the grant is about.

P 5: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:54 [We have a PTO not a PTA. They …] (46:46) (Angelica) Codes: [Grants]

We have a PTO not a PTA. They provide us with all sorts of support of the educational programs. Each year teachers and as well as myself can put in requests for grants for different things. At about the end of the year, and historically, our building has received about 18 thousand dollars a year from them for a variety of things be it assembly programs, you know, support materials, things like that. You know, they just recently got
me two laptops that we can use with projection units so they’re tied into a wireless network. So, that those types of things that they support us with.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rf - 9:61 [The other thing that we did, n.] (42:42) (Angelica) Codes: [Grant]

The other thing that we did, now this just started this year so I can’t say it was around when we first, when we made AYP, but this year the special ed. director wound up winning or being granted a grant to have some specialized people who work with the special ed. groups. And one of them, it’s a part time position, but she specifically specializes in in-class support programs. So she actually works with the in-class support teachers to make sure that the models that they are using are useful and adaptable and functional.

Code: Hiring Practices (6-3)

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rf - 5:57 [And hiring. I sit in with the .] (141:141) (Angelica) Codes: [Hiring Practices]

And hiring, I sit in with the Pupil Services Director when he’s planning to hire someone that’s gonna be in my building. We - we work together to do that. So he’ll look at them from the special ed. perspective and I look at them as a, you know as a teacher in my - in my community perspective. I guess, that’s how I play a role in it.


How do I answer that? Most of the teachers we hire, the special ed. teachers, of course, are special education certified, usually dual-certified. Even when we look for general ed. teachers, we try to get teachers who are dual-certified just so they can have that awareness because our inclusion model is really important and every teacher in our school at some time or another, experiences a special ed. child in their classroom.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rf - 5:87 [I think as long as we are diff.] (184:184) (Angelica) Codes: [Hiring Practices]

I think as long as we are differentiating, we’re modifying instruction, we’re communicating with all parties involved and we hire good teachers who know student differences, then I think that goes a long way in helping the kids succeed.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rf - 5:95 [Any new hires in the district .] (120:120) (Angelica) Codes: [Hiring Practices]
Any new hires in the district go through a 4-day academy in August where they learn about everything from lesson planning to the evaluation process, so on and so forth. There are two components to the Academy that they’re all involved in. One is working with special education children in your classroom because at any time they may have those kids in their classrooms. Then there was another breakout session, I believe, on ICS support - the in-class support, the in-class support model.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rf - 5:98 [Hiring very strong teachers in...]. (134:134) (Angelica) Codes: [Hiring Practices]

Hiring very strong teachers in these areas who know children and know disabilities and know how to meet their needs.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rf - 9:38 [I think the only thing that I...]. (86:36) (Angelica) Codes: [Hiring Practices]

I think the only thing that I didn’t really mention is that I think when you’re hiring someone you have to hire them not based only on what they know and how they can teach kids. I mean that’s obviously primarily what you want to do. But you also have to look at the personality of the teacher and really think is this personality gonna be the right thing for a child. I use my own kids as a litmus test. Would I want my child... I’m fortunate that I don’t have kids who’ve had any disabilities; however, if they did, would I want my child with that person? Is he a good role model? Is she a positive person who’s going to bring my child’s emotional level up. I think that that’s a major part of the whole process. If you don’t get people there that’s going to treat the kids well and but be, be a good role model, you lose something there. I went in fact, I don’t know if I’ll ever get in trouble for it or not, well I’m almost ready to retire in a couple of years so I guess I slid by for awhile. A lot of times I’ll tell teachers when I higher them whether it’s special ed teacher, regular ed., special area, it doesn’t make a difference. A lot of times I tell them that I look at a... When I hire someone I look at it as a marriage and I take marriage very seriously. If I don’t feel that we’re going to be a good match, I’m not gonna give you a contract; therefore, like entering into a marriage. But it’s a long-term commitment that I feel with people that you have to have a good impact on everyone in our collective con...school community. That’s pretty much the way... I think one of the biggest impacts that we can have on kids whether it’s special ed. or not, it doesn’t make a difference. You want good people to be with kids. That’s how, you know, no matter what we do with kids, and I’m sure you see it, but the way that the teachers treat the kids is most often the model of behavior that the kids will have. I can look at a grade level and I know which kids are gonna come out with a, at the end of the year [laughs] with a different attitude because of the way that the teacher’s personality is and character is. They have that effect. So it’s really... I think the final nail in it is really just making sure you hire good people that are gonna be good with kids.

Code: Inclusion Implementation (25-5)
We have a team teaching approach where as the special educator is in the room with the regular ed. teacher all day.

Is there a mission or purpose that guides the IMT's purpose or is it more informed with everyone understanding what their roles are? Good question. We have a district objective for differentiating instruction which was something that central office pretty much put out a couple of years ago and since that's the underlying goal for the district - is meeting the needs of our learners. That's fine to have that out there but the avenue to get there was not readily available to the teachers. They didn't understand how to get there so in doing... in keeping that as the major goal, then we implemented these other steps to achieve that goal.

We definitely follow the IDEA. We follow FAPE and we educate there in the least restrictive environment and we try to meet the needs of all, all the different learners.

Everyday Math is nice because they teach several different ways to approach a problem. So, it really does lend itself to special education, too.

But we really try to include them in everything that they possibly can and what I do for myself, for my - for my multi-handicapped and my autistic class, those teachers we - we meet with the entire faculty. We have socialization programs, like the teacher really explains her children to the whole entire faculty at a faculty meeting, and kind of explains what kinds of things she would like to have. Like, if there's a socialization time, like, they do a lot of cooking. So the teacher will say, "You know what? Every Friday we do some type of cooking activity. I would like some other students, some regular education students to come in and actually help us." They have a school store that they do every once a month and some teachers kind of - some of the teachers send their regular ed. kids to go these for socialization purposes. So for those two classes, it's more socialization. Like, if they're in for homeroom... The multi-handicapped children, some of the children are ready for homeroom, so they just go to classes for homeroom. For the LD classes I assign for each self-contained learning disab - disabled class, I assign two 3rd-grade and
two 4th-grade teachers to work with that special ed. teacher, so that as their children become able to be mainstreamed, they can mainstream for whatever subject is appropriate. They’re mainstreamed at lunch. All special education students are mainstreamed at lunchtime and as for specials, we do as is appropriate. But we really do work hard ahead of time, because sometimes just including them and not giving the education behind why they’re doing it or what the purpose, it - it falls apart. ‘Cause we’ve done it in - I was at another school a couple of years ago and we didn’t do that prior preparation. It was a disaster.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rdf - 2:12] [For the self-contained and the..] (49:45) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Implementation]

For the self-contained and the pull-out replacement, again, the majority, I’d say, 99% of our pull-out replacement and our in-class support is for language arts and for math.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rdf - 2:14] [hey’re not different. We just ..] (79:79) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Implementation]

They’re not different. We just have to find out what makes them tick and help them get to where they need to go.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rdf - 3:11] [You know, we... again we’ve in t..] (43:43) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Implementation]

You know, we... again we’re in the classrooms constantly so we talk to our... Just sitting down with this new teacher saying I don’t need a paraprofessional, someone to walk around and point to things and say what page you are on. I don’t need that. You’re to walk in there and not just paralled teach, we expect them to determine the needs of the students and we have various ways to do that and you can be teaching a lesson, teaching something other than what the teacher’s teaching. Especially in our lower grades some of those children are ready to read in first grade. Others don’t know alphabet letters or sounds yet. So, those teachers are working at the level the students are at. They need to work as the instructional level of the students.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rdf - 3:14 [nd are your in class support t..] (44:44) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Implementation]

[Are your in-class support teachers in there all day long or just for periods?] Just for periods except for my two classes at 4th grade. They’re in there for literacy and most cases literacy and math. They do a language arts period. So, it’s usually sixty minutes: thirty and then thirty. Some are thirty but the majority have two periods which we, what we consider sixty minutes.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rdf - 3:20 [Well I think it’s important th..] (54:54) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Implementation]
Well I think it’s important that, again if you look at our model that they [students with disabilities] are with all different children. Children have to be paired with... We have classes where we’ll have resource, regular and our excelled - gifted students all in one class. It is important and I believe that they are throughout the day, throughout the week exposed to all different children of all different abilities. So, our in-class model does provide for that. They work in-group projects and we mix those groups. Those groups are never the same. Sometimes our in-class support are working in a group project with regular and som...sometimes with our excelled students.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:17 [Okay, we have something really...] (34:34) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Implementation]

Okay, we have something really unique. We have a full - full-time inclusion class. We have two in 5th grade where a special ed. teacher and a regular ed. teacher stay in the room all day and work together. There - there’s about 8 special ed. kids most in each of those rooms. We have two in 5th and we have one in 4th grade. If you were to walk into those rooms, you wouldn’t be able to tell the special ed. kids from the regular ed., ‘cause that’s how well it works.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:37 [What we’ve done, too, is linki...] (64:64) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Implementation]

What we’ve done, too, is linking the teachers’ professional plan to the school goal so that they’re - these arc key connections to really benefit our kids.


Okay. I think I described that, basically, with our ICS setting and with our language learning disabled children being mainstreamed for the full year in a general ed. classroom for related are, lunch, recess, science or social studies. And even in the beginning of the year with the autistic kids, we have teachers who are prepared to have them integrated into their classrooms, when they’re ready. When they’re developmentally ready. And - and then they go with an aide. We do have about four children who have IEPs, but they are in general education environments. They were in special ed. environments maybe when they were in K through 2. But in my building, they are completely mainstreamed. But they still have IEPs and it may be for needing additional time and maybe for other health impairments. And those kids have an aide that is with them. Like, one boy has his aide only for writing time, ‘cause he needs someone to support him during writing. An aide who works in the classroom with him. [What does she do the other time of the day, when she’s not working with him?] She’s with another classroom where they are mainstreamed - where there are children who have IEPs placed in the general ed. environment.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:33 [What we learned the first year...] (112:112) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Implementation]
What we learned the first year of implementation with that are referrals from the general ed. teachers for evaluation by Child Study Team, it decreased from 38 to 6 in one year. Because now these teachers are better equipped to - and also, I wouldn’t say it was just Schools Attuned, because that was really the first year, but we attribute that also to differentiating instruction. So teachers aren’t so quick to say, “Ooh, I can’t teach this kid. He needs to go be assessed by the team.” Now teachers are looking at what can they do in the classroom before they jump to the gun and refer the kid to child study.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:46 [We believe in providing the le.] (131:131) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Implementation]

We believe in providing the least restrictive environment and making adjustments and being flexible enough to adjust our teaching approaches and strategies. Like I mentioned, we might have a part-time setting one year and not the other year, specifically based on what kids need. So we never just say, “Okay, this kid is classified. Put him in a special ed. class.” We don’t really have that setup.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:58 [Just staying in - in communica..] (141:141) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Implementation]

Just staying in - in communication with everybody and, you know, when I talk to the Pupil Services Director, I wanna know who - every child is - who’s in the ICS classroom. I go to their meetings. I know their parents just like the teachers do. I place them. You know, once I get the information I need, what the program is, I - I place them with support from the Pupil Services Director.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:6 [You know, so we’ve really incl..] (29:29) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion implementation]

You know, so we’ve really included the kids in the whole program, you know, for testing, for everything. You know, so they really are focusing on you know, being included in the classroom and no different than any other students. Matter of fact, I just did an observation in an inclusion classroom this morning. If I didn’t know the kids and the identified special ed. kids, you wouldn’t have known who the special ed. kids were because the teacher, when they group and things, they did some literature circles. All the kids were intermingled and the two machers just went from group to group working with the kids. You would not have...you would not have known who the special ed. kids were.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:10 [Yes. You know, for, you know n..] (33:33) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Implementation]

Yes. You know, for, you know, not totally but every special ed. student even the self-contained classes are assigned to a general ed. homeroom where they go to homeroom periods. They participate, you know, in all the assemblies and things like that with their homeroom.
Those kids who have Resource, for the most part, have multiple Resource. Now, we don't deliver Resource in science and social studies. We do all of that in-class support. And Resource is really pretty much reading, language arts, and mathematics. And in virtually every single case, the same teacher who provides the in-class support in social studies and science also provides to those same children the Pullout Resource. So we have some continuity there and we can crossover disciplines in the Resource as well.

For the most part, in one particular room will be the kids who need ICS [in-class support] and then of course the kids who also needs the Resource. And then since we don't offer Resource in science and social studies, every classified kid, whether it's in their IEP or not, gets that level of service. So we often, by default, are offering a higher level service than the IEP warrants which is a good thing.

Our students are included based on recommendations from our special education teachers done in the spring. It's -- they are generally students who are the highest-achieving resource room students and then they are recommended for inclusion the following year. So those students -- and believe me when I tell you that they agitate over who goes in inclusion, they agonize. Because they're very reluctant as third-grade teachers, special ed. teachers, to let them move into inclusion without that small group setting. So, they really carefully choose those students who are ready to move from the resource room onto inclusion. It's almost as though they're afraid to let them go. Now, they've generally been very, very successful. They take hours trying to figure out -- okay, who's the highest student of my resource students who would be okay for inclusion? In fact, Angelica, if I didn't force them into giving me some students for inclusion, they probably wouldn't. They don't want to [laughs], no, but, you know, I kind of force it and say, "You know, I need..." and then when I say that then they'll go back to the drawing board and say, "Uh, uhh, well maybe this one." Yet, when the get into inclusion they flourish.

How inclusion is a word that's been defined in several different ways [laughs]. Inclusion sometimes means, how I have heard it sometimes, inclusion would be those severely disabled children who are, might be more physically disabled. They have some medical problems. They're bed ridden but they're in a classroom. We don't have...we haven't really had that experience except years ago. We did have one boy who was very cerebral
palsy. If you look at inclusion as more of an in-class support type, we are very proactive with in-class support and again, I don’t know if that is part of your definition of inclusion. I’m going to use the broader sense of inclusion being in-class support kids. Again, we have two classes at each grade level except the 3rd grade. We only have one right now. Our numbers are trending to get a little bit less in special ed. I think we are very proactive. We’ve only included the special ed. kids. When I first came I made it a... I made it a demand that every child, every special ed. child has to be assigned to a regular classroom and they are to be included in anything that they possibly can be. Whether they can only get there for homework or a party... if it’s their... if that’s the extent of their ability to be mainstreamed then they’re there for that. However, a lot of the... actually most of the special ed. kids are mainstreamed right in for all the specials, lunch, things like that with some exceptions. Some kids are so disabled they can’t really function in a regular classroom. Then they’re more assigned to a homeroom and things like that. But I would say that we’re fairly proactive. I don’t think to see any child not included in what the regular ed. kids do and that goes for something as simple as Field Day. We happen to have phys ed. teachers who will include any disabled kid no matter what. As long as it’s safe they will have them function in any activity that the phys ed. teachers do to the point of, you know, if they’re doing little scooter races and it’s during Field Day, somehow we adapt that they can do it.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.pdf - 5:17 [Then we have another teacher w... (42:42) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Implementation] Thus we have another teacher who is just a behavior specialist who deals with just general behaviors with you know, within the special ed. population.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.pdf - 5:21 [There very often is a tendency... (42:42) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Implementation] There very often is a tendency I see that when there’s two teachers in a classroom one of the teachers takes a lead. My feeling and when I say my feeling it’s also the feeling of the administrative team and most teachers included, we don’t want to walk into a room... or if I walked into a room with another person who was new to the school... if you came to my building for instance and I said Angelica let’s take a walk and we go into a room and there’s two teachers, I don’t want you to be able to say, “Oh, that one over there must be the special ed. teacher because look at who he is working with.” I wouldn’t want that to happen. So, there is a tendency however, for teachers to, especially at the beginning when they’re first getting used to it, of one teacher takes the lead and the other teacher just sits back and waits to pounce on just the special ed. kids and I said no. What my model would be is, you are... there’s two teachers. One teacher should be the lead in introducing the lesson, doing the objective. All that preliminary kind of things that teachers do to conduct a lesson but the other teacher should be very active working with kids along with the teacher. For instance, if I see a reading lesson, a whole group reading lesson, there’s no problem if one person does the introduction and then the other person would break into groups even from there to make sure that all the learning needs are made. So, what I hate to see is one teacher be basically a teacher’s aide. I want that
teacher to be very proactive in the room and that’s probably one of the toughest things to do because when we… years ago when we first, I’ve been here for about 19 years. So, I’ve seen kind of like the in-class support process really develop over the years. Years ago if we needed somebody for in-class support, I used to be at a faculty meeting and say ok, this is the plan, we’re gonna do an in-class support. Raise your hand if you want to be considered and I’d see six people raise their hands. I’d say ok, the six of you let’s meet and talk. And they wanted to work together. They knew each other. Their personalities were in touch with one another but as more and more in-class support and inclusion happens, that pool of people who want to raise their hands and say yes, I’ll do it, it’s getting smaller and smaller. So, as a result, I found that we’ve had to do actually more training because the personalities are not necessarily a perfect match. So you really have to do a lot massaging of professional egos, personal egos, just to make sure that you can find matches that will work and be productive with kids. Like I said, back in the days when you had, well I have building; I have 40 classrooms, regular ed. classrooms. Twelve years ago, if I had two in-class support rooms that was easy. No problem because I had friends working together and they read off each other. They knew what… it’s just not as easy now because we’ve been demanded to have more and more classes. That pool of personalities that just click automatically, it’s not there.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:23 [You almost need and I again, m..] (44:44) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion implementation]

You almost need and I again, my building’s big. I am blessed with two vice-principals who are very good but we have a lot of needy kids that are not classified. So we’re really dealing with a lot of things at one time and all the things that I know we should be doing doesn’t always get done, such as in those in-class support rooms you almost need like a team building experience in how to work together, how to plan together, how to… how to jive together. You know, in the business world if you’re going to a conference with someone or a business meeting in New York and you have to present a project, you may not like the other person but guess what, you better do your job or you get heisted right out of there. In education, it’s probably going to be at that same point where we have to say ok, you don’t want to work together but you are. Therefore, these are the things that you need to prepare for so you do a good job.

Code: Inclusion Models (Programs) (12-2)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:2 [We have a, autistic program. W..] (20:20) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Models (Programs)]

We have a, autistic program. We have mostly disabled self-contained L.I.D. We have behavior classrooms. We have resource replacement. We have supplemental resource implementation and we have inclusion.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:1 [Yes, we have 4 self-contained..] (22:22) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Models (Programs)]
Yes, we have 4 self-contained classrooms. They are all LD classrooms and I have in-class support at every grade level 1 to 5.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf · 3:71 [Ours are in-class support exce.] (39:39) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Inclusion Models (Programs)]

Ours are in-class support except for two groups at 4th grade. All of the rest... in 1st grade I have three classes of in-class support. At 2nd grade 1 have three... At most grades I have three classes. At 4th I have five and at 5th I have four. So, Ours is an in-class model. I have 10 resource teachers because of the number of classified students. So, they are in the class for literacy and math if needed in that classroom and for content area in the upper grades 4th and 5th.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf · 4:2 [Our programs include mainstream.] (16:16) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Inclusion Models (Programs)]

Our programs include mainstream, mainstreamed with mods, mainstreamed with support of an aide, in-class support, out-of-class resource center replacement, LD - Learning and Language Disabilities class. Then we have "pull out" programs depending on the learning needs and styles of the students.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf · 4:68 [The inclusion model, as I said..] (120:120) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Exclusion Models (Programs)]

The inclusion model, as I said before, that helped teachers to be more aware of special needs kids.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf · 5:2 [The least restrictive would be..] (75:75) (Angelita)  
Codes: [Inclusion Models (Programs)]

The least restrictive would be our in-class support model and that's where we have five or six special education students in a general education environment. There's a general ed. teacher and a special education teacher and they - and they team-teach. But the special education teacher's role is specifically to meet the - the needs of the children in the class with IEPs. In some cases we have a part-time situation, where the teacher - the special education teacher is just with the kids in the morning for reading, writing and math. For social studies, science, and all the other content areas, they're - they're okay on their own with the general ed. teacher. Then that teacher might either move to a resource room setting or to another classroom to work with kids who need support in their - in specific areas. So that's least restrictive. The step up from that would be the ICS [in-class support] setting all day long where there are two teachers all day long: one general and one special ed. teacher. More restrictive would be when they're in an ICS classroom but they're pulled out, in addition to being in an ICS classroom all day, they're pulled out for resource room instruction, which - which can include Wilson Reading Program or Orton Gillingham.
P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:70 [Some kids go to the resource r... (Angelica) (77:77) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Models (Programs)]

Some kids go to the resource room for maybe just reading. Some are in the resource room for the full morning, for reading, writing and math. So there’s - it - it’s really specific to the individual needs - how much resource room time they would get. But those kids always do go back to an ICS classroom. We don’t have any who go to a general classroom and then resource room. It’s always resource and then an ICS classroom with two teachers. We also have two self-contained settings. One is for Language Learning Disabled children and there are about - about 12 or so kids in that room. However, they are mainstreamed in the general ed. environment for science and/or social studies, and recess, lunch, and related arts. So while they’re in the language learning disabled classroom, they’re going to go to - they’re connected to a mainstream class that they are part of and they go with an aide. This includes autistic children, Down Syndrome children. Just children with a severe learning disability in general. So while it’s self-contained for most of the day, they don’t stay there all day, every day. They do get an opportunity to go out and the other self-contained environment is - is our autistic classroom. We have 5 children in that classroom. Now, when we’re ready and when appropriate, based on their needs, they also are mainstreamed into a general ed. environment for science, lunch, recess, related arts.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:40 [We have a self-contained progr... (15:15) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Models (Programs)]

We have a self-contained program where those students are included for the specials: the music, art, phys. ed., Spanish, library, you know all of that. And then we have a couple, you know, pull out for math and language arts. Then we have a number of inclusion classrooms where have’s two teachers in the classroom for at least part of the day. [And what subjects are they in there for, or is it subject driven?] Everything. They’re fully included with everything. [So let me get clarification. Your inclusion program is morning based where you have two teachers?] Right. We have some that are full inclusion where they’re, you know, in that homeroom all day. The special ed. teacher is there for support in the morning for language arts and math. Then we have a number of pull out slash inclusion where they’re pulled for the language arts and math in the morning and then they’re fully included for everything else and there is a teacher in there in the afternoon.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:2 [Our model is least restrictive... (49:49) (Angelica) Codes: [Inclusion Models (Programs)]

Our model is least restrictive environment all the way. ‘In so much as it is humanly possible, we try to keep kids in the mainstream. And with the in-class support model being our preferred model as well as differentiated instruction being one of the leading district initiatives in the past several years, we’ve really found that for most of our kids that that is the most successful model for us.
Well, currently we have the Resource Room. The Resource Room setting for reading and math only. We have, umm, inclusion. For fourth grade inclusion, we have reading and math. We have two classes of inclusion, reading and math. We have the self-contained which is the really cognitively delayed students. And we have the mainstreamed students. How do you define mainstreamed students? Well, they're -- they are still currently classified but they're mainstreamed. So I don't think they take them out of the system of the -- of the Special Education Program. I think they keep their names there, but they have just been mainstreamed. [But they're not in the in inclusion class?] They're not in the inclusion class, but they're mainstreamed special ed. [So what services are they receiving?] They could be doing speech or OT or they could have been students that maybe the year before they were inclusion students and we, you know, we felt as though they're ready now to be declassified. But I'll put in an aide or something just to make sure that they get some support but technically not any real legal services from special ed. But we still keep them in the system. I mean I've asked myself that question, but they keep them there.

The nature of special ed, kids now I think has definitely changed from over the years in the mainstream. Again, the legislation says that we have to keep kids in the mainstream more and more and, you know, we'll support that goal.

We have a range. We have... we reduced the number of self-contained classes to four. We have two behavioral disordered classes. We have an autistic class and then we have more of a life skills type of class as well. Those again are very... most of those are very severely disabled kids. Then we move up and we have the pullout resource rooms that would be the next level from you, know, the more severe kids. So, in severity the resource pull out kids are about the mid-range of what we have. And every classroom, let's see... [pause] Every classroom would have at least a couple of resource pull out kids. Again, they're kids that are just not going to learn the regular instructional methods in a classroom. Then of course, we have the in-class support, which is definitely a growing trend. We have one in the 3rd grade, two in the 4th grade and then two in each of the 5th and 6th grades too. That's probably the larger population really at this point.

Code: Instructional Practices (19-6)
Codes: [Instructional Practices]

Basically, the superintendent doesn’t believe in pulling children out of the regular classroom. That they belong in the classroom as much as possible because if you pull them out they’re missing something and they’re already behind. So give them extra time to help them. I think it does work. I mean, my - our biggest concern and the biggest - I started the after-school program, let’s see, seven, eight, nine years ago and the biggest problem I had to begin with was just making sure that the after-school teacher was following up on what was happening in the classroom. That was the hardest part. But what we do is we have our supervisors who are in charge of the after-school programs and what their job is when they create the list is to put the kids together from certain teachers. So the - the after-school teacher makes it easier for them to contact back and forth with the teachers. So, I find it to be pretty successful now, but it was hard at first. The first few years it was difficult arranging and getting everything together and making sure they were connecting it to teacher.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.ref - 2:75 [So you don’t offer basic skill..] (101:101) (Angelica) Codes: [Instructional Practices]

So you don’t offer basic skills during the day? No. Everything is after school.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.ref - 2:76 [So the children who would stay..] (104:104) (Angelica) Codes: [Instructional Practices]

So the children who would stay after school, are they mandated to come? Yes, mandated. A parent can get them out of it if they write the, you know the letter, but most of the parents want them to stay after school.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.ref - 3:13 [They need to work at the instr..] (43:43) (Angelica) Codes: [Instructional Practices]

They need to work at the instructional level of the students.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.ref - 3:24 [Just send a memo out about the..] (56:56) (Angelica) Codes: [Instructional Practices]

Just send a memo out about the problem of the day. Make sure you’re doing that everyday and I don’t care if it’s a self-contained class or what class it is, they’re all doing what they need to do.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.ref - 3:63 [Ww... and this is a district thi..] (92:92) (Angelica) Codes: [Instructional Practices]

We... and this is a district thing, our district has just... the last couple of years, been doing ‘WOW’, which is ‘Working on the Work’ and we talk about the work we give students. Let’s make the work authentic and the work meaningful so students become
volunteers in their learning process and that's been a little bit of shift with our staff where we tell them we're not talking about your delivery of instruction. We're talking about the work that you're expecting children to do. What purpose is it? Is it authentic and is it something children want to do? So, that's been something we're working on the last few years and I think that's helping us here.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:93 [teachers aren't so quick to say...] (112:112)  (Angelica)  
Codes: [Instructional Practices]

teachers aren't so quick to say, "Ooh, I can't teach this kid. He needs to go be assessed by the team." Now teachers are looking at what can they do in the classroom before they jump to the gun and refer the kid to child study.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:47 [We do a daily writing experien...] (38:38)  (Angelica)  
Codes: [Instructional Practices]

We do a daily writing experience with them and really focus on that.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:51 [You know, when I check lesson...] (40:40)  (Angelica)  
Codes: [Instructional Practices]

You know, when I check lesson plans and things like that, you know, I look for the daily kind of a math problem that will respond to the types of questions that are on the test. You know, the open ended questions where they have to explain and go through that as well as the reading and writing experiences. You know, looking for that they've really focused on making sure that the kids are ready by doing a lot of writing and those things.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:34 [What is space repetition? Just...] (190:190)  (Angelica)  
Codes: [Instructional Practices]

What is space repetition? Just in terms of whatever skill we're working on, we don't let it go. Again, it goes back to that concept of spiralling. Over time that if I really want you to be able to write a topic sentence, I don't give up on doing that after I teach it in September but that I continually find ways to re-enforce it over the course of the year.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:47 [Uhh...we -- I model lesson ev...] (215:215)  (Angelica)  
Codes: [Instructional Practices]

Uhh...we -- I model lessons every now and then. I did it at a faculty meeting last year. I do some guided reading groups in fourth and fifth grade.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:43 [I tell teachers about the read...] (203:203)  (Angelica)  
Codes: [Instructional Practices]

I tell teachers about the reading logs and learning logs and picture prompts and that you can open any textbook to any page and find a picture where you can give the kids
picture prompt to write about. You can work within the textbook itself to teach kids about main idea. In fact, the textbooks are so beautifully laid out to do that -- that you can rather than take two or three or four weeks out of your curriculum -- and don't think we don't do some Test Prep. We're under the gun from ATP all over the place. But I try to tell teachers as much as possible when you can embed the strategies into the curriculum, you're killing two birds with one stone and you're not stepping and trading water while you're just doing. "Okay. Today we're going to do main idea." Of course, you're doing main idea, but do it within the context of the trade book you're reading. Or, we have to write a persuasive essay. All right. Well, what period in history are you studying? Write a letter to general so-and-so explaining why such-and-such so that we're -- we're using the curriculum we have to teach the skills we need to.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.pdf - 8:18 [This -- those children need so..] (78:78) (Angelica) Codes: [Instructional Practices]

This -- those children need sequencing. I'm going to pull a Flex Group of sequencing for the next four days. I'll be back on this day. This goes through reading, writing, and it can also go through math.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.pdf - 8:21 [Now here's the move that I mad...I] (81:81) (Angelica) Codes: [Instructional Practices]

Now here's the move that I made that impacted a lot more, which is still -- still shifting down. Is that this year I made all of Special Ed. Teachers teach writing in the regular classroom. Now, that was a feat because nobody wanted to it. But their first step this year has been, you know, even though the resource room teachers teach reading in their classrooms, small group pull-out, writing is done collaboratively: co-teaching with special ed. That has been a big jump and, you know, successful in some places and still struggling in others. Umm, but it makes a difference in the level of writing, and I have had I have seen that. So, umm, the Special ed, Teachers -- all of them co-teach writing.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.pdf - 8:31 [So my first challenge was to...] (92:92) (Angelica) Codes: [Instructional Practices]

So my first challenge was to get them to understand that they have a right to be in the writing community even though they may not move at the same pace in a writing piece. But I gave the writing -- the special education students -- this is basic skills too -- all my -- all writing is taught collaboratively in this building. I don't care if you're basic skills or special ed, you co-teach writing. But what it has allowed -- what I do allow them to do is some "flex grouping" and pulling out children for a week or so to maybe focus in on -- on editing or focus in on completing a piece. So, if they want -- if the start the piece and I don't know if you're familiar with the Writer's Workshop. If they start a piece and they decide that their special needs student need to come out to work on let's just say a dialog then they can pull them out and work in their room with some dialog and their piece and then pull them back in for the author's chair or whatever. So it's kind of -- I think all those things -- all of those types of strategies help in pulling up the literacy scores.
P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:36 [Co-teaching and I believe thal.] (123:123) (Angelica) Codes: [Instructional Practices]

Co-teaching and I believe that, emm, in our mathematics program, all of our students, Resource Room, and special -- and General ed. have 60 minutes of mathematics. So we probably have some of the highest scores in mathematics in the state of New Jersey for Special Education children. And that's because every child has about 10 minutes of Everyday Math and continuous review math with the whole class in the morning and then they go out to a Resource Room for 40 more minutes of it during the day. So they get technically about 60 minutes of math every day -- whole class right in there with general ed. and then concentrated small group instruction. So I think that led to higher scores. Plus the biggest element is that we all are on the same wavelength with the big ideas in math and literacy. So that when you talk about problem solving and what happens in problem-solving in general ed., you're talking about the same thing in Resource Room. We all talk the same language and in literacy it's the same way. We talk about text connections in Resource Room. We talk about text connections in -- in general ed. So we all focus on the same big ideas in literacy and in math but how we deliver it varies. So that led us to greater -- that led us to everyone having exposure to basically the same material and -- so, you know, it increased our scores in literacy for this year and our math scores were -- were high anyway.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:52 [But I believe that it's -- if.] (173:173) (Angelica) Codes: [Instructional Practices]

But I believe that it's made us be far more attentive to students with different types of learning and forced us to find the answer through differentiation. And I believe far more of us fall into the those areas of differentiation and therefore it in turn helps the regular ed. learner, as well. Because most of the strategies that works for the special needs population through differentiation also help some of the at-risk borderline regular ed. children as well.


When I heard that we passed AYP that year I said the same thing, "How did we do that?" But it didn't happen the following year. You know, last year we did not meet AYP. Like I said, it was a different group of kids. We did pretty much the same practices but you know, for whatever reason the kids just didn't do it. You know, the first thing people said to us was, "Hey did you cheat?" And we said, "No we didn't." [laughing].

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:65 [However, there's also a lot of... (53:53) (Angelica) Codes: [Instructional Practices]

However, there's also a lot of instructional part that went on. So, if you have a 3rd grade class whether they're special ed. or regular ed., teachers will sit down with each child and
do an assessment to find out their need level at a particular skill level. Now in the 3rd grade most of the kids should be out of phonics. However, if they’re not that’s where their teaching level is. So, that’s where the teacher will focus all of their learning, all of her teaching so that the child is not exposed to only one size fits all teaching. They’re grouped and in fact we have one hour a day where we have small group instruction. Again, they’re skill specifically designed for these kids and a teacher would have one group during that time where she works specifically, especially the lower level kids. They make sure that they get them every day. Then we do have another hour where it’s whole group where they’re doing more whole group instruction. You know, where they might be looking at, on a 3rd grade level, they might be looking at a, the characters. What are the characters like? What are their predictions that they might do? Simple things like that. But, it’s a, it has been a very good program, [coughs] excuse me, cause the teachers have very specific targets to aim at and to teach for. So that was probably a big factor. It was very specialized teaching. As I said before, it was probably the luck of the draw that we had more abled kids.

Code: Internal Organization (teams/committees) {12-1}

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:34 [Now, how are they selected (fo.,) (44:44) (Angelica) Codes: [Internal Organization (teams/committees)]

Now, how are they selected (for IMT)? Do you choose or do they volunteer? I choose them. They definitely, you know, express and interest and then from those that express and interest we interviewed and selected.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:35 [Who was on the (IMT) interview... (45:45) (Angelica) Codes: Internal Organization (teams/committees)] [Other Department Support] [Special Services Support]

Who was on the (IMT) interview committee? It was myself, at that time our Supervisor of Curriculum Instruction and Special Ed.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:72 [We have instructional management... (34:34) (Angelica) Codes: Internal Organization (teams/committees)]

c have instructional management team leaders, which have been very effective. The department leaders, they take that information and we work as a group to see where the weaknesses maybe and we develop an action plan based on that analysis.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:76 [Is there a set guideline or do.. (46:46) (Angelica) Codes: Internal Organization (teams/committees)]

Is there a set guideline or do you devise the agenda or who sets the goal for the IMT? That’s a good point. We also, I wanted to tell you, is that this year, actually last year, our teacher facilitator is outstanding and with all these new implementations that we’re
doing, she has been instrumental in assisting the process because you know, you know with any change, sometimes it's hard received and this school's really different because we are a strong, better staff. So, you know, we had to find a way to make this work and you know it was met with some resistance but having that facilitator and implementing the IMT, I think definitely contributed to it being as successful as it is. The facilitator works closely with the team as is in a non-administrative role and knows what the administration needs to happen and she facilitates that with the teaching staff.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:17 [What role do you play in the I... (Angelica) Codes: Internal Organization (teams/committees)]

What role do you play in the implementation of these factors? Part of the Instructional Management Team, [IMT], you know, we review all of the testing before it goes on. We meet with the teachers on a regular basis in the IMT meeting. We have one representative per grade level and also one from Bilingual, ESL and Special Ed. and those grade level leaders become instructional leaders. So we're trying to switch or shift the emphasis from the administration to the educators because they're the ones in the trenches and they're the ones that see day in and day out what's going on in the classroom. So, empowering them to become responsible for partially a leadership role I think had really provided them with the opportunity to feel more ownership of the whole process and I think it's been becoming more successful for us as a school.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:6 [[now, who decides the topics? W... (Angelica) Codes: Curriculum Planning] Internal Organization (teams/committees)]

Now, who decides the topics? We have committees in the summer that kind of review what should be covered at the grade - the content standards - and then look at, you know, what things we have and they kind of match what happens. So basically every summer we look at - we call it our "Monthly Pacing Guide." We look at it and make sure it's covered by the content standards to make sure we have materials that can cover that and, you know, make any, you know, tweaks that we need to do, you know, if something needs to happen earlier or later, kind of move it around.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:120 [They'll be these ten - nine or... (Angelica) Codes: Internal Organization (teams/committees)]

They'll be these ten - nine or ten people that sit down. Everybody together talks about the content standards, make sure they're familiar with it, what they have to do at every grade level, and then they look at the previous years' pacing guides and then they make sure that there's different writing tasks at every grade level.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:141 [We're in the process right now... (Angelica) Codes: Internal Organization (teams/committees) We're in the process right now, the way our administration is set up, we have regular education supervisors and we have special ed. supervisors and they've always been seen
as very different. And what we’ve realized is all children learn differently on different days in different ways and it doesn’t matter if they’re special education classification or they’re regular education students. So what we’re in the process now is kind of merging that will have one person in charge of instruction. Then they’ll kind of be overseeing regular ed. and special ed. together, and then so the super - then we won’t have a supervisor of just special services or special education. It will be a language arts supervisor and they’re going to be overseeing all language arts regardless of what a child’s classification is. Their expertise will be language arts, because you know, my feeling, it doesn’t matter if a child has the label. It - it’ll be the Director of Instructional Services is what they’re gonna be calling it and then under item they’ll have each of the subject areas. Well, this is what we hope, of course, it depends on the budget. We’ll have a Language Arts Super - like, right now we have a Language Supervisor for regular ed., but she has a special ed. background also. So she’s very familiar with alternative programs. So she’s like, a perfect person. Absolutely, so... and then our math person has special education background. Most of our supervisors that - or, you know, principals, have some type of special education background. I mean, that’s one of the things they do look for. I wasn’t a special education teacher, but I was a team teacher and I worked with pullout and in-class support. So, you know, that’s one of the things they do look for - for administrators to have experience with special education students to realize that they all learn, they’re not different.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2 - 2/155 [Your supervisors of language a.] (140:140) (Angelea) Codes: [Internal Organization (teams/committees)]

Your supervisors of language arts, math, and the other content areas, what grades do they span? The way it works is we have, um, my math supervisor is 3 through 6. The language arts 3 through 6. The content area, he does K to 6 - that’s science, social studies, health and special areas. And then we have a supervisor of - I’m trying to think of what they call her - I think she’s Supervisor of Elementary Curriculum and she does language arts and math, K to 2.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4 - 4/40 [We have what’s called “common ...”] (69:69) (Angelea) Codes: [Internal Organization (teams/committees)]

We have what’s called “common planning time” [CPT] once a week and I meet with the teachers. They have it built into their schedule. We also have team leaders on each grade level because I have 12 5th-grade homerooms and 11 4th-grade homerooms. So, I have two team leaders that represent 4th grade, 2 that represent 5th grade. I have a team leader that represents special education. A team leader that represents specialists and a team leaders that represents our intervention program. I meet with them regularly and we identify - you know, we address these issues. [Are those team leaders receiving a stipend for meeting with you?] Yes, they receive an annual stipend. The stipend is small for what they do because they do a lot with their... When they have their CPTs, they plan agendas. They do minutes. They do their budget. They do a lot of curriculum mapping, benchmark - benchmarks with the curriculum. They do a lot of work and then we meet
before school starts usually and sometimes they come in, you know, on their own. They don't get really paid for that part of it and we'll spend, like, a whole day or two before school starts, planning out our goals for the school year.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:45 [Family School Council, which i.,] (82:80) (Angelina) Codes: [Internal Organization (teams/committees)]

Family School Council, which is a site-based committee is comprised of the administrator, teacher representatives from the grade levels, two parent chair people as VPs, and then we invite parents in for these meetings. I just had one about two weeks ago in the evening. We send out, you know, an invitation to all the parents. So it's an open... parents involvement. [What types of things do you discuss?] Results of the school goals. The New Jersey ASK test results. Programs about the curriculum. The teachers would do presentations, which they did. They just gave a mid-year update on our school goals, both the 4th and 5th grade teachers did. One did the presentation on the math goal and the other did their literacy goal. So the teachers do a "share out." I talk about various aspects of the curriculum, our new reading program. Any special activities that occurred in the school that the parents may want to know about. If it was around the time, like, at the end of the year, I'll do the results of our school goal. Next September I'll do the results of the New Jersey ASK, which was taken in the prior spring. The council is to work in collaboration with the school, so that there's an open line of communication, that we provide information. It's two-way and they also share out information. Questions that they may have about how are, how are the assessments going? How are the results of the - the New Jersey ASK? So I think it's a two-way thing... just communication. It's also to resolve any issues. If the parents have any questions about the lunch program or the cafeteria service or issues in general, they can bring it to the table at Family School Council. I usually have at Family School Council two parents that are the VPs and I meet with them to develop the agenda. What the parents would do if they have, say, numerous items that come to their attention, they will bring it to me and then we'll put it on the agenda. But if it's only one or two and we can resolve some of those questions before the meeting, we don't. [You meet how often?] I try to meet with them once a month.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:46 [Who develops the goals for you.] (82:82) (Angelica) Codes: [Internal Organization (teams/committees)]

Who develops the goals for your school? Collaboratively with the teachers we look at the areas that we want to address. We usually have a meeting at a faculty meeting and we feel... We list all the areas and try to prioritize those that we want to really address. Since we - since the Everyday Math program was the one big issue... So for three years we've been working on both assessments. We felt the literacy - literacy is so important with NCLB, so we've tried to stay to the literacy and the math. That's basically the two goals.

Code: Interventions (7-2)
P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rf - 1:43 [And with that grant the students] (57:57) (Angelica)
Codes: [Interventions]

And with that grant the students that performed partially proficient on the ASK test grade three into four, so our current fourth graders are eligible for, we have a summer program, in August that ran for five weeks every day, two and a half hours a day and tutoring throughout the school year on a one to two ratio.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rf - 1:45 [We were a recipient of the New] (57:57) (Angelica)
Codes: [Grants] [Interventions] [Tutoring]

We were a recipient of the New Jersey After Three Program Grant and along with that program is a component for tutoring for students that were partially proficient on the ASK test so we’re definitely [laughing] stepping up our intervention.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rf - 3:82 [Yes, yes and what we find that... ] (75:75) (Angelica)
Codes: [Interventions]

Yes. Yes and what we find that we’re doing, that as a result of, with our Dibbles we’ll meet. They’ll put the Dibbles in. We’ll get the results and we have a... and this is the first year we have common planning time and we’ll meet at one of their common planning times and without using names, talk about a child and then toss to the group how can this teacher help this child? What can they do? Just like we would do in our PAC or I&RS meetings.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rf - 5:56 [So I think all those things an...] (138:138) (Angelica)
Codes: [Interventions]

So I think all those things and the Study Island, teachers being trained in Schools Attuned, hiring good staff, the workshops, the communication, the relationships that we have - the professional relationships we have, the relationships with parents. We keep them abreast of everything. They’re very involved. I think that all played a role in achieving AYP that year.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rf - 5:59 [Using Study Island, which is... ] (144:144) (Angelica)
Codes: [Interventions]

Using Study Island, which is was, I mentioned, was new last year. Providing the Project Achieve program that’s new this year. Differentiating instruction. Modifying instruction. Strong parental connections with the school.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rf - 6:49 [Now this year one of the thing... ] (40:40) (Angelica)
Codes: [Interventions]
Now this year one of the things we did, we identified students and we have actually five different groups that we’re running... working on developing writing skills. We have one group where two teachers meet with about 25 kids after school. My LDTC is meeting with two groups of 3rd graders over lunch and recess one day a week, working on developing their writing and how to respond to picture prompts. Then I have a group that I’m working with, of about 12 kids over lunch and recess one day a week, working on developing their writing and how to respond to picture prompts and things like that. You know, we’ve really kind of focused on that.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:73 [And even when I do LR&S, which.] (182:182) (Angelica)
Codes: [Interventions]

And even when I do LR&S, which I don’t know if you’re familiar. When I look at that and I, you know, look at a teacher whose whose goal is to try get them in special ed. or classified, my whole thing is, “What are we doing?” Have we done everything because my program in Balanced Literacy really lends itself to children who learn differently? So what’s not working there? It’s not just in that, it’s not just in that, but it’s also that I’m constantly looking around to see do my programs support it?

Code: Mainstreaming (13-1)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:70 [All of our special ed. students...]. (30:30) (Angelica)
Codes: [Mainstreaming]

All of our special ed. students are mainstreamed for lunch, recess and also for special areas and depending on the individual students and their needs and IEP, some receive a mainstream for maybe a self-contained student in a MD classroom with the hopes of implementing them back into the classroom or mainstream them for science or social studies based on their needs. So, it’s really a case by case basis but if the question is: Are they... Do they all have interaction in the regular setting? They do with lunch, recess and special areas.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:136 [So for those two classes, it’s...]. (71:71) (Angelica)
Codes: [Mainstreaming]

So for those two classes, it’s more socialization. Like, if they’re in for homeroom... The multi-handicapped children, some of the children are ready for homeroom. So, they just go to classes for homeroom. For the LD classes I assign for each self-contained learning disabled class, I assign two 3rd-grade and two 4th-grade teachers to work with that special ed. teacher, so that as their children become able to be mainstreamed, they can mainstream for whatever subject is appropriate. They’re mainstreamed at lunch. All special education students are mainstreamed at lunchtime and as for specials, we do it as is appropriate. But we really do work hard ahead of time, because sometimes just including them and not giving the education behind why they’re doing it or what the
purpose, it - it falls apart. 'Cause we've done it in - I was at another school a couple of years ago and we didn't do that prior preparation. It was a disaster.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:137 [Yes, every special education student is included at some point, when they're able to, whether it's just attending assembly or lunchtime. They're - they're included for everything.]

Yes, every special education student is included at some point, when they're able to, whether it's just attending assembly or lunchtime. They're - they're included for everything.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:15 [Yes, yes, our students go... maj.]

Yes. Yes. Our students go... majority of them, except for our, some of our very little ones are not mainstreamed for areas but they all go out for specials: music, art, library, phys. ed. Then of course we send them out to mainstream for subjects as they're able to do. Usually we begin with social studies and science if they can handle that or if their strength is math they are mainstreamed for a math class or reading class. Except for... again, our first LD class, they are at a 1st grade level and some of them are not yet able to handle movement, transition but we do try to get them out at least for one or two of their specials. They have a special everyday. So they are in with the age appropriate classrooms.

P 2: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:17 [Okay, okay. So just for clarification purposes, when your LD 1st graders go to music, are they alone in music or are they with another 1st grade class in music? They... some of them... We have a class of music for them. Some of them will go out with other 1st grades because of the maturity level.]

[So just for clarification purposes, when your LD 1st graders go to music, are they alone in music or are they with another 1st grade class in music? They... some of them... We have a class of music for them. Some of them will go out with other 1st grades because of the maturity level.]

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:27 [Yes, they are. LLD kids are on...]

Yes, they are. LLD kids are only in general education settings for specials, lunch, homeroom, recess, because they're in self-contained classes. We have in-class support for science and social studies that's always in class. I think by including them, it gives them an exposure, an opportunity to be with their peers and to develop good social interactions and also to be challenged educationally. So yes, these kids are included.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:45 [The majority are. The only ones...]

The majority are. The only ones who have not yet been mainstreamed are the autistic children.
P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:88 [We do have about four children. ] (98:98) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Mainstreaming]  
We do have about four children who have IEPs, but they are in general education environments. They were in special ed. environments maybe when they were in K through 2. But in my building, they are completely mainstreamed. But they still have IEPs and it may be for needing additional time and maybe for other health impairments.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:104 [When I mentioned the autistic ...] (210:210)  
(Angelica)  
Codes: [Mainstreaming]  
When I mentioned the autistic classroom and that those children were not yet mainstreamed I found out that three of them are being mainstreamed as, I think, two different classrooms where they go for, you know, activities or related arts. And then there is a 4th-grade class that takes in one child. Some of the kids have befriended the children and become so close that they come to the class and visit them and do activities with them. So... Yeah, it's a whole network of kids, 3rd and 4th graders, who've taken upon themselves to reach out to these kids. They play basketball with the kids. They sing with them, you know. They get involved in the songs. So, anyway, the - the fact of the matter is three of these kids are - are mainstreamed already and two are working toward doing that.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:77 [So that's four of our kids and...] (154:154) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Mainstreaming]  
So that's four of our kids and four others who are multiple handicapped and communication impaired are also in a self-contained environment. Beyond that, the other 826 kids all spend at least some time in the mainstream. First of all, so matter what their classification is, in science and social studies, every one of those 826 kids is in the mainstream. When it comes to the specials: art, music, phys. ed., Spanish, every one of them is in the mainstream. Obviously, in lunch they sit with their - by homeroom. So, yes. For the most part, I guess, the child whose program has been most restrictive beyond the self-contained spends half his day outside, outside the mainstream class in the Resource Room.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:27 [Yes. They're all included in s...] (114:114) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Mainstreaming]  
Yes. They're all included in specifically in social studies and science settings. Those are the two subject areas that all children, even - even self-contained are included in social studies and science instruction. The reason why they're included there is because our science is a hands-on science curriculum. Our social studies curriculum, we generally have classroom sides that are in there to help support the special education children and we can differentiate those through unit work. So, everybody is in that one. I don't care
which — you know, what — you know, you could be — even our most severe cognitively impaired children are in science and social studies.


Yes, at whatever level they are able to. As for instance, as I said before, all kids are assigned to homerooms and even if it's something as simple as they go to their homerooms and go for attendance, if that's academically all they can handle that's what they do. Now I'm talking about the... I'm talking about the self-contained kids at this point. They're really the self-contained kids. As I said before too, we have more and more disabled, more severely disabled kids left in the self-contained rooms. So, for them it's difficult. For instance, I have one little girl who's in a... most often a walker. She used to be in a wheelchair but she's graduated up to a walker. She goes in as much as she can into the regular classroom but it's simply sometimes not safe or to her benefit for other purposes. She would be crushed on the playground for instance. So we have her aides work with her. She's allowed on the playground of course. She wouldn't be excluded. But we have to give her more attention when she's out there. Again, we want to be safe with her and we don't want her to get hurt. But yes, they're included as much as their ability, disability allows then I should say. This is the general way that I like it to work. Let's say Mrs. S has five kids in her self-contained class. Each of those children has an appropriate grade level homeroom that they're associated with, okay. So, in Mrs. S's class little Betty, if, she may go down to homeroom with her mainstream class. Maybe the rest of the day she's not there because of her disability. She simply can't be there because of her learning needs let's say. So whatever, you know, if the IEP says she has to have instruction in a self-contained room that's where she goes. Whenever she can though, she's in the mainstream class. It might be for a petty. You know, if they have a Valentine's party next week that child has to be in that mainstream class. Now another child, we've had others... Well, I'll give you for a instance. We have at the other extreme one kid who is in the 5th grade, last year who was in a self-contained room almost all day. This year he's mainstreamed, probably 99% of the day in his 5th grade homeroom but he's still a self-contained child. But he's worked his way where he can function in a regular classroom through the bulk of the day. So we have a range. Again, we have some more severely disabled kids that are less able to go into the rooms but they are always invited in whenever they possibly can be.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:26 [I'm a firm believer that every.] (49:49) (Angelica) Codes: [Mainstreaming]

I'm a firm believer that every child should be able to do the most that they are able to do. You know, kids should not be held back and discriminated against just because they're disabled. You know, if they can get into a classroom and function... As I said, maybe they can do - take special areas, and a lot of our self-contained kids by the way go to specials with the regular ed. kids. They should be able to do that.
Well... definitely their individual program, exposure and opportunity to have exposure to the generalized curriculum, absolutely. The instruction is modified obviously to suit their needs.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:55 [So we’re trying... You know, if..] (87:87) (Angelica) Codes: [Modifications]

So we’re trying... You know, if I have 4th graders working on the 1st grade level, they’re not going to be able to read the test. They’re just not going to be, but then their IEPs will have test modification, so that the teachers can re-read the directions to them or re-explain the directions to them. They’ll be given extra time, extra breaks.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:72 [We teach the curriculum. They..] (56:56) (Angelica) Codes: [Modifications]

We teach the curriculum. They receive some modifications but they’re receiving the same program.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:88 [We’re working as hard as we ca..] (90:90) (Angelica) Codes: [Modifications]

We’re working at hard as we can to make them achieve but they also have many modifications as you know to take that test and without those modifications they wouldn’t be able, I think, to pass.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:2 [We, you know, meet with the te..] (31:31) (Angelica) Codes: [Modifications] [Teacher Interaction]

We, you know, meet with the teachers regularly and talk about inclusive practices and you know, how to make modifications and adaptations for the students.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:11 [So that by modifying and adapt..] (35:35) (Angelica) Codes: [Modifications]

So that by modifying and adapting and using positive reinforcement with the kids, they really could achieve anything under the right circumstances.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:26 [You know, with the special ed-..] (42:42) (Angelica) Codes: [Modifications]
You know, with the special ed. kids with the test modifications: the small group, the extended time, making sure that they are in a good testing environment and having breaks for them and things of that nature.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:45 [I mean one of the things that..] (29:29) (Angelica) Codes: [Modifications]

I mean one of the things that, you know, up until this year, we only had two students who did AYP. Everyone else did take the test with modifications.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:49 [We don't pull every kid into s-] (229:229) (Angelica) Codes: [Modifications]

We don't pull every kid into small groups for the testing but we're very thoughtful when we look at the things like test anxiety. If I'm going to make a mistake, it's going to be on the safe side because in the fourth grade they have very little if any testing experience. They have the NJASK 3. So we do have testing modifications. When we think it's appropriate, we have scribes. A scribe would be someone who - if we had someone whose thinking was real good but he was unable to put pen to paper. That person would right the essay for example in the kid's words. When we think it's appropriate, the tests will be read aloud to kids. Well, that's, that's pretty common or write the, bubble in for a kid who can't bubble.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:40 [On -- on, uh, achieving AYP, ..] (132:132) (Angelica) Codes: [Modifications]

On -- on, uh, achieving AYP, what - what we did was we -- now, we focused in on those children who were special education and that needed to reach AYP. We looked very closely at the modifications that the state gave us. Our test coordinator met with the special education teachers to further expand areas that we could modify. If you understand what I mean. Like they - they really read and thought about ways to modify to give the children any more time. Or to - I'll tell you an example. Like sometimes the children in math use charts and so they read that to say that if they use it every day then they can use it. If it's an aid that they can use every day, you know, then it's an aid that they can use during testing. So they really studied hard, specifically for the special ed. teachers and students, what areas could we make that testing environment the optimum?

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:45 [We spent a lot of time with gr..] (137:137) (Angelica) Codes: [Modifications]

We spent a lot of time with grouping, you know, in getting together with those resource room teachers. We took our inclusion students -- we took them out of the classrooms. So we really looked at these areas to see what would be the optimum environment for them. That helped us. The resource room teachers felt as though that was one thing that made a difference in us meeting AYP last year. A different setting and also that they were able to use some everyday classrooms aids that they were use to using every day of
course that were not excluded. So they were little things that we did and spent time examining those modifications that made a difference in reaching AYP. Of course changing in program.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:35 [Another factor was we did ever..] (55:55) (Angelica) Codes: [Modifications]

Another factor was we did everything we could to provide all of these accommodations for testing where if it was legal we did it. As far as, you know, grouping them if their IEP allowed them to be grouped in a small group where the teacher could read as much as they could to the child, cause not everything can be read to any child. But if some of the things could be that would not be in a regular classroom, we did that. In fact, I run out of small rooms to put kids into because there's so many teachers with small groups during a test. But those are probably some of the biggest factors. Again, specialized teaching, a lot of support within a classroom and within the special ed. resource rooms too.

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Code: Other Department Support [8-2]

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:35 [Who was on the (IMT) interview..] (45:45) (Angelica) Codes: [Internal Organization (teams/committees)] [Other Department Support] [Special Services Support]

Who was on the (IMT) interview committee? It was myself, at that time our Supervisor of Curriculum Instruction and Special Ed.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:47 [So basically, you know, workin..] (61:61) (Angelica) Codes: [Other Department Support]

So basically, you know, working collaboratively with our Supervisor of Curriculum because the students with disabilities do have exposure to that regular ed. curriculum. So I guess, the best way I could put it is just that collaborative relationship and support from other supervisors and administrators.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:7 [Who sits on the committees? It..] (39:39) (Angelica) Codes: [Empowerment of Teachers] [Other Department Support]

Who sits on the committees? It is one of our curriculum supervisors, the Assistant Superintendent, and then teachers from each grade level. Usually, there are seven teachers, one from each grade level and then, you know, at least two administrators. Usually, about nine or ten.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:69 [But what we do is we have our ..] (103:163) (Angelica) Codes: [Other Department Support]
But what we do is we have our supervisors who are in charge of the after-school programs and what their job is when they create the list is to put the kids together from certain teachers.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rf - 2:78 [For the tea prep we actually do - ] (114:114) (Angelica) Codes: [Curriculum] [Other Department Support]

For the test prep we actually created the curriculum, the two supervisors and the two principals - my, myself and the 5th-6th principal.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rf - 2:95 [Either I meet with them, [teach-] ] (139:139) (Angelica) Codes: [Other Department Support]

Either I meet with them [teachers] or the Supervisor of Language Arts or the math or the content area supervisor. So it depends, we kind of take turns.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rf - 2:98 [Basically, I work very closely-] (143:143) (Angelica) Codes: [Other Department Support]

Basically, I work very closely with my Child Study Team and we have a Supervisor of Special Education. Her responsibilities really are to oversee self-contained classrooms and fill out replacement classrooms. So I work closely with her. And our Assistant Superintendent is very involved in terms of the testing and the special ed. students. She has a special education background herself, so she's very involved. She's very involved in terms of what kinds of placement. She's involved in materials that we're choosing and, you know, instructional methodology. I mean, everything.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rf - 3:46 [So we -- we get support from ] (144:144) (Angelica) Codes: [Other Department Support]

So we get support from their department. We get support probably from most of the special areas. Like, you know, when I say "special areas" I mean like the art and the, umm, art the classes and the music classes because even they tie in different big ideas from math and from literacy into their art classes and their music and that that tends to touch the special areas because it's kinesesthetic.

Code: Other Department Workshop Offerings [1-1]

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rf - 2:45 [Actually, some of our supervisors...](73:73) (Angelica) Codes: [Other Department Workshop Offerings]

Actually, some of our supervisors and administrators teach the classes. So that's nice, too.
Code: Parent - Teacher Meetings {4-1}

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:106 [So you don't have those begin... ] (148:148) (Angelica)
Codes: [Parent - Teacher Meetings]

So you don't have those beginning of the year meetings or professional development day in the beginning? No, we haven't, since we started this program. We found it more important that they meet with parents than they meet with us. And it's pretty successful. The parents and, you know, the parents and teacher both like meeting together.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:109 [Is there a set amount of time... ] (149:149) (Angelica)
Codes: [Parent - Teacher Meetings]

Is there a set amount of time allocated, like, 15-20 minutes per parent? We try to do about 20 minutes, that's what we try to do. This is just k-6.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:156 [We have, you know, obviously w... ] (145:145) (Angelica)
Codes: [Parent - Teacher Meetings]

We have, you know, obviously we have our early annual meetings, but we have something in the beginning of the year called 'Individual Student Goal Conferences.' So before school even starts, all of our teachers meet with parents before school starts to talk about the child and to develop a plan. Usually, we don't focus on academics during that first meeting. It's more about socially or emotionally or behaviorally, things that the parents want to know about the child and, you know, pick something that, you know, we want to work on throughout the year. So all parents - regular and special ed. - are all involved in that.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:157 [And then what we try to do is... ] (147:147) (Angelica)
Codes: [Parent - Teacher Meetings]

And then what we try to do is that first week of school a few of those days are half days just in case they couldn't get in touch with a parent before school started. So that they can, you know, try to meet with them the first few days, 'cause usually parents are - some parents are not available in the summer time. Some of my teachers actually do it... They get their class list in the beginning of June. Some of my teachers will meet all their parents the following year before school gets out [in June].

Code: Parent Contact {7-1}

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:164 [So at the individual student g... ] (146:146) (Angelica)
Codes: [Parent Contact]
So at the individual student goal conferences, which are held, you said every parent has the option to come in for that? Yeah. Well, we encourage - we try to encourage 100 percent of parents to come in and meet the teacher before school starts. And then we have another conference. That one has been switched around a little bit. This year we did it at first report card time. Sometimes we do it half way through the year. So that depends, but, you know, we - we have - try to have two conferences every year: one before the school starts and then the other one sometime throughout the year.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:47 [Well, we send out the minutes... ] (84:84) (Angelica) Codes: [Parent Contact]

Well, we send out the minutes of the meeting, too, with my newsletter, so parents are aware and we do put it on the Listerv, so everyone knows they can pull it up on their computer.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:16 [So the teacher of these kids w... ] (90:90) (Angelica) Codes: [Parent Contact]

So, the teacher of those kids work directly with the parents of those kids to decide, "Should we just do it in class? Should you just do it at home? Should we do it at all?"

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:55 [the relationships with parents... ] (138:138) (Angelica) Codes: [Parent Contact]

the relationships with parents. We keep them abreast of everything. They’re very involved.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:71 [They go on and solve problems... ] (81:81) (Angelica) Codes: [Parent Contact]

They go on and solve problems on the computer and then at the end they play games where they’re also answering questions, but it’s in a game format. Then they get a - a printout and parents can look at the results and see how they’re doing, where they need more support, and that sort of thing.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:4 [We have parent nights... ] (68:69) (Angelica) Codes: [Parent Contact]

We have parent nights

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:10 [We go through a conference wit... ] (36:36) (Angelica) Codes: [Parent Contact]

We go through a conference with I&RS and I’m more involved with the parents and kids at that time.
Code: Parent Desires (4-0)

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:150 [So and - aol during the day we..] (93-93) (Angelica) 
Codes: [Parent Desires]

So and - during the day we're using two different versions in the classroom but after school we're doing a test prep class. 'cause parents, you know, want some extra help.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:153 [The test prep class will be a ..] (109:109) (Angelica) 
Codes: [Parent Desires]

The test prep class will be a maximum of ten. That seems to be a little high, 'cause we have a lot of children whose parents want them involved in the test prep class, so...

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:85 [Our parents, whether it's spec..] (86:86) (Angelica) 
Codes: [Parent Desires]

Our parents, whether it's special... all parents... I have not, I think maybe once in the last five years, gotten a call from a parent being concerned that her child was in an in-class... a regular child, concerned that she was with special ed. children in that in-class support. I had the parent come in, visit the class, talk about it and she was fine with that. So our parents know any given year, your regular ed. child can be... if we have three out the eight in most cases, three or four out of the eight classes have in-class support throughout the years, their children are often with as in-class support. So, our parents have come to accept that, have come to support us in any way and again, don't complain that I don't want my child in a class like that. They see the benefit of having a second teacher in these.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:97 [Even our special ed. parents w..] (90:90) (Angelica) 
Codes: [Parent Desires]

Even our special ed. parents will say that, 'Why are you expecting the same thing from your regular ed. students that you're expecting from my child. They can't do it.'

Code: Parent Support (8-2)

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:102 [Our parents - I'd say, out of..] (145:145) (Angelica) 
Codes: [Parent Support]

Our parents - I'd say, out of our special education population, probably 80 percent of the parents are very involved.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:15 [Then parents came to an inform..] (90:90) (Angelica)
Then parents came to an information session prior to signing up for the after-school piece [Study Island].

Codes: [Parent Support]

On occasion, I just got an e-mail from a parent yesterday who really wasn’t doing her part at home and now - we’ve been very worried about her child for a while. Just yesterday she says, “I think I will just have her tested.”

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rf - 5:65 [Okay. From parents, very stron..] (171:171) (Angelica)
Codes: [Parent Support]

From parents, very strong parental support. They wanna know everything that’s going on. They come to every meeting. One in a while, we get a rare parent who does not wanna hear about special education. [pause] Usually, they’ll come to the meeting and be very stubborn. But most of the parents, they wanna know, like, “What do you have that can help my child?” You know, and most people trust that we are the experts and if we have the right data, they’re very supportive. And, usually, I find ones who are supportive, when they’re in those meeting they just can’t thank the teachers enough for - the teachers and the team for being so interested in - in helping their kids. Many of them also do things outside of the school. Sometimes it’s okay. Sometimes it’s too much on a kid, like, you know, they’ll have their psychologist, their counselor, their therapist, the tutor. We have a couple of kids who are overload with that and that’s why we try to do as much as we can in school. But I would say the majority of our parents are very supportive.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rf - 6:31 [The parents come in and they g.] (46:46) (Angelica)
Codes: [Parent Support]

The parents come in and they get the snacks together and get them delivered to the classroom the week of testing. So, you know, those types of things and just really you know... it’s... you know we have good support. If I need help, you know, we put a call out and we’d have people coming in giving us assistance.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rf - 8:48 [The parent volunteers have a i.] (161:161) (Angelica)
Codes: [Parent Support]

The parent volunteers have a little January, I don’t know, a little January pickup out there for the teachers where they drop their names in a little bag and they pick out the teacher’s name and that teacher gets like day of parent volunteer or goody day. I guess they do whatever they need them to do the whole day. So they not only do it for the children but they also work with the staff as well. It’s really nice. They have a trailer out on the side of our school where we have the laminating machines and copy machines and they can
go out there and if we’re doing, say for instance, well the thing that coming up now is Math Carnival. They’ll go out there and maybe do all of the counts and then they just give it in to the front office.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.1rf - 8:50 [We have a parent volunteer. We.] (149:149) (Angelica) Codes: [Parent Support]
We have a parent volunteer. We have a Parent Volunteer Coordinator who does all of the parents. We have a lot of parent support in this community. They do a lot of the xeroxing, a lot of the laminating for the teachers’ materials for special education. So they have an awful lot support from parents. They come and read to them. So we—we’re really very blessed that in that sense.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.1rf - 9:45 [Okay, the parents... the special...] (74:74) (Angelica) Codes: [Parent Support]
Okay, the parents... the special ed. parents are... They range. I mean you get some kids who are... some parents who are just almost neglectful of their kids. You don’t get much support from them. In other cases you get so much support that sometimes it’s, you know, overwhelming. You know, they want to know everything about their child and, you know, they want to hold their hands from one end of the day to the next. So, with those people you tend to say, well let’s see how you can deal with your child in a different way because you don’t want them to be too over bearingly caring for their kids. And like I said, it ranges with the parents. Most parents are very good. I have to tell you that, you know, of all the parents that we work with most go along with the program and will support what we’re trying to do. A lot of times it’s a personal touch there too. You know, if they know that you care and you’re there for their kid, they’re gonna support you. The ones that really just turn their back and say, you know, you deal with the kid. You know, sometimes you just say let’s cut bait and just deal with what we need to with the child and do the best we can without the parent. Again, I couldn’t even give you numbers of, you know, in the range of each category, but you do get a sense of—of majority of parents being very supportive.

_code: Pressure on Students (11-2)_

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.1rf - 1:39 [I think they feel the pressure.] (67:67) (Angelica) Codes: [Pressure on Students]
I think they feel the pressure. I think the kids feel the pressure and I think the teachers feel the pressure and I know I feel the pressure. You know, and unfortunately students that have disabilities are involved in programs to meet their needs because they do have the disability. So to hold them to the same accountability as the regular ed. students may be questioned.
So we’re grading them based on their IEP and then they fail this test and the parents are like, “But they failed; you said they’re doing okay.” You try to explain to them, and then they sometimes get down on their kids, “You’re failing, you’re doing this, you’re doing that.” A lot of them have self-esteem issues as it is. They don’t need that. So I, you know, I - I think it harms them in the long run.

I think there’s a lot of pressure on those students. Are they achieving? We’re working as hard as we can to make them achieve but they also have many modifications as you know to take that test and without those modifications they wouldn’t be able, I think to pass. I think we’re frustrating them. So, and I’m sure you... We have children that try during the test... a lot of problems. They just are unable to do the same thing. But because the modifications, I think they are achieving but they couldn’t if they took the test like everyone else.

I do feel there is a negative effect by consistently raising the bar on the achievement levels. I worry about it depleting students’ self-esteem and I think it did them more harm than good, in raising that bar.

I just think we give kids test anxiety that they don’t have because we feel, I don’t know, it’s not really NCLB. It’s NALS! That’s No Administrator Left Standing.

We do work on practice with our classified kids, whether they’re ICS or Resource in terms of being better test takers. Again, as I said, “to reduce them being all stressed out over this.”

I don’t like high-stakes testing. I think it scars kids. I think it scars growups.
P 7: INTERVIEW #7 rtf - 7:34 [We're way under the gun and, y-] (207:207) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Pressure on Students]  
We're way under the gun and, you know, this aft flows down hill. You know, the -- the federal government is gonna deny states money, so states put the pressure on the county supt. The county supt. say, "You know, this ain't going to fly," so they put the pressure on the local supt, who puts it on the principals, who puts it on the teacher, who puts it on the kids. Like just the -- the gun is huge, and then it gets smaller and smaller and smaller and smaller, but ultimately it's pointed at a kid's head.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7 rtf - 7:38 [I think it's giving kids and p-] (270:270) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Pressure on Students]  
I think it's giving kids and parents ulcers.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7 rtf - 7:90 [I certainly -- when I see some-] (270:270) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Pressure on Students]  
I certainly -- when I see some of these children, now don't get me to cry here -- when I see some of these poor children who can barely put pen to paper sit with this test that regular bright kids struggle with and there's no way on the planet that they're ever gonna pass this. I see them bringing their nails. I see them crying. I see the visits to the nurse tripping because kids are getting physically sick to their stomach.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9 rtf - 9:40 [I think thought that, they've s-] (76:76) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Pressure on Students]  
I think though that, they've set a double standard of they're saying that, you know, we know that a child who, some kids are going to be mentally retarded and not all those kids are exempt from the regular testing. Those kids are never going to make it...We put more pressure on kids... I, well I think we just put too much pressure on kids to begin with. Well, that's another answer. I just think that they've set unrealistic goals for some of our kids. Some of our special ed. kids are not going to make the same standards as the regular ed. kids. I wish they could.

___

Code: Pressure on Teachers (3-2)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1 rtf - 1:60 [I think they feel the pressure..] (67:67) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Pressure on Teachers]  
I think they feel the pressure. I think the kids feel the pressure and I think the teachers feel the pressure and I know I feel the pressure.
P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:42 [We're way under the gun and, y..] (207:207) (Angelica)
Codes: [Pressure on Teachers]

We're way under the gun and, you know, this all flows down hill. You know, the -- the federal government is gonna deny states money, so states put the pressure on the county supt.s. The county supt.s. say, "You know, this isn't going to fly," so they put the pressure on the local supt. who puts it on the principals who puts on the teacher who puts it on the kids.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:57 [I don't like high-stakes testi..] (268:268) (Angelica)
Codes: [Pressure on Students], [Pressure on Teachers]

I don't like high-stakes testing. I think it scares kids. I think it scares grownups.

Code: Principal Expectations (12-2)

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:148 [I found some phenom..] (87:87) (Angelica)
Codes: [Principal Expectations]

I found some phenomenal materials that are very New Jersey Ask-like. So what I do with - first of all, I have the expectation with everybody - is everybody can pass. No, I - I truly believe everybody can pass this test. It's not going to be easy, but everybody can pass the test and what we need to do is hold at - for those, especially, some of the lower functioning children that are going to be forced to take the test.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:36 [I don't care whether it's a ..] (63:63) (Angelica)
Codes: [Principal Expectations]

I don't care whether it's a self-contained class or if you have resource students; everyday they have to learn to solve a problem.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:62 [I think again that the most im..] (92:92) (Angelica)
Codes: [Principal Expectations]

I think again that the most important thing is the high expectations and we expect our teachers... All teachers are responsible for our special education students. So, if you've an in-class support, just because study's is that in-class support and I'm special ed. doesn't mean the regular ed. teacher's not as equally responsible for my achievement and that's I think what makes it work. So, I don't want to hear just because I get support two periods the other teacher doesn't feel that she has to worry about me or be accountable for me. So the accountability level is very high.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:34 [I think the - the basic philos..] (61:61) (Angelica)
I think the - the basic philosophy of understanding that these kids have different, you know, learning styles and that we recognize these learning styles through the specific programs has really, really helped.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:48 [Is your newsletter totally fac.] (85:85) (Angelica) Codes: [Principal Expectations]

Is your newsletter totally facilitated by you or is that in conjunction with the PTA? Well, they have a column in there, but mostly it's - it's done here at the - the basic office level. All the teachers submit articles. I write a letter. There are clubs. They - they submit information about clubs, curriculum, specialists, you know, things like that. Any special activities, upcoming events, it's quite lengthy. I've got it here in front of me. It's probably about six or seven pages, back and front. [Your teachers are very open to submitting articles?] Oh, yes. They write the articles.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:51 [I receive copies of all the IL-] (109:109) (Angelica) Codes: [Principal Expectations]

I receive copies of all the IEPs. I attend all the intervention and referral services meetings. I've been trained in that at the county level. I'm notified of any issues. They're very open with the communication and it's ongoing. So basically, you know, it's just that ongoing communication. There's always follow up whenever we have any issues regarding any of our special needs kids, whether it's discipline or whatever. We work very closely with the case managers, the guidance counselor, and the teachers involved.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:78 [We try very hard to make sure .] (95:99) (Angelica) Codes: [Principal Expectations]

We try very hard to make sure all kids are included in the general population. So it is no different.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:56 [If you set the expectations hi-] (58:58) (Angelica) Codes: [Principal Expectations]

If you set the expectations high enough, teachers will work towards that goal and just as kids will do that. If you have no expectation of them they're not... they're gonna reach that expectation. If you have a... you set the bar higher and they'll work towards that with the right attitude.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:55 [We know that we are under a mi-] (265:265) (Angelica) Codes: [Principal Expectations]
We know that we are under a microscope, in terms of what we need to deliver, and we deliver it.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:33 [So my first challenge was to g.] (92:92) (Angelica) Codes: [Principal Expectations]  
So my first challenge was to get them to understand that they have a right to be in the writing community even though they may not move at the same pace in a writing piece. But I gave the writing -- the special education students -- this is basic skills too -- all my -- all writing is taught collaboratively in this building. I don't care if you're basic skills or special ed, you co-teach writing.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:35 [Because it was, umm, Bill Cosb..] (108:108) (Angelica) Codes: [Principal Expectations]  
Bill Cosby put it out, but it was probably one of the best videos I've ever seen, and -- and they absolutely loved it. I wanted them to know from the beginning how I feel about students with learning disabilities. Here's who I am. I believe they belong in the community. I believe that it's our job to differentiate naturally and to make them believe that they can achieve but just in a different way. I've seen some scenarios and bring this up to teachers quite a bit that even with my gifted population if I put them in bookbinding, which is a part of Balanced Literacy, I have seen my gifted children struggle greatly and my special needs students just fly by them where they even have to go to them for help. It's been phenomenal moments that I thought thank you for just letting me see this minute. You need that in a learning community: to know that you're very bright but only in some areas and in some areas I'm brighter than you. It's just a different gift.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:37 [Plus the biggest element is th..] (123:123) (Angelica) Codes: [Principal Expectations]  
Plus the biggest element is that we all are on the same, uhh, we're all on the same wavelength with the big ideas in math and literacy.

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Code: Principal Self-Perception (20-1)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:30 [So, empowering them to become ..] (40:40) (Angelica) Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]  
So, empowering them to become responsible for partially a leadership role I think had really provided them with the opportunity to feel more ownership of the whole process and I think it's been becoming more successful for us as a school.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:43 [it's my job to provide the res..] (70:70) (Angelica)
Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

it’s my job to provide the resources

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:77 [Basically, I’m involved in all.] (11:4:114) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

Basically, I’m involved in all of it. I take it seriously and I know I have supervisors, but like, I have a math supervisor and a language supervisor that’s helping me but I take it personally and responsible for making sure that everybody does the best they can. So I’m involved in every aspect. I’m here after school, you know, monitoring. I’m helping them determine... For the test prep we actually created the curriculum, the two supervisors and the two principals--my, myself and the 5th-6th principal. We actually sat down and figured out what types of things, based on our tests result, you know, our pre- and post-tests that we’re doing need to be focused on in terms of making sure that it’s covered before the test. So we’ve actually created all of the curriculum and the material 'cause we have the test prep book, but we have some additional materials or things that our district just needs more help in.

Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

Well, you know what I think, like all... that we all expect it as administrators - high expectations whether it’s the regular... the self-contained.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:13 [So I try to take an active role.] (27:27) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

So I try to take an active role in promoting all of the programs that our teachers have and supporting them with Project Read and Great Leaps and the professional development aspect.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:31 [Okay, well I would think, you .] (61:61) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

Okay, well I would think, you know, the support of all those programs that I mentioned earlier and recognizing the benefits of that to the whole school community in that we - that I encourage the continuation of that training and application of those programs. I think that has really, you know, contributed to it.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:57 [Well, all I can say, if you wa.] (120:120) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

Well, all I can say, is we want all our kids to be successful. As the leader of my Bobcats here, my role is to ensure that that happens morally, ethically.
P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:21 [I would say my interactions are the same as they are with all kids because they are - it is an inclusion environment.]
(Maria) Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:18 [Well, just really being the cheerleader and when the teachers are frustrated, being that shoulder to cry on and giving them the support that they need to do that.]
(Maria) Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:27 [We have a real team approach a.s.]
(Maria) Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

We have a real team approach and attitude and do whatever we need to do to make kids successful and to help them be successful. I mean, that's something we really live by. We don't just say it we live by it I think.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:12 [Well, I'm --[laughing]-- I'm s.]
(Maria) Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

Well, I'm --[laughing]-- I'm somewhat a cross between Perry Como and Mr. Rogers. I'm not quite sure how that works out. But I'm - I'm one of the more visible principals that you'll ever see. I spend an enormous amount of time with kids. I don't know--I don't really believe this has any impact on how they do educationally, although I wish it did.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:12 [I just think it's important fo.]
(Maria) Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

I just think it's important for the staff to see me as a practitioner and for the kids to see that, hey, the guy who runs the school actually has half a clue.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:56 [I'm still learning an awful lot.]
(Maria) Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

I'm still learning an awful lot. Not sure I'm ever doing it really well but just remembering back to the classroom days what is it I would have wanted to see my principal do. I wanted -- I would have wanted to know the guy could teach and I had two previous principals where I knew that was not true. So this way I figure it works -- kind of -- sort of both ways. Then I -- even with the regular teachers sometimes they'll go listen, "Can I leave a period early, and I go, "Well, only if I can come and teach." So I think they're glad and they leave and I just go have fun with kids. It doesn't happen as often as I'd like. That's probably about once every two weeks.
P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:61 [What else do I feel you need to know about...? (187:187) (Angelica) Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

What else do I feel you need to know? You have to live it and breathe it and constantly read about it and constantly scan your whole population and your programs and say, are we looking at supporting them in every way possible? I think that has led to change here. I mean if I stay or if I decided to go, they would still say she was one that.... She was a person who really understood that to change our special needs scores, we had to include them more even though we didn't like it. So that makes a difference.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:71 [So, what role do I play in the...? (125:125) (Angelica) Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

So, what role do I play in the implementation? Is making sure that they have the training and the material and the understanding of the big ideas in both of the areas of reading and math. That's my role. You know constant dialog about it, constant adjustment, supporting after school activities. So my goal is -- is to continually be a facilitator of, umm, you know, the big ideas in both areas and that led to achieving AYP. It increased our literacy scores so that our special education children went up in reading and writing and our math was already there.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:74 [So I believe that it's just th...? (182:182) (Angelica) Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

So I believe that it's just that -- that overall philosophy that I see there more as just a different population as opposed to, you know, they're higher or lower. I don't see it as higher or lower. I just see it as different. I worry about the impact on self-esteem. I still worry. I worry about that all the time because it just means a lot to me. So, you know, and I think all of my teachers know that. They-they all know that I'm very sensitive to that.


[Describe what interactions you have, as a principal, with students with disabilities in your school?] Okay, not as much as I used to. I'm a former special ed. teacher and actually started out as a vice-principal math supervisor of special ed. So, you know, probably not as much as my nature would say I should be.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:36 [But my role, and it really is ...? (57:57) (Angelica) Codes: [Principal Self-Perception]

But my role, and it really is being enforcer and to make sure that I know what they're talking about. They don't want a principal who if they come in and they're talking about a reading program or math program, if I know nothing about it they're not gonna come to me and they need to come to... they need to come to a leader.
Okay, my role has been really make sure the teachers are doing what they're supposed to in the classroom. We do visits in the classrooms. We do observations and, you know, the regular things that principals do.

I used to love just going to other schools and talk to people. Last week in fact we visited a school down in Burlington county that they're using some technology that we want to look at. The Success Maker Program. I don't know if you've seen that. It's a computer based program that initially like the fundamental part of it is really for reading and math and very individual with kids but very animated. It looks like a very good program. So we went to two schools to visit. Two very different schools. One is a little country school. One is kind of an urban setting. I spent more time just talking to the principal that looking at the program because you know, you want to find out okay, well how are you using this program? What other things are you doing? This is what I'm doing. See what you're doing now is really a great thing. You're really seeing personally... You're getting out there to see more and more and more people and you learn more.

Code: Professional Development Offerings (35-3)~

They've had... they've been on observations of other school districts, successful school districts with inclusion. They've gone on workshops. We've had in-services training brought in to come here. So, and peer coaching also with other grade levels that have started at the inception of inclusion here at the school.

We have the Herrman Method. I believe, that they're using now, and there's another one that they're just trying out and I don't remember what the name of it is. They're just piloting in some of the classes and having some training, so I know it is a part of Orton Gillingham.

Yes, our teachers have been tr.~ (71:71) (Angelica)
Yes, our teachers have been trained [in inclusion]. My Child Study Team actually has very different backgrounds and teach at colleges and teach all those different things. So my team is actually does the training in terms of inclusion for all teachers. Like, for instance, this afternoon the Child Study Team is working with all my special area teachers on how to make sure that children can be mainstream into the special areas the best and actually succeed there.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2-rf - 2:44 [If - we have had some speakers...J (73:73) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

If - we have had some speakers come in, but for the most part they [teachers] work with our Child Study Team. And we do send them out. Every teacher gets 150 dollars a year to spend on professional development. So we encourage them, if we find good workshops for them. We encourage them to go to those also. The other thing we do is we're connected with [Blank College in [Blank]. I don't know if you're familiar with that. What we do is we have a partnership, so some of their graduate classes are actually taught on our school campus to make it easier for teachers to actually go to graduate school and special education is one of those areas that they do offer classes here. So that's available and what they do - so they don't have to drive to [Blank] they can just take their class right in the building and also what they do is they have arrangements, so that they can take the money out of their paycheck a little over each month instead of having to pay directly their tuition all at once. So actually, some of our supervisors and administrators teach the classes. So that's nice, too. That's something we've been doing for a few years. But it... The two focus areas we have with [Blank] [Blank] is Special Education and Administration. So those are the two. Well, and - and - and it's also it's open to our staff first but then all local school districts if anyone wants to take these classes they can come here also. It makes it easier on everybody.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2-rf - 2:74 [They have plasma, they have sc..J (55:55) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings] [Professional Development Time Allotment]

They have plasma, they have scanners, they have digital cameras and they're trained monthly on how to infuse technology into literacy, which is what the grant is about.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2-rf - 2:126 [So, those 15 teachers received..J (61:61) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

So, those 15 teachers received extra instruction and they got all of these materials to try to help them.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2-rf - 2:135 [We have socialization programs..J (71:71) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]
We have socialization programs, like, the teacher really explains her children to the whole entire faculty at a faculty meeting, and kind of explains what kinds of things she would like to have.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:10 [They have been trained through...] (41:41) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

They have been trained through going to workshops but what we do now is use our own people. So I just hired a new resource teacher because one retired. So, what she will now do is... I will have her visit the others for the next week or so to see how each teacher does it. How they work it out between the classroom teacher and the resource teacher. So, we do outside training. We send them for outside training but we do a lot of observation allowing them to see, go visit our classes within the building because it is already working.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:43 [So we sent as a school, our te...] (69:69) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

So we've sent as a school our teachers out to various workshops that we think might help them. So we've sent teachers out to Stevenson and then they'll come back and turn key within the building. So, that's a building thing.


Yes, it's Working on the Work. The author... the person in charge of it is Philip Schlechty.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:1 [The teachers have also been tr...] (15:16) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

The teachers have also been trained with brain-based learning and Schools Attuned techniques.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:18 [We have just required - we ve...] (34:34) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

We have district wide - we've had district wide training in the past for these teachers for this model on Saturdays. We have some teachers that have received the training. We do have a lot of new teachers this year that have not received the training, but the district has held a district-wide training on a Saturday for - for full-inclusion classes. [What's the duration of that training?] I think it's a full day. [Is that mandatory or voluntary participation?] It's voluntary.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:22 [I think all of our special ed...] (46:40) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]
I think all of our special ed. teachers have been trained in the both Orton Gillingham programs

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:42 [But it's the recognition, it's] (78:78) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

But it's the recognition; it’s the support of continuation of these training programs, because it does show that it helps these kids in the long run.


Okay. I just remembered the guidance program. I Can Problem Solve. That’s a purchased program. You probably could find it on the Internet somewhere. You know, they also got training in that in the beginning of the year. They have a consultant come in from the company who did some training on one of those curriculum half days.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:65 [We’ve had a lot of professiona..] (120:120) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

We’ve had a lot of professional development and I think that’s another critical component into making this successful for our kids

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:72 [At faculty meetings I’ve had p..] (27:27) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

At faculty meetings I’ve had professional development training sessions on how to work with kids with special needs. I’ve had my LDTC’s present. I’ve had my special ed. teachers share out techniques from Project Read and Great Leaps.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:74 [We’ve had outside people conte..] (44:44) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

We’ve had outside people come in and speak at our curriculum days. The district has been district-wide trained in brain-based learning with Dr. Phil DeFina. He has come to the district on the full day to do training there. He’s also done after-school teacher workshops last year, where teachers voluntarily signed up for it.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:5 [And then in a classroom, there..] (81:81) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

And then in the classroom. There’s another program that the teachers use in the classroom called Study Island. It’s an online resource, where - and it’s standards based - where the children can go on a computer with teacher guidance and practice test-taking
skills and strategies. So every special education teacher has been trained and has an account for the children they work with. So the children do that during the day.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:12 [We have all of our BSI and spec.] (87:87) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

We have all of our BSI and special education teachers trained to use it [Study Island] last year.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:39 [Let's see. We also have School... ] (112:112) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

Let’s see. We also have Schools Attuned, are you familiar with that? Schools Attuned is not necessarily a special education program but it was developed by [pause] - oh, my goodness! Mel Levine! His name just escaped me. Yes, because I’ve run some workshops for it, too, with Mel Levine’s program and we’ve had it in our district for a while, but just last summer for the first time we fine-tuned it. So, the training was done right here in house for my building. So, we had about 25 teachers and then we had about 25 more go through it last summer and that included mainly general ed. teachers. The special education teachers, also. So, they really focus on looking at different kinds of learners and how you meet their needs. It was not necessarily - necessarily having to assume they need special education services. [Was that - was that about a five-day training session?] Yes. So the Pupil Services Director and I went to hear him speak at Princeton this past summer for a conference. He and I worked together to make sure that the teachers are following up with - they have to keep portfolios, they have to get parents involved. They really, really do a specific analysis on a child and how they’re learning. But, again, the children that they’re assessing are not special education kids. But we were using that and we’ve also been involved in a study for Schools Attuned to see how Schools Attuned is affecting our special ed. population. So, anyway, Schools Attuned was just another way to look at that from a general ed. perspective, but also we did have special education teachers involved in it as well.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:53 [There were also workshops for... ] (110:110) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

There were also workshops for in-class support, which is exactly what I think you’re asking, like, is there training for those two teachers. Well, we would encourage the general ed. teacher and the special ed. teacher to go together to an in-class support workshop and hear from the experts, from people who have been doing it for a long time or who had best practice models and hear about that. That was offered twice, I believe, in the summer.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:96 [The other thing, the other thing... ] (120:120) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]
The other thing, the other thing as far as training would be our New Staff Academy. So, every new staff member had some type of opportunity to learn about special education, whether they were a special education teacher or not. [Who provides it? Is it the Directors of Pupil...?] That is offered by our Instructional Services Department. So, our Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction really oversees it. All the Directors of Curriculum who are pretty much experts in their area, you know, our Director of Science, Social Studies... They actually run it and plan it. The Pupil Services Director is involved. The Pupil Services Supervisor is involved. Sometimes they get principals involved. I ran a workshop on the super/they and observation process, dress code, that kind of thing. So all of us really kind of contribute in some way. [Your district enforces a dress code or discusses it at least?] Not really enforces but we talk about professional dress especially because we're dealing with people right out of college who, you know, we don't want your midriffs showing. We want adults and parents to treat you like a professional. So, you have to portray yourself that way. That's pretty - pretty much the gist of it.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:100 [whenever we plan staff develop... (136:136) (Angelica] Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]
Whenever we plan staff development, I'll go to these. I'll go to the whole staff. I'll go to everyone and say, "What are your needs?"

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:101 [So that was another workshop t... (136:136) (Angelica] Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]
So that was another workshop that I don’t think I mentioned, that was offered, but that was just - that was building-based. I think we called it Implementing IEPs in the General Ed. Classroom. Then there was also implementing IEPs in the Related Arts Classroom and that was a building-based request and we put these teachers and went specifically through the IEPs of the kids those teachers had, and said, "Here’s what you really need to know. Here’s what you should be doing to help address their IEPs when they’re with you."

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:14 [Primarily the teachers got tra... (38:34) (Angelica] Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]
Primarily the teachers got trained in Wilson Reading and used a lot of those strategies.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:20 [They do more workshops and in... (115:115) (Angelica] Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]
They do more workshops and in-service in this district that I've ever seen in my life.
P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rdf - 7:72 [We in-house on Project Read, o.,] (1:18:118) (Angelica)
Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

We in-house on Project Read, on using technology in a classroom, on Smart Boards, on Columbia Writer's Project, on -- you name it, we got something cooking.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rdf - 8:25 [The inclusion teachers have be.,] (81:81) (Angelica)
Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

The inclusion teachers have been trained by a fellow name Rick Welch. Rick Welch, W-E-L-C-H, is a national Differentiated Instruction Inclusion Special Ed. Teacher. I mean it takes you like a year to get him. He trains for a full week and he's a high-demand and he's hard to please. His training is very intense and you have to do a hundred millions things to get ready for him. Oh, man. He's intense [laughs]. He drives me nuts, but but, umm, even before he trains the teachers in inclusion, he emails them. They have to email him lessons like they're training and he's training them along the training even before they get to the training. Then that full week he is doing nothing but training them and they train in the classrooms and they train out of classrooms. So, before he ever meets with them for inclusion, they at mid-year have to e-mail him lessons. Then he looks at their lessons and then he comes in and he meets with them. He actually co-teaches with them. You know, he goes in the class and co-teaches the class with them. Then he comes out, they analyze it, then they go in with their co-teacher and teach. So, it's very intense. He's -- he's excellent, but he is high-maintenance just getting everything that he needs to get done, but he is worth it. Rick Welch whatever -- com. So most of our inclusion teachers have been through very intensive training with Rick Welch.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rdf - 8:34 [So when I looked at the -- the.,] (102:102) (Angelica)
Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

So when I looked at the -- the Special Education population, my first thought was in -- in my first year as a principal I played to them -- for them in one of our first faculty meetings a video by Bill Cosby that sort of spoke to children with learning disabilities and his son. You know, actually I got it off the Internet. It was a phenomenal video that he made right after his son Enus passed away, who of course had learning disabilities. It is one of the best videos and I have to a staff member who gave it to her son and hasn't given it back to me. But what it did was it brought out all types of people with disabilities, you know, scientists and whatever. It also had one African-American Dean in Mississippi who was special education and he talked too. My staff was moved by this. He talked about being in the resource room down the hall and how he was always late to class and how even though he's the only African-American Dean in the state of Mississippi and the youngest, that he still can look at his student population that come into college and spot those who are resource room. It moved them.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rdf - 8:69 [That was difficult because I h.,] (81:81) (Angelica)
Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]
That was difficult because I had to train all teachers in co-teaching. Now, that — I didn’t do as well because I was only able to get a co-teaching workshop through ETTC and it was an hour after school. It wasn’t all that I wanted it to be but I had to be able to say legally that I’d given them some co-teaching training. I need to do a lot more.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.pdf - 9:15 [We had probably a mixture of f.] (42:42) (Angelica) Codes: [Professional Development Offerings]

We’ve had probably a mixture of formal and informal training. We have had trainings in school where some of the teachers who had had successful models and might have seen, have gone for outside training, you know, at a workshop or something where they’ll come back and pretty much turnkey what they’ve learned or what they had been practicing themselves.


As more and more in-class support and inclusion happens, that pool of people who want to mine their hands and say yes, I’ll do it, it’s getting smaller and smaller. So, as a result, I found that we’ve had to do actually more training because the personalities are not necessarily a perfect match. So you really have to do a lot massaging of professional egos, personal egos, just to make sure that you can find matches that will work and be productive with kids.


A fellow by the name of Bill Blocker, Dr. Blocker works out of Washington State. I want to say Seattle but I’m not sure if he’s out of Seattle. He developed this program based really on research practices, the best practices of reading. He put them together in a training program that filtered… basically we have teachers who’ve been trained by Literacy First consultants. It’s a two year process. They come in, they teach the basics of… and again I’m going back to the fundamentals of reading, however the big kickers is everything that it done is based upon assessments of the kid.


So, I… thereto, I think we have a mixture of the formal and informal. Some of it is me going into the classroom and saying, to change this around, do this or do that. In fact I have an observation later on a teacher, an in-class support team, that last time I did an observation last week. I said, “I want some things changed,” and sometimes you get better effects implementing things when you go back in and give some useful criticism. So, it’s been a combination of types of trainings.
They have plasma, they have scanners, they have digital cameras and they’re trained monthly on how to infuse technology into literacy, which is what the grant is about.

This district has special curriculum days throughout the year. We used to have 10 curriculum days per year, now we’re down to 5, where school is closed for half a day and the teachers have in-service staff development in the afternoon. We have two full days also where school is closed and there’s all-day professional development. Out of the 5, 2 are full days.

Like I said, for those who did not make all these workshops, we meet with them as a group once a month. That’s the minimum. Well, actually, I shouldn’t even say that. He may not have made it every month. But as needed, he meets with the – with the special education department when the teams have their meetings.

It was about a – maybe a morning. A morning session, where all those teachers came and, again, it’s only for our students who are classified or who are getting BSI instruction. So it’s not used across the board in school.

Teachers get two professionals days on their own and then they get typically a minimum two to three other special district days.

Now, that – I didn’t do as well because I was only able to get a co-teaching workshop through EITTC and it was an hour after school. It wasn’t all that I wanted it to be but I had to be able to say legally that I’ve given them some co-teaching training.
P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:64 [basically we have teachers who... ] (5:53) (Angelica)
Codes: [Professional Development, Time Allotment]

Basically we have teachers who've been trained by Literacy First consultants. It's a two year process.
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Code: PTA/PTO/HSA (9-2)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:81 [Well our PTA works very close...] (6:63) (Angelica)
Codes: [PTA/PTO/HSA]

Well our PTA works very closely with the school. We're fortunate to have a very good PTA; unfortunately, not that many people participate on it.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:103 [The PTA, they pretty much supp...] (14:145) (Angelica)
Codes: [PTA/PTO/HSA]

The PTA, they pretty much support across the board everybody. They do assemblies. They have a lot of volunteers that come in and help in the classrooms.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:56 [Well our PTA is very active, I...] (8:86) (Angelica)
Codes: [PTA/PTO/HSA]

Well our PTA is very active. In it are regular ed. parents and special ed. parents.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:52 [Well, we get support from our...] (11:113) (Angelica)
Codes: [PTA/PTO/HSA]

Well, we get support from our Home School Association [HSA] for all of our students. We don't isolate special ed. kids. We just treat them like any others. Teachers - the Home School Association does give the teachers mini-grants. Like if they're developing something, a special program, they help us and they'll - the teachers will fill out an application and the HSA will fund them. You know, small amounts if they need it for special programs, projects. They support us through all of our cultural arts activities throughout the year for all of our students.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:64 [As far as the PTA, I wouldn't...] (17:171) (Angelica)
Codes: [PTA/PTO/HSA]

As far as the PTA, I wouldn't say they do anything specifically for our special ed. kids. What they do is for everyone. But if... Let's say... if there was something that I needed them to do that met the needs of special ed. kids for whatever reason, they would do it. An example I have is... We had a school store where our PTA bought all of the supplies
that teachers wanted kids to have. We bought them all and had a store set up right here in school for the parents to come to the school as opposed to having to go to Staples and the Wal-Mart and then - 'cause the parents said they hate that. So we - that was the first time we did it. We have kids on free and reduced lunch. We have about maybe six kids on free and reduced lunch. We told the PTA these parents may not be able to afford to buy all these things and they put together a whole backpack of school supplies for those kids. So if I say to them, you know we have a special ed. need, can you make this accommodation or adjustment, then they would.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rf - 6:53 [We have a PTO not a PTA. They ..] (46:46) (Angelica) Codes: [PTA/PTO/HSA]

We have a PTO not a PTA. They provide us with all sorts of support of the educational programs. Each year teachers and as well as myself can put in requests for grants for different things. At about the end of the year, and historically, our building has received about 18 thousand dollars a year from them for a variety of things be it assembly programs, you know, support materials, things like that.


Our PTA supports everything. And, again if a Special Education Teacher were to go to them with a request, the PTA would support it.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rf - 8:49 [We do an after -- what we call..] (149:149) (Angelica) Codes: [PTA/PTO/HSA]

We do what we call a math carnival and a math pizza night where the PTA kind of helps us with funding for prizes and that includes the special needs children and regular ed. children working for like an hour of practice for mathematics. So we receive from the PTA, usually support for literacy materials, such as, a new set of books for core literature or they may need Judy Clocks or they may need... The PTA is pretty generous with helping us from there.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rf - 9:46 [As far as other groups and lik..] (74:74) (Angelica) Codes: [PTA/PTO/HSA]

As far as other groups like the PTA, they don’t really... they don’t really have a position where they are doing anything with the... they don’t discriminate. They don’t ever talk about special ed. kids one way or the other. I mean they just treat kids as they are. They don’t... in fact, you know, sometimes... well in fact I would say that probably some of the PTA executive people have kids who are in the special ed. programs. So, you know, they’re not going to discriminate one way or the other.
Code: Results with Teachers (3-2)

P 2: INTERVIEW #2 rtf - 2-90 For instance, I just got their... (130:130) (Angelica) Codes: [Results with Teachers]

For instance, I just got their December writing scores back. So we looked at overall how their class did. What we do is... The rubric is broken down into content and skills in terms of their writing and what we did was we looked at the strength of the kids and we looked at the weakness - weak areas and we developed a plan of how they're going to address the weak areas. So, for instance, what we're gonna do is there's five content area sections and then there's maybe about 15 skills. So what we're going to do is they're gonna every week focus on a content and a skill in writing and do some modeling. So, you know, I gave them just some ideas on how to model, what kinds of things to model, how to go about implementing it, and how to, you know, fit everything in.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2 rtf - 2:54 [Either I meet with them [teach... (139:139) (Angelica) Codes: [Results with Teachers]

Either I meet with them [teachers] or the Supervisor of Language Arts or the math or the content area supervisor. So it depends, we kind of take turns. That's what time I use. Like, this week I used that [articulation] period to review their writing scores with them.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9 rtf - 9:41 [Okay, well there too, it's real.] (63:63) (Angelica) Codes: [Results with Teachers]

Okay, well there too, it's really... a lot of it has to do with just making sure the teachers have time to teach and that they're teaching to the skill level of the child. And, of course, with special ed, kids the IEP of course is the major organ for making sure that the kids are getting certain types of programs. But within that IEP, it's just making sure that everything is being done that they can and making sure that they have good teaching practices.

Code: Scheduling of Aides (2-3)

P 5: INTERVIEW #5 rtf - 5:79 [So you're scheduling aides bas... (99:99) (Angelica) Codes: [Scheduling of Aides]

[So you're scheduling aides based on the needs, not per assignment?] Exactly. Right. The aides are based specifically on what the needs of the kids are. So it changes from year to year. We did have a boy in 3rd grade who is very, very, very bright, but he has bipolar disorder, ADD, and is also going through a lot of situations at home. He was technically classified, but he did not need any modifications to his curriculum. So, he was in a mainstream class and we had an one-on-one aide for him. As a matter of fact, there are two boys with that situation; one in 3rd and one in 4th. Same - same scenario. Mainstreamed for the entire day, but they have IEPs and an aide, one-on-one aide.
Like, one boy has his aide only for writing time, 'cause he needs someone to support him during writing. An aide who works in the classroom with him. [What does she do the other time of the day, when she's not working with him?] She's with another classroom where they are mainstreamed - where there are children who have IEPs placed in the general ed. environment.

Code: Scheduling of Students (3-5)

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:57 [Cough.] Okay. We -- in order ...] (100:100) (Angelica) Codes: [Scheduling of Students]

[Cough.] Okay. We -- in order to place them properly, we structure our special ed. population schedule first and we establish groups of kids depending upon the level of service that they need.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:57 [[What do you attribute that to?]] (77:77) (Angelica) Codes: [Scheduling of Students]

[What do you attribute that success to?] Well, I attribute that to having a co-teaching environment all day long. The ability to, you know, between two teachers to Pull-Out and Flex Group frequently. [When you say, "flex group," what does mean?] Well that means if a child is in a reading class and they're working on I don't know. Let's say they're working on inferences. A -- my resource room teacher who was co-teaching with my regular ed. teacher can pull a couple of those special needs students just for inferringing out with even a couple of general ed. students and take them into another group that's working in the back of the room or to a different room and just work on that specific skill of inferringing for the next couple of days. Then pull them back into the regular classroom for the remainder of the time once they've mastered that skill of inferringing. So they can pull those "Flex Groups" at any moment. So that has made a great difference. Sometimes it's the special ed. children and some, it's mostly special ed., but it's mixed with some regular ed. too because they're very sensitive to the special education children not feeling singled out. That is one of the reasons why I feel that group always comes out with the strongest scores, where -- you know, as much they agonize over who putting them in there.
Code: Scheduling of Teachers (15-3)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1, rt: 1:75 [How often do you (Instructors,..) (41:41) (Angelica)
Codes: [Scheduling of Teachers]

[How often do you (Instructional Management Team) meet?] We meet... last we met
twice a month. This year we seem to be meeting once a month with several informal
meetings.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2, rt: 2:89 [And when you meet with the tea..] (134:135)
(Angelica)
Codes: [Scheduling of Teachers]

[When you meet with the teachers separately, when is this time, when does this take
place?] Basically, the way it works is the teachers contractually have one prep - 45-
minute prep period every day, but then throughout the week everybody has something
called "an articulation period" which is another 45 minutes that their children are in a
special. Then we can meet with them to talk about whatever it is we need to talk to them
about. So it's an articulation, you know. They call it their sixth prep, but it's "an
articulation period." Basically, they have Phys. Ed. twice a week, they have Art once a
week, Music once a week, Computer once a week, and Library. So it takes some
manipulating with the schedule to try to get several of them having that common planning
period together.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2, rt: 2:93 [Is your library period is prep..] (157:137) (Angelica)
Codes: [Scheduling of Teachers]

[Is your library period is prep?] Right.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2, rt: 2:105 [How much time do your teachers..] (147:147)
(Angelica)
Codes: [Scheduling of Teachers]

[How much time do your teachers have before school starts?] Basically... [pause] I'm
trying to think. It's usually... they have at least three days before school starts. And then
what we try to do is that first week of school a few of those days are half days just in case
they couldn't get in touch with a parent before school started. So that they can, you
know, try to meet with them the first few days, 'cause usually parents are - some parents
are not available in the summertime. Some of my teachers actually do it... They get their
class list in the beginning of June. Some of my teachers will meet with all their parents the
following year before school gets out [in June]. But they get two days built into their
schedule that they can use for the conferences.
[So you don't have those beginning of the year meetings or professional development day in the beginning?] No, we have - we haven't, since we started this program. We found it more important that they meet with parents than they meet with us.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:18 [Sure, but just for scheduling.] (50:50) (Angelica) Codes: [Scheduling of Teachers]

[Sure, but just for scheduling that one LD teacher, when is her prep time?] What we do is our teachers have to do lunch and recess. That LD teacher does not have to do a duty. So she gets her lunch and then where she would have done a recess duty, she does not have to do that so she gets a prep at that time.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:52 [Yes, now are all of your... for.] (76:77) (Angelica) Codes: [Scheduling of Teachers]

[Are you able to provide common planning time for an entire grading level?] Well, in some grades. It's hard because there are eight at a grade level. Some we were able to do that but some we have to do four and four because there were too many to get a special for.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:53 [And with your resource teacher.] (78:78) (Angelica) Codes: [Scheduling of Teachers]

[Do you meet with all ten of your resource teachers at one time?] At times. At times but mostly we try to have them meet within their grade level. So, if it's a common planning time and the resource teacher is a third grade resource teacher we have that teacher meet with her peers at that grade level.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:83 [...] and this is the first year we... (75:75) (Angelica) Codes: [Scheduling of Teachers]

... and this is the first year we have common planning time and we will meet at one of their common planning times and without using names, talk about a child and then toss to the group how can this teacher help this child?

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:30 [The Pupil Services Supervisor.] (105:105) (Angelica) Codes: [Scheduling of Teachers]

The Pupil Services Supervisor will call me and say, "Here's what the needs are. Here's what I wanna do with your teachers. Who can do this? What's the schedule look like?" Then we - we work it together in the summer. If we can let them know in the spring, we do but with all the work that the - the Child Study Team is doing, at - at the end of the
year and into the summer, we still aren’t always sure until, you know, the end of the year, early summer.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:81 [[The teachers who share the a...1 (105:105) (Angelica)

Codes: [Scheduling of Teachers]

[The teachers who share the aide, again, just to clarify, those aren’t the classes where the ICS takes place?] No. No, because then... and we only have one part-time setting. It’s 4th grade where the ICS teacher is in a classroom for reading, writing and math for five or six kids. For social studies and science, they’re with the general ed. teacher and then she goes to another class in the afternoon to support three children in another 4th grade classroom for science and social studies. And in the morning, those kids that she sees in the afternoon, those kids are in a resource room. It really varies. It is totally prescriptive to an individual. So last year this teacher didn’t do the part-time thing, because that wasn’t the need. So when we see, okay, this child doesn’t need ICS all day, this child only needs it for this and this, let’s use that teacher in another way, and then we split their time.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:84 [Once a month our Pupil Service...] (110:110) (Angelica)

Codes: [Scheduling of Teachers]

Once a month our Pupil Services Supervisor meets with just the special education teachers, so they have their own... When I have a - a team meeting for the grade levels, they’re usually pulled out to meet as a department.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6:43 [We have common planning time f.] (29:29) (Angelica)

Codes: [Scheduling of Teachers]

We have common planning time for the teachers in the morning so that they can, you know, plan out what they’re doing. It just really works extremely well.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:56 [[What do you attribute that su...1 (77:77) (Angelica)

Codes: [Scheduling of Teachers]

[What do you attribute that success to?] Well, I attribute that to having a co-teaching environment all day long. The ability to, you know, between two teachers to Pull-Out and Flex Group frequently.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:58 [She can do that [Flex Group] b...] (78:78) (Angelica)

Codes: [Scheduling of Teachers] [Student Success]

She can do that [Flex Group] because she’s only assigned to inclusion teachers. So, she can do that because that one resource room teacher is only split between her - her two - two fourth grade classes. So she can Flex Groups from either class. So that really works
very, very well. I mean I must say that, you know, they - they, they've master that. So those children really soar.

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Code: School Spirit Activities (2-1)

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:68 [What are some of the activities you do during the Spirit week?]
Yes, we do activities all week long. We do school colors. Days like Crazy Hat Day, so they do a Crazy Hat Day. One of the teachers does school spirit, so they divide... My gym teachers are phenomenal. So what we do with School Spirit is they're having a volleyball contest, 'cause they're gonna be doing volleyball at the time. So the whole school is divided into blue and gold, half and half, and they run all kinds of contests, you know, for volleyball. Another day, I think we have School Colors Day. We have the Volleyball Contest Day... [pause] Friday is Red, White, and Blue Day, and then we do the pep and the smarTy. I think they're thinking of doing a big Pep Rally on that Friday, but we haven't quite gotten that all together yet. I don't remember what we did the other day.

Angelica

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Code: Special Education Parents (1-2)

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:5 [Well, you know, I don't know e.,] (55:55) (Angelica)
Well, you know, I don't know exactly the economic breakdown of your community, but as you probably know from looking at our report card, this is an upper middle-class community and they are as active and engaged and vocal as most of the populations, particularly the parents of the Special Ed. kids.

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Code: Special Education PTA (2-2)
P 3: INTERVIEW #3, ref: 3:36 [The district this year has, we.,.] (86:86) (Angelica)
Codes: [Special Education PTA]

The district this year has, well I think it's a couple of years now, they formed a Special Ed. PTA. I don't know that I'm in agreement with that but the special ed. parents have belonged to our PTA and have their own PTA. They do functions. They do fund raisers. They separate them a little bit and I think that defeats the purpose. We're supposed to be all together as one and I think that does separate.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7, ref: 7:56 [We also have a PTA -- very, we.,.] (265:265) (Angelica)
Codes: [Special Education PTA]

e also have a very, very active PTA specifically devoted to special needs kids. It's called PASS. I don't know what those -- that acronym stands for. It's a group of parents of all classified kids and they attend board meetings. They have their own monthly meetings. They offer parents workshops at night. They support the school with an After School Social Skills Program where they pay one of my staff members to have bi-monthly interaction groups with kids who don't fit in real well--both classified and non-classified.

And, you know how Ralph Nader is a kind of a watchdog or used to be on the consumer industry, that's why I like having them around. Because they...if you don't do it right, they let you know. And it's not that they -- they're not critical. But it's the way, you know, kids behave better when dad's watching. So I think that's an appropriate analogy here too.

Code: Special Services Support (15-3)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1, ref: 1:25 [Who was on the (MT) interview-..] (45:45) (Angelica)
Codes: [Internal Organization (teams/committees) [Other Department Support] [Special Services Support]

[Who was on the (MT) interview committee?] It was myself, at that time our Supervisor of Curriculum Instruction and Special Ed.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1, ref: 1:48 [Well I guess the support I rec..] (61:61) (Angelica)
Codes: [Special Services Support]

Well I guess the support I receive is basically collaborative. Issues that deal directly with the building principal, you're involved in everything. Specifically to attend every IEP meeting, no I don't. But between myself and the Director of Special Ed. you know, the ones that we need to attend we attend either together or separately to ensure that the appropriate thing is going on.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3, ref: 3:54 [I don't know if I want to answ..] (80:80) (Angelica)
Codes: [Special Services Support]
I don’t know if I want to answer that [laughs]. No, no, I will answer it but I’ll answer it with this - we have only two district administrators in our special ed. department: a director and a supervisor. It is almost impossible for them to have direct contact. Certainly if I make a phone call there’s some support but there is no on a consistent basis, absolutely not.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:19 [They usually bring in someone ..] (34:34) (Angelica) Codes: [Special Services Support]
They usually bring in someone - a consultant that comes in and does the training and that is usually organized through the Director of Special Services.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:24 [We’ve had some of our special ..] (44:44) (Angelica) Codes: [Special Services Support]
We’ve had some of our special ed. department learning consultants speak at faculty meetings.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:28 [So when see, okay, this child ..] (105:185) (Angelica) Codes: [Special Services Support]
[So when we see, okay, this child doesn’t need ICS all day, this child only needs it for this and this, let’s use that teacher in another way, and then we split their time. Who makes that decision, you [principal] with the team [Child Study Team] or someone else?] The Pupil Services Supervisor, Director, and the Child Study Team altogether. The Pupil Services Supervisor will call me and say, “Here’s what the needs are. Here’s what I wanna do with your teachers. Who can do this? What’s the schedule look like?” Then we - we work it together in the summer.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:58 [The support is tremendous and ..] (147:147) (Angelica) Codes: [Special Services Support]
The support is tremendous. It’s in them calling me, “You have a new student who’s coming to your district who needs to be in this kind of program. What’s your class size look like?” You know, just making sure they bounce things off of me. When the Pupil Services Department has meetings, IEP meetings of any kind, I get invited to those meetings and I put them on the calendar and I go when I can. We just communicate. The communication is completely open.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:97 [The fact that I and the child ..] (134:134) (Angelica) Codes: [Child Study Team] [Special Services Support]
The fact that I and the Child Study Team and the Pupil Services Department, we work so closely together. I could talk to them every day. In fact, this week, I think I’ve spoken
to somebody from those departments every day. We have our own Child Study Team right here in our building.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rfi - 6:16 [The Director of Special Servic..] (38:38) (Angelica) Codes: [Special Services Support] [Test Preparation]

The Director of Special Services, every month, stressed strategies to help make kids successful on the test.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rfi - 6:46 [The Director of Special Servic..] (31:31) (Angelica) Codes: [Special Services Support]

The Director of Special Services does in his monthly faculty meetings with the special ed. staff does go over inclusion practices and things like that. So they are involved in that kind of a constant thing and we really encourage the inclusion with the team in the building.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rfi - 7:51 [Well, I mentioned to you that] (253:253) (Angelica) Codes: [Special Services Support]

Well, I mentioned to you that they, PPS [Pupil Personnel Services] does do its own professional development for their people. That the district is remarkably – I won't use the term generous because I don't think that fits, but they really support when I need an instructional assistant. If it go over six, for example, and yet a seventh comes in they're right there with the funding for it. So funding is huge. We try not to go above six, I, in fact, right now, I can tell you for a fact I don't have any in the building where I'm over six, either in resource or ICS. They're all at either four or five. One or two have six and we're maxed out.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rfi - 7:87 [They have their own budget for..] (255:255) (Angelica) Codes: [Special Services Support]

They have their own budget for materials and supplies on top of the school budget. So the special ed. teachers -- I don't know if they get two or three hundred dollars in mutual supplies just from PPS [Pupil Personnel Services] itself. So there's financial support.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rfi - 8:72 [We're able to get, of course, ..] (144:144) (Angelica) Codes: [Special Services Support]

We're able to get, of course, get support from even our speech teachers who work with New Jersey ASK materials and they -- they too try to help the children with their science and social studies by integrating some of their work even in their speech work. So we get support from their department.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rfi - 9:14 [I've tried to have the Special..] (42:42) (Angelica) Codes: [Special Services Support]
I’ve tried to have the Special Ed. Supervisor and the Child Study Team in to help them. We’ve also have had discussions as to what is expected out of a in-class support room.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:43 [I have open access to the Spec... ] (72:72) (Angelica) Codes: [Special Services Support]

I have open access to the Special Ed. Super... Director. She, I literally can walk from my building across the sidewalk and into the administrative building and talk to her. So, I would say we get very good support. It’s an interactive kind of support where we, you know, if we discover a need for a child we can sit down and talk about where can, what we can do with the child. Whether it’s a learning need, behavioral need, you know, whatever the case may be. So, I would say we have good support. It’s a good working relationship as well with the superintendent. Again, with the small district, you know, I’m lucky enough that they’re right here on my grounds. I can walk over to the superintendent. Unless he’s in a meeting, door’s open. But we, again, we don’t... In fact, it’s not uncommon for the Special Ed. Director to walk over and bang on my door and say, “Hey, Can we talk about a kid?” You know, that’s one of the nice things about being small.

Code: Special Services Workshop Offerings (8-2)

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:40 [Because we have so many kids w... ] (110:110) (Angelica)

Codes: [Special Services Workshop Offerings]

Because we have so many kids who are mainstreamed into a general classroom anyway, our Pupil Services Department has workshops throughout the school year and the summer for teachers.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:44 [Let’s see. There was also a voo... ] (110:110) (Angelica)

Codes: [Special Services Workshop Offerings]

Let’s see. There was also a workshop called Managing Misunderstood Minds. That was to help - help teachers understand and address the neurodevelopmental constructs that impede learning.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:85 [There have been workshops - I... ] (110:110) (Angelica)

Codes: [Special Services Workshop Offerings]

There have been workshops - I just went back and pulled some workshop titles. For the aides, this year they had a workshops called Teacher Instructional Aides Partners and Practice and they were taught strategies to support kids in all classroom settings. There was a workshop called Using Authentic Assessment to Guide IEP Development for
Special Education Teachers and they were able to look at classroom data and use it to inform decision making, communicating with parents and making recommendations for their special education students for the following year.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:51 [Then they’re also - another wo..] (110:110) (Angelica)
Codes: [Special Services Workshop Offerings]

Then they’re also - another workshop that was offered twice was Differentiating Mathematics in the IC - ICS Classroom and that was run by the Pupil Services Supervisor and our mathematics director. So they network to come up with a way to address that for those teachers.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:92 [Let’s see he also ran an IEP W..] (110:110) (Angelica)
Codes: [Special Services Workshop Offerings]

Let’s see he also ran an IEP Writing Workshop for special ed. teachers. Just preparing them on writing IEPs.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:25 [The Pupil Personnel, our Depart..] (146:146) (Angelica)
Codes: [Special Services Workshop Offerings]

The Pupil Personnel, our Department of Special Services will conduct its own workshops for special ed. teachers and they also have, in addition to the money that I have, they have more money to grant additional days if teacher have particular things that they really want to go see.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:70 [Our Department of Special Serv..] (115:115) (Angelica)
Codes: [Special Services Workshop Offerings]

Our Department of Special Services has run some workshops. Co-teaching is a pretty common model here. The teachers have also, although it’s not related directly to inclusion, we are big on Project Read and we’ve brought Project Read into our resource and inclusion classes.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:86 [There’s professional support i..] (255:255) (Angelica)
Codes: [Special Services Workshop Offerings]

There’s professional support in terms of staff development. There’s support in terms of constant emails get/f are flashed out from PPS about workshop opportunities and professional day opportunities that are out there. A lot of awareness kinds of things, you know, folks go to this website. There’s this group that’s offering this workshop. You may be interested in this, very supportive.

Code: Student Characteristics (2-1)
And what we've realized is all children learn differently on different days in different ways and it doesn't matter if they're special education classification or they're regular education students.

One factor was that particular year that group of children were not terribly disabled. Their disabilities were not as severe as they might be. The following year the kids who took the test were, they had more learning problems. So, by luck of the draw, I hate to say that but simply by the luck of the draw sometimes you have a group of kids that just are less disabled and more, have more ability to achieve.
little title on it, "My Principal Thinks I'm Special," "My Principal Sees How Well I'm Working," something to that effect. I have to pull them out and look at them now. They say all little slogans like that.

Code: Student Success [5-4]

P 4: INTERVIEW #4 et al - 4:34 [I think the - the basic philo... f. 61.61] (Angelica) Codes: [Principal Expectations] Student Success

I think the - the basic philosophy of understanding that these kids have different, you know, learning styles and that we recognize these learning styles through the specific programs has really, really helped.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6 et al - 6:17 [We really focused on working w...] (38:38) (Angelica) Codes: [Student Success]

We really focused on working with students with their writing abilities. We do a daily writing experience with them and really focus on that. And I think that was a big key in helping them to achieve success.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6 et al - 6:42 [You know, we discussed it with...] (26:26) (Angelica) Codes: [Student Success]

You know, we discussed it with the Child Study Team and you know, with the parents and just, you know, really working with him to help him succeed. And it's paying off. He was down today and got a 95 on his math test, his least favorite subject.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8 et al - 8:8 [Our inclusion students probabil...] (77:77) (Angelica) Codes: [Student Success]

Our inclusion students probably made the most gains on the New Jersey ASK than any other population in our school.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8 et al - 8:68 [She can do that [Flex Group] b...] (78:78) (Angelica) Codes: [Scheduling of Teachers] Student Success

She can do that [Flex Group] because she's only assigned to inclusion teachers. So, she can do that because that one resource room teacher is only split between her - her two - two fourth grade classes. So she can Flex Groups from either class. So that really works very, very well. I mean I must say that, you know, they - they, they've mastered that. So those children really soar.

Code: Student Work [1-1]
We'll look at children's work and we'll have teachers meet together at their grade level and say let's look at this work and see what we think about it. Is it authentic? Are the children getting it, something out of it? Worth your reading...the book is an easy reading book, Working on the Work.

Code: Teacher Characteristics (6-1)

P 2: INTERVIEW #2, rtf - 2:52 [So you have a separate comput..] (136:136) (Angelica)
Codes: [Teacher Characteristics]

[So you have a separate computer teacher who is a certified teacher?] Yes, a certified elementary teacher.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4, rtf - 4:33 [I have really a wonderful staff..] (61:61) (Angelica)
Codes: [Teacher Characteristics]

I have really a wonderful staff that is very committed and dedicated to helping these kids.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4, rtf - 4:66 [teachers are very self-reflect..] (120:120) (Angelica)
Codes: [Teacher Characteristics]

Teachers are very self-reflective of their practices. We - we really do a lot of that. We pride ourselves in being reflective of every lesson that we teach.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4, rtf - 4:73 [Teachers have to want to try t..] (38:38) (Angelica)
Codes: [Teacher Characteristics]

Teachers have to want to try this as well. But people that have been involved in it right now have done it for a while. But we do try to encourage others to take on that - that new challenge. Especially if we see teachers throughout the year that demonstrate a great sensitivity and understanding to special, you know, regular teacher who - who demonstrates a special understanding and connection with special needs kids. We encourage them to be part of that - that collaborative model. I'm kinda looking more at the regular ed. teacher being a part of the inclusion model and those are the teachers that need to have the right, I think, characteristics that will make a nice match for that.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8, rtf - 8:14 [They're both strong, strong, s..] (78:78) (Angelica)
Codes: [Teacher Characteristics]
They're both strong, strong, strong personalities. So the resource room teacher who's been trained in inclusion and is strong in special ed. and strong in Orton-Gillingham, and strong in a lot of programs. But she's also strong in being able to pull out a Flex Group.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rtf - 9:27 [As far as it goes for like, you know, teacher training and things like that I, as I said before, teachers I feel that the state has set up with discriminatory practice by segregating your certification. I have... I'm a special ed. teacher by certification. I never went for my regular ed. certification. I'm really upset with myself that 30 years ago I didn't do that because I didn't know any better then. I think that people have a mindset when they come out of college if they're only trained in one particular area and think that I'm only going to work in one area. The rate of in-class support programs we have would say hey folks you may be a special ed. certified teacher but you will have to know how to work with all kids and regular ed. teachers should know special ed. I don't see that their should be a difference at all. But again, I've given that opinion every time I get a chance and I don't see that happening.

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Code: Teacher Feedback {7-4}

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:26 [We have some grade levels that..] (25:35) (Angelica)

We have some grade levels that use that and I have one, second grade did not choose to use it. They felt that it was too high of a level for our second grade students. So they did... made their own assessment and then they have to do their own analysis using a spreadsheet. Well, it's been successful. What we learned, this is my second year using it. What we learned after the first year was that some of the concerns of the teachers were that the questions on the Edu-Test did not reflect what we wanted them to be assessed on. But the second year we found that we could make our own questions administratively and then put them into the test and that worked much better.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:10 [I'll say, "I'll probably be in..] (64:64) (Angelica)

I'll say, "I'll probably be in this class. Do you want me to pick something or do you want me to read something?" Some day she's reading a chapter book out loud and I might pick up the next chapter.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:44 [Oh okay, okay So with that you..] (67:57) (Angelica)

So you walk around and you may ask them to submit their Problem of the Day for that week so you and review it and give them feedback? Say maybe I don't think your
students are clearly... me getting clear answers and I... or I don't think your response to them makes them understand what they're doing and not doing.

P3: INTERVIEW #3.rf - 3:41 [We will meet with our resource.] (73:73) (Angelica) Codes: [Teacher Feedback]

We will meet with our resource teachers and talk about where our children are. And ask a teacher to share with us what they're doing to help move the child along. So, we meet a lot, a lot with individual teachers.

P7: INTERVIEW #7.rf - 7:11 [And the five-by-five walkthrough.] (71:71) (Angelica) Codes: [Teacher Feedback]

And the five-by-five walkthrough, will you please elaborate on that? I just think, you know, a kind of supervision where you do five classrooms a day for 5 minutes - and you either just do a general kind of walk-through, or you look for things related to instruction or classroom management. I sometimes carry a little checklist with me, which is like-- if it were for classroom management, all I'm looking at is-- and here's my little checklist here: "Was attendance taken while students were working? Were there procedures in place for collecting assignments? Were there clearly identified and practiced routines that kids follow? Kids got seated and were ready to work when the bell rang. They worked until the end of class," depending upon when I go in. "The discipline interventions are given in a calm, yet adult voice: quick, respectful, effective and suited to the offense. Students are busy and focused," and it's either yes, no, or not applicable. And they as often as not I toss a little handwritten note their box. Nice lesson. What a pleasure it was to see! Great job -- that kind of thing. They're kind of cool. I don't use them all the time, but it helps keep me focused on what I'm walking around to do.

P8: INTERVIEW #8.rf - 8:10 [In fact, Angelica, if I didn't.] (75:75) (Angelica) Codes: [Teacher Feedback]

In fact, Angelica, if I didn't force them into giving me some students for inclusion, they probably wouldn't. They don't want to [laugh]. No, but you know, I kind of force it and say, "You know, I need..." and then when I say that then they'll go back to the drawing board and say, "Uhh, uhh, well maybe this one." Yet, when the get into inclusion they flourish.

P9: INTERVIEW #9.rf - 9:22 [Some of it is me going into th... ] (42:42) (Angelica) Codes: [Teacher Feedback]

Some of it is me going into the classroom and saying, no change this around, do this or do that. In fact I have an observation later on a teacher, an in-class support team, that last time I did an observation last week. I said, "I want some things changed," and sometimes you get better effects implementing things when you go back in and give some useful criticism.
Code: Teacher Interaction (15-2)

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.pdf - 2:60 [The math test is online, the r.] (87:87) (Angelica)
Codes: [Teacher Interaction]

The math test is online, the reading test- we actually send it out to be scored, and the writing test is online, which will give us a score back. And we look at those scores and all of them will give strengths and weaknesses and, you know, I sit down with the teacher, regular and special. This is everybody, we sit down as soon as the test scores come back and we look at it and look at who did well, who didn't do well, what skills they didn't do well on, and make plans of how are you gonna help that child, you know, address those weaknesses. My biggest thing is I don't treat the special education students any differently. We look at the data the same way and I realize that, you know, some of them are different, but we need to have them grow. And that's- that's the whole idea. Let's see how we can make them grow.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.pdf - 2:72 [I started that after-school pr.] (103:103) (Angelica)
Codes: [Teacher Interaction]

I started that after-school program, let's see, seven, eight, nine years ago and the biggest problem I had to begin with was just making sure that the after-school teacher was following up on what was happening in the classroom. That was the hardest part. But what we do is we have our supervisors who are in charge of the after-school programs and what their job is when they create the list is to put the kids together from certain teachers. So the- the after-school teacher makes it easier for them to contact back and forth with the teachers. So, I find it to be pretty successful now, but it was hard at first. The first few years it was difficult arranging and getting everything together and making sure they were connecting it to teacher.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.pdf - 2:84 [Basically, I - I'm meeting with..] (130:130) (Angelica)
Codes: [Teacher Interaction]

Basically, I - I'm meeting with the teachers individually and - well, actually, I met with the two self-contained teachers yesterday and we kind of looked at overall their class scores, cause we just got the writing back.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.pdf - 2:86 [So, you know, I work individa..] (139:130) (Angelica)
Codes: [Teacher Interaction]

So, you know, I work individually with the teachers.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.pdf - 2:119 [So they make sure nothing is o.] (43:43) (Angelica)
Codes: [Empowerment of Teachers] [Teacher Interaction]
So they make sure nothing is overlapping with each other and then individually the grade-level teacher would have a committee meeting with everybody at their grade level on their own time and show them what they're doing and get their buy in, and then they come back as a committee to finalize it.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2, 2134 [For the LD classes I assign fo... (71:71) (Angelica)
 Codes: [Teacher Interaction]

For the LD classes I assign for each self-contained learning disab - disabled class, I assign two 3rd-grade and two 4th-grade teachers to work with that special ed. teacher, so that as their children become able to be mainstreamed, they can mainstream for whatever subject is appropriate.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2, 2146 [What I do is every week I give... (87:87) (Angelica)
 Codes: [Teacher Interaction]

What I do is every week I give it to the teachers and I say, "You have to expose it to them, show them step by step how to work through the problems," and that's what I do with all of my teachers. It's weekly. They're getting problems that they have to do with their class to show them how to do it.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3, 3:9 [They have been trained though... (41:41) (Angelica)
 Codes: [Teacher Interaction]

They have been trained through going to workshops but what we do now is use our own people. So I just hired a new resource teacher because one retired. So, what she will now do is... I will have her visit the others for the next week or so to see how each teacher does it. How they work it out between the classroom teacher and the resource teacher.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3, 3:34 [Do you meet with all ten of yo... (78:78) (Angelica)
 Codes: [Teacher Interaction]

Do you meet with all ten of your resource teachers at one time? At times. At times

P 4: INTERVIEW #4, 4:70 [I work closely with guidance a... (27:27) (Angelica)
 Codes: [Teacher Interaction]

I work closely with guidance and the teachers.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5, 5:9 [The teachers who run the after... (81:81) (Angelica)
 Codes: [Teacher Interaction]

The teachers who run the after-school program work in our building, so they communicate with the classroom teacher.
We, you know, meet with the teachers regularly and talk about inclusive practices and you know, how to make modifications and adaptations for the students.

Once we structure those groups, we pair, preferably based on previous interaction and/or affinity for one another, the in-class support teacher and the mainstream teacher.

In between time, I have you know, I have more contact with the special ed. teachers during meeting and things like that, so plan for, you know, instruction.

Another part of it is to be very, you know, if the kids, if the teachers are being trained, administrators sit in with them. Not that we don’t have emergencies that pull us out. You know, you’re a principal. You know how that goes but you try to have the conversations with them and try to maintain conversations geared towards whatever we’re looking at for training. That’s a large part of it. I think a lot of times if the teachers know that you know then you can support them. Sometimes, they’re crying on my shoulder because there’s... especially when it’s a new program. A lot of it is counseling teachers by saying you will get through it. [laughs] You’ve been a good teacher all along. You will be continuing to be a good teacher. Let’s look at what you can do and accomplish. And again, I don’t know what your experience is when you introduce something new. People are willing to do it but they’re scared and they don’t want to do a bad job. They don’t want to hurt kids. So, you know, a lot of it I just kind of console a lot of people but let them know that it’s there. I think that leadership role is not just knowing what the program is and making sure it’s done. It’s also measuring teachers that it’s not going anywhere. We’re staying with this. So let’s work towards it. Don’t... You’re not gonna be exonerated from anything new. What happens is after a, the first year they get more comfortable with it and now after three, four years it’s part of what they live. It’s what they do on a daily basis. So what’s new has become very common place and just accepted.

Code: Technology (13-2)

[The Edo-Test, can you tell me...] (35:35) (Angelica)
The Edu-Test, can you tell me a little bit more about that? It is put out by Plato Learning and Edu-Test is basically a computer-generated assessment for students. It can, you know, provide like a snap shot of learning. The teachers can make up the questions and put them into this assessment and the test itself, the computer program, will then analyze it for the teacher for each student.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1_rtf - 1:56 [Edu-Test] (34:34) (Angelica)
Codes: [Assessment of Students] [Technology]

Edu-Test

P 1: INTERVIEW #1_rtf - 1:59 [Edu-Test] (35:35) (Angelica)
Codes: [Technology]

Edu-Test

P 2: INTERVIEW #2_rtf - 2:15 [We're very much into technology...] (53:53) (Angelica)
Codes: [Technology]

We're very much into technology. The superintendent is very into technology. So if we can find technology that the children can use at home and here [school], he's very much approving of us spending the money on it.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2_rtf - 2:18 [We have the Everyday Math onli... ] (51:51) (Angelica)
Codes: [Technology]

We have the Everyday Math online games that the children can play in class or they can sign on - go online from home and play the games also.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2_rtf - 2:124 [There is - every classroom has... ] (55:55) (Angelica)
Codes: [Technology]

There is - every classroom has a flat-screen and then the majority of them have three to four laptops in every class, because we had the Star W Grant. We received that three years ago. So we’ve been receiving funding for the last three years to have technology.

So, I probably have 15 classes that actually have plasma screens in the classrooms, yes, I know, it's great. They have plasma, they have scanners, they have digital cameras and they're trained monthly on how to infuse technology into literacy, which is what the grant is about. And then we're lucky. We probably over the last three years have purchased probably over a hundred laptops. So they're spread out and dispersed along - among the teachers and then I have one lab that any teacher can borrow it and take it into their whole class, you know, and do a project. Actually, I have two carts. So eventually we'll have two portable labs that the teachers can borrow and use at any time.
They have the whole set up. They have the plasma screens, they have the scanners, they have the printers for the cameras, and they have their own printer. So, those 15 teachers received extra instruction and they got all of these materials to try to help them. [How were they selected?] They volunteered. Yeah, they volunteered. Technology was scary three years ago, so it was hard to actually find the people who would volunteer, but, you know, now the rest are kicking themselves for not doing it!

We also tried last year an electronic assessment called the "i-KNOWS". This is an electronic assessment for language, arts, reading and math. And the kids would take it individually. It was about one hour. It gave the teachers immediate feedback.

And then in the classroom, there's another program that the teachers use in the classroom called Study Island. It's an online resource, where - and it's standards based - where the children can go on a computer with teacher guidance and practice test-taking skills and strategies.

We also have a computer lab and that's where the actual after-school program takes place in our computer lab. In our library there's a class set of computers in both the - in the computer lab, and in the library we have about 15 computers.

You know, they just recently got me two laptops that we can use with projection units so they're tied into a wireless network. So, that those types of things that they support us with.

A piece of software called "Skills Tutor," which is an on-line skill development program that pre-assesses kids and then puts them into a program prescribed by what their needs are and then tracks their progress electronically over the internet. What we have found is
that the software will adjust to the ability of the kid. Every student has access to it from home. We've trained the entire staff at this point and they... We sent a letter home and they and their parents are encouraged to work together using a computer at home. It's not an interactive one between grown ups but if you're just looking to afford kids practice, and there is some merit to practice without supervision, then this is something that let's us do that as well as de some diagnostic stuff.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.txt - 9:58 [Last week in fact we visited a... ] (98:98) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Technology]  

Last week in fact we visited a school down in Burlington county that they're using some technology that we want to look at. The Success Maker Program. I don't know if you've seen that. It's a, basically it's a computer based program that initially like the fundamental part of it is really for reading and math and very individual with kids but very animated. It looks like a very good program.

Code: Test Preparation (18:7)  

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.txt - 2:54 [So what we do is we look at th... ] (87:87) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Test Preparation]  

So what we do is we look at the test format, try to familiarize the students with the format, and then we actually look at all the different accommodations that are available and see what kinds of things are going to help that child be successful.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.txt - 2:66 [We have an after-school progra... ] (96:96) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Test Preparation]  

We have an after-school program all the time, but the test prep is a month before the test. The children stay Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursdays for the month before the test. It's - it's a volunteer program. The parents sign up for it, and anybody that, you know, requests to stay after, stays after, and then they'll be working on test strategies and the format of the test.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.txt - 2:67 [Yes, well, we have the after-s... ] (100:100) (Angelica)  
Codes: [Test Preparation]  

Yes, well, we have the after-school... What we did was we don't have basic skills during the day anymore. So anybody that needs extra help, it's after school. So we have the after school program that the teachers get paid for and they get paid for one hour extra three days a week throughout the year and we have probably 20 teachers that are doing it after school. So what we do is we stop the basic skills program and it's just test prep the month before.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.txt - 2:73 [How large are these classes? A... ] (109:109) (Angelica)
Codes: [Test Preparation]

How large are these classes? After-school, there's no more than ten. Most of them range about six or seven. The test prep class will be a maximum of ten. That seems to be a little high, 'cause we have a lot of children whose parents want them involved in the test prep class, so... The after-school teachers that we have are for 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th, but this program is just for 3rd and 4th. So, we dropped the 5th and 6th for this month, and then they'll continue after that.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:79 [For the test prep we actually .] (114:14) (Angelica)
Codes: [Test Preparation]

For the test prep we actually created the curriculum, the two supervisors and the two principals — my, myself and the 5th-6th principal. We actually sat down and figured out what types of things, based on our tests results, you know, our pre- and post-test that we're doing need to be focused on in terms of making sure that it's covered before the test. So we've actually created all of the curriculum and the materials 'cause we have the test prep book, but we have some additional materials or things that our district just needs more help in.

P 2: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 2:145 [Let's show them the format, ho..] (87:87) (Angelica)
Codes: [Test Preparation]

Let's show them the format, how is the test set up, how to go about reading the questions. So we focus on more of the set up, so that they can see how to take the test and what's the format and teach them how to read longer passages and when they see a math problem, how to use the calculator when it's appropriate. We're showing them the set-up of New Jersey Ask.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:151 [Mostly reviewing the format [o..] (93:93) (Angelica)
Codes: [Test Preparation]

Mostly reviewing the format [of the test], 'cause that's - that's what they're unfamiliar with. I think that - I think, you know, I know that makes a difference.

Codes: [Assessment of Students] [Test Preparation]

I'll collect what the children did. I'll go into a class and I'll say submit your problem of the day this week so that I can look at how the children responded. Are they writing the answers? Did the teacher mark them with a rule connected to what the NJ ASK is looking for? So, we collect them and look at what they are doing.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:77 [I think... if I can back up beca..] (63:63) (Angelica)
Codes: [Test Preparation]
I think... if I can back up because I'm maybe not understanding the Problem of the Day. That... I just telling about math. That's part of our [mat] program. So, students should be working on the... or... everyday there's a problem on the board. A word problem they have to solve. As you know the ASK is, is problem solving. So, everyday they need to be doing at least a problem and the problem of the day is usually a difficult one. But I don't case whether it's a self-contained class or if you have resource students, everyday they have to learn to solve a problem.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5/72 [There's another program that t.] (81:31) (Angelica) Codes: [Test Preparation]

There's another program that the teachers use in the classroom called Study Island. It's an online resource, where - and it's standards based - where the children can go on a computer with teacher guidance and practice test-taking skills and strategies. So every special education teacher has been trained and has an account for the children they work with. So the children do that during the day and they can do it at home. We just implemented an after-school program called Project Achieve. It just started in January where those kids can come after school once a week for an hour between now and the NJASK. That's not only for special education children, but that's also for children who get basic skills support. What they do is - they do an assessment on the computer and the computer actually generates math and language arts questions that are connected to what the NJASK would be like and also what the curriculum should prepare them to do. They can play games as well. So it's - it's - you know, the teachers actually lead the instruction by teaching - teaching study strategies and test-taking strategies and then actually do the assessment. They go on and solve problems on the computer and then at the end they play games where they're also answering questions, but it's in a game format. Then they get a - a printout and parents can look at the results and see how they're doing, where they need more support, and that sort of thing. The teachers who run the after-school program work in our building, so they communicate with the classroom teacher.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6/16 [The Director of Special Servic.] (38:38) (Angelica) Codes: [Special Services Support] [Test Preparation]

The Director of Special Services, every month, stressed strategies to help make kids successful on the test.

P 6: INTERVIEW #6.rtf - 6/24 [Each morning we give all the k.] (42:42) (Angelica) Codes: [Test Preparation]

Each morning we give all the kids a snack before the test. You know, granola bars and some juice and things like that so that we know that they got something in their stomachs. We do that every morning with the test.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7/1 [The ICS[in-class support] and .] (51:51) (Angelica) Codes: [Additional Programs] [Test Preparation]
The ICS [in-class support] and the Resource both also combine, in so much as it's possible within the framework of the curriculum, a study skills component, so that we work on organization, test-taking skills, other things of that nature.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7, rf - 7:81 [We cheat. [Laughing.] No. I'm not.], (203:203) (Angelica) Codes: [Test Preparation]

We cheat. [Laughing.] No. I'm just messing with you. You know, it's really hard -- it's really hard to say this is what did it. I can tell you whether it's in the in-class support or the Resource that we work with special ed. kids to reduce test anxiety, to try to make the experience less stressful for them. I can tell you we -- I believe deeply in not teaching to the test but in teaching kids how to take the test in terms of eliminating distractors, in terms of focusing on the hardest questions first, in terms of literally marking through the letter of choices that you know are wrong, and to embedding when we can opportunities for test preparation into the regular things that we do.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7, rf - 7:82 [don't think we don't do some T..] (203:203) (Angelica) Codes: [Test Preparation]

don't think we don't do some Test Prep. We're under the gun from AYP all over the place. But I try to tell teachers as much as possible when you can embed the strategies into the curriculum, you're killing two birds with one stone and you're not stopping and reading water while you're just doing. "Okay. Today we're going to do main idea." Of course, you're doing main idea, but do it within the context of the trade book you're reading. Or, we have to write a persuasive essay. All right. Well, what period in history are you studying? Write a letter to general so-and-so explaining why such-and-such to that we're -- we're using the curriculum we have to teach the skills we need to.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8, rf - 8:42 [We also did some Test Prep, yo-.] (137:137) (Angelica) Codes: [Test Preparation]

We also did some Test Prep before the test and that helped us with AYP, gaining AYP. So we did a series of things with our special education population that made a difference in reaching AYP.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8, rf - 8:47 [For New Jersey ASK time, all t..] (161:161) (Angelica) Codes: [Test Preparation]

For New Jersey ASK time, all the parent volunteers will do -- we give on the second or third day of testing, we give them little jelly rolls, you know, little jelly pick-up rolls, you know. So they will work on doing those with a little on saying inside. You know, keep up the good work or something with testing. So it's kind of nice.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8, rf - 8:64 [When I'm ready for testing, do..] (182:182) (Angelica) Codes: [Test Preparation]
When I'm ready for testing, do I -- am I looking at every population and saying I'm giving them the same testing environment? And if I didn't, what can I do to improve that? So I'm constantly looking at that to see, you know, ok, is that special needs population being serviced and in the best way that I possibly can. I know that if I'm servicing them to the best of my ability, you're only as strong as your weakest link. If that's the way you want to really -- you know, I don't really see them as the weakest link, but I seem am a link that academically I may have to do the most support. But I also see that as I also have other children, who are not in that category that I'm also helping as well.

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Code: Test Preparation Materials \{7-1\}

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:78 [We, this year we have... and last...] \{52:52\} (Angelica) Codes: [Test Preparation Materials]

We, this year we have... and last year we purchased some preparatory material you knew to teach test taking skills.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:59 [In January, what we're doing n...} \{87:87\} (Angelica) Codes: [Test Preparation Materials]

In January, what we're doing now is we - one of the things we do here, we just started it last year, is we get several tests throughout the year to kind of see how the children are pro - kind of to predict how they're going to do on New Jersey Ask. So we give a writing test, a math test, and a reading test in September. We give it again in November. We give it again in February and then we'll do it at the end of the year, just as a wrap-up. And, you know, what we do is we - it's... The math test is online, the reading test- we actually send it out to be scored, and the writing test is online, which will give us a score back. And we look at those scores and all of them will give strengths and weaknesses and, you know, I sit down with the teacher, regular and special.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:50 [No, it's actually the - the sc...} \{120:120\} (Angelica) Codes: [Test Preparation Materials]

No, it's actually the - the testing that we do online is called Global. Global does the writing and the math. Then we're doing Scholastic Reading Inventory for the reading - www.teacher.scholastic.com/products/sri. I'm not finding that to be so helpful, though, to be honest. The Scholastic Reading Inventory, I mean, it gives us good information in the beginning and probably some good information in the end, but it's not a good help in terms of what the teacher needs to do to help the child move forward. But the Global Math and the Global Writing, it's - it's wonderful, 'cause the Global Writing, they actually, you - you have the child do a writing piece, you send it out, they have two or three people look at it and score it based on the rubric. Then they send you back the writing and the rubric's score. So you can kind of see the child's strengths and
weaknesses based on skills and the content of their writing. So it kinda helps the teacher focus on what they need to work on with that child.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:147 [New we're in the process of le...] (87:87) (Angelica) Codes: [Text Preparation Materials]

New we're in the process of let's get ready for New Jersey Ask. What we do is we do a problem of the week, which is something to do with the content standards or some type of problem that's similar that they'll see on New Jersey Ask. What we do is a lot times, like, some of my self-contained classes or my multi-handicapped children that actually will take the test, sometimes it's not on their level, but it's on the level of the test that they're going to take. What I do is every week I give it to the teachers and I say, "You have to expose it to them, show them step by step how to work through the problems," and that's what I do with all of my teachers. It's weekly. They're getting problems that they have to do with their class to show them how to do it. I found some phenomenal materials that are very New Jersey Ask-like.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:149 [I have looked for all kinds of...] (93:93) (Angelica) Codes: [Text Preparation Materials]

I have looked for all kinds of materials, I taught 4th grade probably 2 or 9 years ago, so I guess it was EPA then and I was always looking for materials that looked like the test, 'cause there's lots of stuff out there but none of it looks like the test! But the Rally materials look identical to the format of the test. So I highly recommend those. I'll let you know. This is the first year I actually have them for everybody. Last year I piloted them in two or three classes and those classes did very well. So this year - this is the first year we're going to be using them in every classroom across the board. So, hopefully it'll help us make a difference and actually this material comes in three different versions. So and - and during the day we're using two different versions in the classroom but after school we're doing a test prep class, 'cause parents, you know, want some extra help. So, like, that month before the test, they're gonna use the third version after school, again. Mostly reviewing the format of the test, 'cause test-ns - that's what they're unfamiliar with.

P 5: INTERVIEW #5.rtf - 5:4 [And then in a classroom, there...] (81:81) (Angelica) Codes: [Technology] [Text Preparation Materials]

And then in the classroom, There's another program that the teachers use in the classroom called Study Island. It's an online resource, where - and it's standards based - where the children can go on a computer with teacher guidance and practice test-taking skills and strategies.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rtf - 7:44 [Do you purchase any Test Prep...] (205:205) (Angelica) Codes: [Text Preparation Materials]
[Do you purchase any Test Prep material?] Uh, not really. I don't like to. We did buy -
- what did we buy? Um, Strategies for Success. [Is that the series?] Teachers have a
class set. They're not perishable - they're not consumable. Kids don't write in them
'cause I'm not going to buy these years after. They cost twelve bucks apiece. I'd rather
buy a couple reams of paper. They each have a Math and they each have a Language
Arts Literacy Test Prep Book that they will use over the course, probably picking up near
about now and going once a week, once every other week for a class period.

Code: Time with Students (18-2)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rf - 1:8 [I guess it would range from, y.] (22:22) (Angelica)
Codes: [Time with Students] [Visibility]

I guess it would range from, you know, classroom observation, informal as well as
formal. Participating in IEP meeting or manifestation meetings. Developing goals and
objectives. Counseling the students or sometimes disciplining. You know informal
interactions in the hallways and in the lunchroom.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rf - 2:31 [I read to the classes. So, you... ] (64:64) (Angelica)
Codes: [Time with Students]

I read to the classes. So, you know, I go in their classes as much as possible. I let them
decide if there's something that they want me to read. I usually give them, say, this is
probably one... you know based on my schedule and what it looks like. I'll say, "I'll
probably be in this date. Do you want me to pick something or do you want me to read
something?" Sometimes she's reading a chapter book out loud and I might pick up the
next chapter. But for the most part I kept all my books from when I was teaching. So, I
have tons of literature books in my office. So I see what they like and find something.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rf - 2:32 [The children with disabilities...] (64:64) (Angelica)
Codes: [Time with Students]

The children with disabilities are included in everything that we do, like, today I had
"Lunch with the Principal." So they're - excuse me, the teacher chooses, you know,
chooses several children from each classroom. They come out and have lunch. I buy
them pizza and everything.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rf - 2:33 [How often do you have the "Lunch with the Principal"][5] (65:65) (Angelica)
Codes: [Time with Students]

[How often do you have the "Lunch with the Principal"?] Monthly, we do that monthly.
We have three different lunches. So, at each lunch - like, s - there's probably - I have 33
classes. So they usually pick two people from their class and if I can seat them all, we'll
eat in my conference room. So we've separate and have special comfy chairs and then
one lunch is kind of large so I can't kind of do that. We do that in the cafeteria, but it's,
you know, we have pizza and they buy snacks from the cafeteria and they can buy their juice or their fruit or some chips or whatever they need to do.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:34 [Are you able to meet - to have..] (65:66) (Angelica)
Codes: [Time with Students] [Visibility]

Are you able to meet - to have lunch with every child throughout the school year? Yes. Yes, and like today - we had a half day today. So, today I had to do all three lunches. So I had probably 60 kids in the cafeteria today, 'cause we had to do it in the cafeteria with all those kids. So, you know, I try to do as much as we can.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:70 [What type of connection does g.] (37:37) (Angelica)
Codes: [Time with Students] [Visibility]

[What type of connection does going into the classrooms everyday establish?] We visit children I guess to see what children are working on. I'll stop at individual desks and talk to children, "What are you working on? What are you doing?" So that when there is an issue, they see me... and it's not just the principal as a disciplinarian, they see who's out all the time and asking about how they're doing and talking with them and joking with them and having a light conversation with them. So, it does help our discipline, it really does.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:6 [I have lunches with the princ.] (27:27) (Angelica)
Codes: [Time with Students]

I have "Lunches with the Principal" and my special needs kids are included in that.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:9 [I do make a lot of special vis.] (27:27) (Angelica)
Codes: [Time with Students]

I do make a lot of special visits, as I said before, to the - at one resource room here, where our kids are, low functioning and I bring them special books. The last series that I brought them was the Sally, Dick, and Jane books because they're reading those books and they really enjoy them.

P 4: INTERVIEW #4.rtf - 4:15 [And then I have the lunches wi..] (30:30) (Angelica)
Codes: [Time with Students]

And then I have the lunches with the kids. I do that weekly. It's about 10 or 12. I ask the teachers to just pick names out of the hat and what happens, you know, there's special ed. and regular ed. - it's just a mixture. But it does give me a chance to sit with them informally and talk about myself and show pictures of my family and my pets, and then they talk about themselves, and then I usually give them like a little ice cream treat. So it's something kinda neat and they come down into the main conference room in the main office.
I work with all the discipline, the behavioral issues. I don’t have an assistant principal to do any of that.

You know, when there are discipline issues, they’re here at my office, so they - we meet and we talk and I visit their classroom just as I would any other classroom.

Or if there’s a specific family or child that I’m concerned about or they’re new and I just wanna get to know them, I’ll go just to get an update on how they’re doing. So, you know... Sometimes I’ll plug them in, specifically for my own, you know, calendar.

I am actively involved, you know, all students. I have one guy that I meet with every morning. We go over homework and things, you know, every morning. He’s a special needs student? Yes. I meet him off the bus and we spend 5, 10 minutes going over homework. A lot of it is just trying to boost his self-confidence and get him off to a good start every day. [And how was he selected?] Just, he had a lot of issues. His mother ended up passing away last year and dad works second shift. You know it’s a real tough situation on him. He has a lot of abilities. It’s just he really, you know, lacks self-confidence and things and it’s just one of those things. He was kind of one of those special kids you kind of feel for and want to do something special with him and try to help him out.

I have a group that I’m working with of about 12 kids over lunch and recess one day a week, working on developing their writing and how to respond to picture prompts and things like that. You know, we’ve really kind of focused on that.

Okay. I have two classes of multiply disabled kids. They’re my favorite. Oh, God. I love them. I spend more time in there than any other place in the whole school. I was in there two days ago because the teacher was not there and I got real appreciation for what
this woman does. She's got a class -- and she -- her lesson plans are nine pages long, typewritten because she scripts her entire day every day. It begins with the [laughing] singing our morning songs. Today it Monday. It's marvelous Monday. So I'm in there hitting the play button and singing along with these children and rolling around on the floor. It was just too fun. But the works like a dog.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rsf - 7:55 [I am with kids all the time. T..] (73:73) (Angelica) Codes: [Time with Students]

I am with kids all the time. That's -that's why -when I get buried at a desk and you know there can be whole days sometime where you almost don't get to see a child. I will take as much of the next day as possible and I find substitutes and just kick 'em out. I go, "I need to teach a lesson today." So I do teach too. That's has no impact on whether there are Special ed. kids or not.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rsf - 8:6 [Uhh, I probably have a lot of..] (68:68) (Angelica) Codes: [Time with Students]

I probably have a lot of interactions with them in literacy with reading and writing. I may go in observe classes or observe teacher and teacher techniques as they work with children with disabilities. I may go in and watch like the reading programs or listen to them read. Or when they have a writing piece, if I know that they're in a class that's an inclusion class then I may go in there and listen to their pieces. So I have, you know, math is same way.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rsf - 9:9 [I tend to be more involved at..] (36:36) (Angelica) Codes: [Time with Students]

I tend to be more involved at the beginning level when kids are brought to me as a, with a learning problem and we go through a conference with me. We go through a conference with I & S and I'm more involved with the parents and kids at that time.

Code: Tutoring (2-3)

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rsf - 1:45 [We were a recipient of the New..] (57:57) (Angelica) Codes: [Grants] [Intervention] [Tutoring]

We were a recipient of the New Jersey After Three Program Grant and along with that program is a component for tutoring for students that were partially proficient on the Ask test so we're definitely [laughing] stepping up our intervention.

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rsf - 1:79 [And with that grant the student..] (57:57) (Angelica) Codes: [Tutoring]
And with that grant the students that performed partially proficient on the ASK test grade three into four, so our current fourth graders are eligible for, we have a summer program in August that ran for five weeks every day, two and a half hours a day and tutoring throughout the school year on a one to two ratio. One teacher, two students and you know, a lot of our special needs children of course qualified for that. So they're receiving that this year. We have migrant tutoring if a student is of migrant status and some are migrant and special education, they receiving that tutoring after school.

Code: Visibility [16:3]

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rtf - 1:8 [I guess it would range from, y.] (22:23) (Angelica) Codes: [Time with Students] [Visibility]

I guess it would range from, you know, classroom observation, informal as well as formal. Participating in IEP meeting or manifestation meetings. Developing goals and objectives. Counseling the students or sometimes disciplining. You know informal interactions in the hallways and in the lunchroom.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:34 [Are you able to meet - to have lunch with every child throughout the school year?] (66:56) (Angelica) Codes: [Time with Students] [Visibility]

[Are you able to meet - to have lunch with every child throughout the school year?] Yes. Yes, and like today - we had a half a day today. So, today I had to do all three lunches. So I had probably 60 kids in the cafeteria today, 'cause we had to do it in the cafeteria with all three kids. So, you know, I try to do as much as we can.

P 2: INTERVIEW #2.rtf - 2:132 [I visit their classrooms daily.] (64:64) (Angelica) Codes: [Time with Students] [Visibility]

I visit their classrooms daily, I'm in every single classroom. I don't really treat the class - the children with disabilities any differently or their teachers. Whatever I do for one class, I do for all.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:2 [There's daily interaction, I believe in being in every classroom everyday, So, that's whether it's at a self-contained class or the regular class. There's constant interaction.] (26:26) (Angelica) Codes: [Visibility]

There's daily interaction, I believe in being in every classroom everyday. So, that's whether it's at a self-contained class or the regular class. There's constant interaction.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3.rtf - 3:35 [I'll go into a class and I'll .] (62:62) (Angelica) Codes: [Visibility]

I'll go into a class and I'll say submit your problems of the day this week so that I can look at how the children responded.
With the students we’re in the… I’m in the cafeteria when they’re eating lunch. One of the things we do here and I don’t collect plan books. I do them in the classroom. This way it forces me again to visit all of the classrooms. Well you know, that’s important. That’s extremely important that the children see you, that the teachers see you because it is so big, there has to be some kind of… there has to be that connection.

P 3: INTERVIEW 3.rf - 3:70 [What type of connection does g.,] (37:37) (Angelica) Codes: [Time with Students] [Visibility]

[What type of connection does going into the classrooms everyday establish?] We visit children I guess to see what children are working on. I’ll stop at individual desks and talk to children, “What are you working on? What are you doing?” So that when there is an issue, they see me… and it’s not just the principal as a disciplinarian, they see [person] who’s out all the time and asking about how they’re doing and talking with them and joking with them and having a light conversation with them. So, it does help our discipline. it really does.

P 4: INTERVIEW 4.rf - 4:7 [Classroom visitations.] (27:27) (Angelica) Codes: [Visibility]

Classroom visitations.

P 4: INTERVIEW 4.rf - 4:43 [I do a lot of communication an.] (78:78) (Angelica) Codes: [Visibility]

I do a lot of communication and newsletters. I have a Newsletter that I do to the whole school community. I do a lot of Board of Education presentations on the results of our New Jersey ASK test, both with special ed. population included. I break it down so they can see how the special ed. kids are achieving and they’ve been doing really well.

P 4: INTERVIEW 4.rf - 4:49 [I attend all the intervention..] (109:109) (Angelica) Codes: [Visibility]

I attend all the intervention and referral services meetings.

P 5: INTERVIEW 5.rf - 5:77 [I’m in their classrooms just a.] (95:95) (Angelica) Codes: [Visibility]

I’m in their classrooms just as much as I am, you know, ‘cause their classrooms are the general classrooms for the most part and the kids know me. So, for example, with the autistic children, even though they’re not quite mainstreamed yet, when I see them in the hallway, we stop and we say hello, ‘cause they’re still practicing greeting and that sort of
thing. You know, when there are discipline issues, they're here at my office, so they - we meet and we talk and I visit their classroom just as I would any other classroom.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rsf - 7:8 [But whether it's eating lunch... ] (70:70) (Angelica)
Codes: {Visibility}

But whether it's eating lunch with them in the cafeteria, which I do near about every day to getting into classrooms for five-by-five walkthroughs of the 37 classrooms, there's not a week that goes by that I'm not in every single class at least once or twice.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7.rsf - 7:64 [I'm - I'm one of the more vis... ] (70:70) (Angelica)
Codes: {Visibility}

I'm - I'm one of the more visible principals that you'll ever see. I spend an enormous amount of time with kids.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rsf - 8:3 [I, of course, am in and out of... ] (68:68) (Angelica)
Codes: [Visibility]

I, of course, am in and out of all of the classrooms - the Resource Rooms and inclusion and self-contained classrooms.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rsf - 8:5 [We do -- my in interaction wit... ] (58:68) (Angelica)
Codes: [Visibility]

We do -- my in interactions with my special ed. -- special needs students may be at the math carnival. We have parent nights that I -- I may see them there. Or they may do like a math game and I'll come down and watch them do that as well. But when I generally have a lot interaction with them, it's usually whole school. You know, when they're-- they're combined in. So that, I'm less likely to see who they are.

P 9: INTERVIEW #9.rsf - 9:8 [As... I don't have a daily inter... ] (36:36) (Angelica)
Codes: [Visibility]

As... I don't have a daily interaction with all the special ed. kids. Again, we have... it's a fairly large school. It's about almost 900 kids. So my schedule doesn't allow me; however I do try to get into the classrooms as much as possible just to know who the kids are and let them know who I am.

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Code: Websites (on-line resources) {12-2}

P 1: INTERVIEW #1.rsf - 1:27 [Is there a website for that pr... ] (36:36) (Angelica)
Codes: [Websites (on-line resources)]
(Is there a website for that product or...?) It’s Plato Learning. It used to be Light Span. I don’t know if its Light Span now. It’s Plato Learning, and I think it’s www.plato.com.

Codes: [Websites (on-line resources)]

Yes, 100BookChallenge.com. It’s phenomenal.

Codes: [Websites (on-line resources)]

Go on www.rallyeducation.com

P 2: INTERVIEW #2 rtf - 2:154 [No, it’s actually the - the te... (126:120) (Angelica)
Codes: [Websites (on-line resources)]

No, it’s actually the - the testing that we do online is called Global. Global does the writing and the math. Then we’re doing Scholastic Reading Inventory for the reading - www.teacher.scholastic.com/products/sri.

P 3: INTERVIEW #3 rtf - 3:75 [There’s probably a website. Yes...] (58:58) (Angelica)
Codes: [Websites (on-line resources)]


P 5: INTERVIEW #5 rtf - 5:11 [Their website is www.studyisla... (85:85) (Angelica)
Codes: [Websites (on-line resources)]

Their website is www.studyisland.com

P 7: INTERVIEW #7 rtf - 7:10 [The [checklist I carry] -- som... (71:71) (Angelica)
Codes: [Websites (on-line resources)]

The [checklist I carry] -- some of it is adopted from A Framework For Understanding Poverty. These came from -- I think they’re from an ASCD or NPSA... They’re all adapted from A Framework For Understanding Poverty at www.asdprocess.com as a process.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7 rtf - 7:73 [A piece of software called “Sk... (118:118) (Angelica)
Codes: [Websites (on-line resources)]

This is at skillstutor.com. It’s Achievement Technologies, but it’s www.skillstutor.com.

P 7: INTERVIEW #7 rtf - 7:75 [It’s a research-based, languag... (147:147) (Angelica)
Codes: [Websites (on-line resources)]
It's a research-based, language arts program. Go to www.projectread.com and you'll see the phonology, linguistics, reading comprehension, written expression. There are five curriculum strands.


Rick Welch whatever -- .com. So, most of our inclusion teachers have been through very intensive training with Rick Welch.

P 8: INTERVIEW #8.rtf - 8:30 [I played to them -- for them i..] (102:102) (Angelica) Codes: [Websites (on-line resources)]

I played to them -- for them in one of our first faculty meetings a video by Bill Cosby that sort of spoke to children with learning disabilities and his son. You know, actually I got it off the Internet at www.hellofriend.org/programs.