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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE REAUTHORIZATION OF THE
INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT
ON CATHOLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN
WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES
IN NEW YORK.

BY

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Education
Seton Hall University

2007
Abstract

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE REAUTHORIZATION OF THE INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT ON CATHOLIC SCHOOL CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN NEW YORK

By Elizabeth R. Frangella

There is a hidden population of students in the Catholic schools in the United States. They are the children who exhibit learning disabilities but may go undiagnosed and not serviced according to their needs. In November of 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops conducted a study and wrote a document based on those findings entitled Catholic School Children with Disabilities. The USCCB study produced six major findings relating to the diagnosis of Catholic elementary school students with learning disabilities and the services provided to them. The reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 proposed to address these issues.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act on Catholic elementary school students with learning disabilities in New York.
This study sought to gather data in the form of patterns and themes through 13 individual qualitative interviews of principals from 5 counties in the Archdiocese of New York in order to determine the extent to which students with learning disabilities are diagnosed and receive services from the Local Education Agency for those learning disabilities in 2007.

Interview questions from the 2002 USCCB study entitled Catholic School Children with Disabilities as well as interview questions from Special Education in Tennessee Private Schools- Qualitative by Shannon Taylor were used with permission by the authors. Questions from each of those studies were combined to form the 12-question open-ended interview instrument used in this dissertation.

The responses to the interview questions were consistent in showing that, in general, principals reported no significant change by the Local Education Agency in the evaluation of and services to children with learning disabilities in Catholic elementary schools in New York since the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act 2004.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with deep admiration that I thank Dr. Anthony J. Colella for his support and for his belief in this project. His style of mentoring was much appreciated, allowing me to see this dissertation evolve and guiding me to its completion. I also thank my other team members, Dr. Caterine Squillini, Rev. Dr. Kevin Hanbury and Rev. Dr. Christopher Hynes who gave their support and advice along the way. Thank you, Cathy, for always being there with your red pen. I want to thank Dr. James Caulfield for allowing me to be a part of this wonderful family of Seton Hall. Dr. Caulfield is one of those truly great leaders who only come along once in a lifetime and it is a real gift to know him.

I also want to thank my Cohort 9 members who kept me laughing along the way. Thank you Connie, for being the best roommate ever, and for giving me your spirit of relaxation.

Thank you to the principals in the Archdiocese of New York who agreed to be interviewed.

One never knows what life has in store when growing up. It is only as time passes that we realize
the gifts we have all along the way in our family and friends. I thank my parents for giving me life, my sisters for helping me to grow into the woman I am and my little brother for being the best brother anyone could have.

My husband is a truly remarkable man, who has supported my habit of education for all our married life. I love you, Bob, more than you can ever know. I also thank you for standing by all the times that I was busy with my own project, taking care of the children and the pets and the house.

To my children, Elizabeth, Eugene and Eileen, my wish for you is that you grow in knowledge and in strength and become beautiful citizens of the world. Wherever life takes you, remember that education can bring you even further. Always do your best.

Last, but really first, I thank God for never letting me down. He is always with me, guiding me along the journey. As Monsignor James Corman would have said, Duc In Altum.
DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Bob, a man I truly love. I know I don't say it nearly enough. I love you! This degree could never have been accomplished without his support and his encouragement all along the way. He deserves this as much as I do.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Problem

There is a hidden population of students in the Catholic Schools in the United States. They are the children who exhibit learning disabilities but may go undiagnosed and not serviced according to their needs. There are statistics to show the number of students with Individual Education Programs (IEP) in Catholic schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2001), but there is another part of the Catholic school population that has never received such documentation. There are statistics to show the amount of government funding that is granted to children with learning disabilities in Catholic schools in the United States (United States Department of Education (2001)), but it is a small percentage of those students with actual needs.

In November of 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops wrote a document entitled Catholic School Children with Disabilities. The document served as a study of data culled from a survey sent to Catholic schools across the country and the follow-up interviews to parents
and local and state education authorities. These survey results and interviews added to the information gathered on children with special needs in Catholic schools across the United States. The study encompassed over one million children in almost three thousand schools over more than 20 states and more than 30 dioceses.

The major findings of the 2002 study Catholic School Children with Disabilities are as follows:
1. Catholic schools serve special needs children in all disability areas. 2. The Child Find process is inconsistent and difficult to access for parents of children in Catholic schools suspected of having a disability. 3. Catholic school children are less likely to be diagnosed with a disability by a public school evaluator than through a private evaluation. 4. Catholic school children with disabilities appear to be enrolled in roughly the same proportion by ethnicity as their non-disabled peers. 5. Catholic school students diagnosed as having a disability are not receiving sufficient services through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. 6. In the absence of IDEA services, Catholic school teachers, counselors, and administrators utilize innovative
strategies for accommodating students with disabilities (p.3).

The research questions for this dissertation were formulated after analyzing these six major findings from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops study (2002). In looking at the first major finding, it is shown that the disabilities identified as being serviced in Catholic schools included mental retardation, hearing impairment or deafness, orthopedic, autism, emotional disturbance, developmentally delayed (aged 3-9 only), speech/language, uncorrected vision impairment including blindness, learning disability, deaf and blind, traumatic brain injury, and other health impairments. Respondents to this survey reported that services “when provided, were not provided to their fullest extent” (USC&B, 2002 p.17) by the public schools. The study also found that the Child Find process for parents of Catholic school students with disabilities was “inhospitable”. Although the language of federal, state, and local guidance was generally clear, the policy interpretation of the State Education Agency and Local Education Agency often deviated from federal law. Parents found that the difficulties of the Child Find
process itself did not allow for evaluation of many of the children suspected of having a disability.

The third major finding was that Catholic school children were less likely to be diagnosed with a disability by a public school evaluator than by a private evaluator. When the survey statistics were analyzed, it was found that 68% of Catholic school students suspected of having a disability were referred to the local public school. Of those, six percent were denied an evaluation. When evaluated by a private evaluator, 72% of those students were found to have a disability. Of the 94% who were evaluated by the local public school, 72% of those students were found to have a disability. It was determined that of those students who were not diagnosed as having a disability by the local public school 72% were subsequently evaluated privately and were found to have a disability. There were 3% of Catholic school students suspected of having a disability and referred to private evaluators rather than to the local public school. Ninety percent of those students were diagnosed as having a disability.

One of the issues investigated by the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004)
was the disproportionate amount of minority children being identified as disabled in the public schools. According to The Civil Rights Project out of Harvard University (2000), African American children were almost three times as likely to be labeled mentally retarded as their White counterparts. The USCCB (2002) study showed that “Catholic school children with disabilities were enrolled in roughly the same proportion by ethnicity as their non-disabled peers” (p.15). When the USCCB study was conducted in 2002, it was found that less than one percent of Catholic school children with a disability were receiving IDEA services to the extent that would sufficiently address their disability.

The sixth major finding noted that the Catholic school administration, faculty, and staff are innovative in servicing those children who appear to have a disability even when IDEA funding is unavailable. A school official from Texas stated,

“...We truly modify our curriculum and presentation to meet the needs of ADD/ADHD and students with learning disabilities” (USCCB, 2002, p.18)
The most recent statistics excerpted from United States Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools: 2004-2005, published by the National Catholic Educational Association and the Website of the National Center for Education Statistics show that seven percent of students in Catholic elementary and secondary schools are children with identifiable disabilities as defined under The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) – compared to 11% in public schools.

One of the conclusions of the USCCB (2002) study was that parents of children with learning disabilities who choose Catholic schools pay for evaluations and services from their own resources for which they are entitled. In many cases, children will not be evaluated or identified or serviced, or their identification and services will be limited in relation to their disability needs. Another of the USCCB conclusions was that parents of Catholic school students with disabilities were forced to make a choice for their child’s education, to choose between accessing IDEA services or a Catholic education.

The moral dilemma of the Catholic school principal occurs when that administrator determines the financial
impact of a potential student with a learning disability on
the budget and resources of the Catholic school. Questions
asked may include "Do I have the academic resources to
assist this child?" and/or "Do I have the financial
capabilities to adequately educate this child?" The answer
to these questions may rely on the availability of outside
resources. As seen in the USCCB (2002) study, funding
sources for children with disabilities who attend Catholic
schools are as follows: 34% are covered by traditional
tuition methods without additional funding by parents, 13%
are covered by federal funds, and 34-37% are covered by
State and local funds. Less than 1% of the children with
special needs in Catholic schools receive services funded
by IDEA (USCCB, 2002). These statistics reflect the
participation of those Catholic school principals who seek
additional funds from sources other than tuition.

There is another dilemma regarding teachers of special
education in Catholic schools. Catholic school teacher
preparation courses for special education are more abundant
in 2006 than ever before. The dilemma is that although some
teachers in private or parochial schools may be more
prepared to teach a child with a learning disability
because of their degree, if there is a lack of resources for such a population, their services may not be utilized. It appears to be a catch-22 with limited funding not allowing for the hiring of teachers of special education, which limits the amount of students with special education needs, thus limiting the need for teachers of special education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is an investigation of the influence of the reauthorization of IDEA on Catholic school children with learning disabilities in New York. This study will also offer an analysis of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002) document entitled Catholic School Children with Disabilities as well as the document, the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004. Both documents will be reviewed with reference to their impact on Catholic school students with learning disabilities. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops commissioned their study in November 2002. Dioceses from across the United States took part in the study, and 87% reported that some of their schools were
unable to enroll students, because they did not have the capacity to meet the special needs of the students.

"This only includes students whose actual enrollment was denied. It does not include the parents who call to ask if we can take students with special needs, those who have a child in the school and know we can't serve the sibling, or those who are willing to pay for special accommodations if we will only take their children." (USCCB, 2002, p.12)

The USCCB (2002) document was written to influence policy and to shed light on the issue of special education in the Catholic schools. On May 13, 2004, the United States Senate passed what is now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (H.R.1350). It is from that reauthorization that the purpose of this study was formed.

This dissertation analyzed the responses to a set of interview questions asked of PreK-8 elementary school principals in Catholic schools in the outer counties of the Archdiocese of New York. The population consists of 83 schools in the counties of Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, and Westchester. A sample of 13
principals was chosen from the 80 schools using a stratified systematic sampling. The researcher interviewed each principal individually, and the interviews were audio taped and transcribed. All personal information was coded for confidentiality purposes. This qualitative design analyzed the extent to which children are diagnosed with learning disabilities in Catholic schools. An analysis was also made of the services available and the services given to children with learning disabilities in the Catholic schools in New York since the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004).

Research Questions

To what extent are children diagnosed with disabilities in Catholic elementary schools in New York in 2006?

To what extent are children in Catholic schools who are diagnosed with a learning disability receiving services for that disability?

What services are available for prescriptive teaching in the Catholic schools?

Where are prescriptive services given to children with learning disabilities in the Catholic elementary schools in New York?
Figure 1 is a chart which relates to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002) findings 1 through 6 and whether that information has changed since the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 as seen through responses to the four research questions from this study. The research questions relate to the interview questions as asked of the 13 principals interviewed.

Figure 1. Principals' Responses to research questions

Research questions and how they relate to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops 2002 study.
The United States Council of Catholic Bishops Study on Children with Special Needs (2002) key findings are as follows:

1. Finding #1 - Catholic schools serve special needs children in all disability areas.

2. Finding #2 - The Child Find process is inconsistent and difficult to access for parents of children in Catholic schools suspected of having a disability.

3. Finding #3 - Catholic school children are less likely to be diagnosed with a disability by a public school evaluator than through a private evaluator.

4. Finding #4 - Catholic school children with disabilities appear to be enrolled in roughly the same proportion by ethnicity as their non-disabled peers.

5. Finding #5 - Catholic school students diagnosed as having a disability are not receiving services through IDEA sufficient to adequately address their disability.

6. Finding #6 - Catholic schoolteachers, counselors, and administrators utilize innovative strategies for accommodating students with disabilities, even in the absence of IDEA services.
Definition of Terms

Catholic school: Catholic schools are categorized according to governance, into parochial, diocesan and private schools. The task of the Catholic School is "fundamentally a synthesis of culture and faith and a synthesis of faith and life" (Congregation for Catholic Education, The Catholic School, Rome, March 19, 1977, Sections 9,37).

There are three types of Catholic elementary schools. Schools which are associated with particular parishes, diocesan schools which are associated with the larger diocesan unit and private order schools, which are associated with specific groups within the Catholic Church, such as the Christian Brothers, Dominican, Jesuit, and Marianist Orders are all considered Catholic Schools (NCES, 2006).

Child Find: The State must have in effect policies and procedures to ensure that all children with disabilities residing in the State, including children with disabilities attending private schools, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated; and a practical method is developed and
implemented to determine which children are currently receiving needed special education and related services (IDEA, 1997).

Elementary school: A school is elementary if it has one or more of grades K-6 and does not have any grade higher than grade 8; for example, schools with grades K-6, 1-3, or 6-8 are classified as elementary schools (NCES, 2000).

Free appropriate public education (FAPE): Free appropriate public education, or FAPE, allows every child the right to attend a school, whether special education or not. Special education services are provided at public expense, and are under the supervision of the public school district. They also follow the standards set forth by the State Education Agency and their population includes all children in preschool, elementary and/or secondary education in the State (IDEA, 1997).

The services, which are provided, also follow an Individualized Education Program or IEP that meets the requirements of the regulations.

IEP- Individual Education Program or Plan: The State must have on file information that shows that an IEP, or an IFSP that meets the requirements of section 636(d) of the Act,
is developed, reviewed, and revised for each child with a disability in accordance with the law (IDEA, 1997).

LEA: LEA or local educational agency means a public board of education or other public authority legally constituted within a State for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public elementary or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a State, or for a combination of school districts or counties as are recognized in a State as an administrative agency for its public elementary or secondary schools (IDEA, 1997).

Learning disabilities: The federal definition of learning disabilities appears in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which was written in 1997.

The term means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury,
minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.

The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage (IDEA, 2004) 34 CFR 300.7(c)(10).

Special education: The term special education means specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents, to meet the unique needs of a child with a disability, including: instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings; and instruction in physical education (IDEA, 1997).

Unilateral placement or parental placement: This is a parental choice of placing a child with a disability in a nonpublic school or facility even though that child has free appropriate public education available to them.

According to IDEA, the LEA is not required to pay for the child's nonpublic education. However, the public agency shall make services available to ensure the child a genuine opportunity for equitable participation in programs and services under the IDEA (34 CFR/300.403(a)).
Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to the Elementary Catholic School Principals in Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, and Westchester Counties, which are the outer counties of the Archdiocese of New York. For purposes of this study, private Catholic schools and other public and nonpublic institutions were not used. The responses to interviews regarding services and diagnoses available to the students with learning disabilities were limited to those Archdiocesan principals who responded to the invitation to be interviewed. The original design of the study incorporated a 30-question survey as well as the interview questions. The researcher utilized the original survey from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops entitled Catholic School Children with Disabilities (USCCB, 2002) as well as a survey written as partial fulfillment of a doctoral dissertation by Shanco Taylor entitled Special education in Tennessee Private Schools—Quantitative (Taylor, 2003), both used with permission from the authors. The researcher assembled one survey, taking questions from the two. That newly formed survey was sent to a jury of 11 experts and was reviewed three times with recommendations.
made after each review. It was decided that the survey information that would be gathered would change the design of the dissertation, and so it was not used. Interview questions from the 2002 USCCB study entitled Catholic School Children with Disabilities as well as interview questions from Shanos Taylor entitled Special Education in Tennessee Private Schools—Qualitative were used with permission by the authors. Questions from each interview were combined to form the 12-question interview instrument used in this dissertation.

Significance of the Study

This research may provide information that can be utilized to influence educational policy making decisions regarding Catholic school students and special education at the State and Federal levels. According to the Bishops’ document,

the Child Find process is inconsistent and difficult to access for parents of children in Catholic schools. Those children are also less likely to be diagnosed with a disability by a public school evaluator. Those children who are diagnosed are not
receiving sufficient services through IDEA (USCCB, 2002, p.3).

Since all children who have a learning disability are entitled to identification and evaluation and to receive services even if they attend private schools (IDEA, 1997), this dissertation will serve to offer current information to Catholic school dioceses. Such information will allow Catholic dioceses to approach state and federal representatives and advocate on behalf of the children located within their school system.

The changes in identification of and delivery of services to those students will serve to enhance their education, while they remain within the Catholic school diocesan system.

Organization of the Study

This research is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction to the study and includes the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the definitions of terms and the research questions being asked. Chapter 1 also includes the limitations of the study, the significance of the study and the organization of the study. Chapter 2 is the literature review. The
literature review includes a history of Catholic education and a history of the special education component both in general and in Catholic schools. Chapter 2 also reviews the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops study of Special Education as it relates to Catholic schools. An analysis of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Information Act will complete the chapter.

Chapter 3 is the methodology section, which describes the population, the interview instrument used, and the procedure for analysis of the data collected.

Chapter 4 is a compilation of the results of the research questions found in chapter 1, the research in chapter 2, and the methodology of chapter 3. Chapter 5 is a summary and conclusion of the paper with recommendations for future study.
CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This literature review will serve to identify research that will support the statement of the problem in the introduction as well as to clarify research and information relating to the design of the study in the methodology section of chapter 3. There are four main components of this literature review. This literature review will examine the history of Catholic schools, the history of special education as it relates to Catholic schools, the document written by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2002 relating to special education in the Catholic schools entitled Catholic School Children with Disabilities and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2004). The historical research analyzes the Catholic educational system from the early 1800s until present day. The recent research analyzes the 2002 document written by the United States Council of Catholic Bishops entitled Special Education in the Catholic Schools as well as the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004.
Responding to diversity is nothing new for us; it is intrinsic to Catholicism. Ultimately, a Catholic response to (cultural) diversity is based on the inherent dignity of the human person, in all of the diverse manifestations of that humanity (Martin & Litton, 2004, p. 29).

This dissertation is written to determine the effect that the USCCB document has had on current practices in the identification of and services to learning disabled students in Catholic schools. The USCCB (2002) concluded that there are limited resources available to those students with learning disabilities in Catholic elementary schools. This dissertation will examine current information gathered from Catholic school principals in the outer counties of the Archdiocese of New York.

A History of Catholic Education from 1700-Present

The Church has a long history of working for social justice and civil rights issues under the umbrella of equality for all. This extends to children in Catholic schools with special needs. Gearheart and Waishahn (1984) defined three periods of time in the research of special education in the United States. Those periods are: An era of misunderstanding and persecution or “early history-
before 1800; an era of institutions—1800 to 1900; era of public school special classes—1900 to 1960s and 70s and an era of accelerated growth—1960 to the present" (Gearheart and Weisshahn, 1984, p.4). Missionaries in the southern part of the United States established Catholic schools as early as the 17th century.

The earliest record of a school within the boundaries of what would become the Thirteen Colonies was, in fact, a Catholic school in the Catholic colony of Maryland in the 1640s (Bokenkotter as cited in Lynch, 2006). During the revolutionary war, Bishop John Carroll of Baltimore saw the need for Christian instruction of youth as "a principal object of pastoral solicitude" (Dolan, 2002). Bishop Carroll was elected by his fellow priests in 1789 to guide the American church. Under his direction, many religious institutions entered the United States, and they began to open institutions of education. Elizabeth Seton came to the United States and founded the Sisters of Charity in Emmetsburg, Maryland in 1809. After their institution, they began to open Catholic elementary and secondary schools (Bokenkotter, 2004). Also, Georgetown College and St. Mary's College were among the first educational
institutions of higher learning opened during Carroll's tenure. Because of a perceived Protestant influence on the common school and the influx of immigration, the Catholic parish elementary school was established.

Histories of education record that Catholic schools played an important role in the assimilation of diverse European ethnic groups into mainstream American life, but the processes by which this was accomplished remain largely unknown (Bryk, Lee & Holland, 1993, p. 15). To understand the Catholic parochial school system, we must remember that the first big wave of Catholic immigrants coincided with the spread of the public school system in this country. But when Catholics entered their children in these public schools, they soon found the Protestant atmosphere of the public school a detriment to their children's Catholic faith (Bokenkotter as cited in Lynch, 2006).

It was because of this sentiment that the Catholic parents and clergy wanted to work toward a system of schools in order to propagate their faith. Since the Protestant version of the Bible was the only Bible allowed in the classrooms in New York, Catholics felt the need to
do something. The bishops became more insistent that every parish open and operate their own schools.

As the 19th century continued, Catholic schools flourished. As early as 1842, Sisters of the Good Shepherd worked in Kentucky with young wayward girls. By 1875, there were 1,444 parish schools in existence. In order to continue the propagation of the faith and to ensure that Catholics were not unduly influenced by the Protestant readings of the King James version of the Bible and the devotions fostered in the common schools, the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore decreed in 1884 that within 2 years, every parish would have a parish school and that all Catholic parents were to send their children to that school (Buetow, 1970). This was a tremendous expansion creating the beginnings of the largest system of private schools in the world.

In the years between 1880 and 1920, the Catholic population increased almost 300%. This large influx of Catholics increased the Catholic school population by even more than 300% and the numbers of students in Catholic schools rose from 400,000 to 1,701,219. At the same time, the Church itself was undergoing an internal schism. The
Irish and German American bishops were seen as liberal and in favor of supporting the American legal system. They believed that the public schools were to be left up to the government to handle. On the other side were a group of conservative bishops who believed in the Catholic educational system above the government. It was only through the intercession of Pope Leo XIII that the schism was resolved. At that time, Oregon passed a law requiring attendance at public schools. The United States Supreme Court overturned that law in 1925 through Pierce v. Society of Sisters (Oyez, 2006).

In 1929, in the midst of the World Wars and the threat of communism, Pope Pius XI decreed that the teachings of the Church were so important that the ideal was for all Catholic children to be in a Catholic school. This is presented in the 1929 encyclical The Christian Education of Youth (Buetow, 1970).

By 1954 there were 9,279 Catholic elementary schools enrolling more than 3 million students. There were also almost 2,300 Catholic secondary schools, 224 Catholic colleges, and almost 300 seminaries (Bokenkotter, 2004).
In the 1960s, the Second Vatican Council was held. By the mid 1960s, enrollment reached 5.6 million students in Catholic Schools. This was known as the "era of accelerated growth" (Gearheart and Weishahn 1984). However, things began to change rapidly as escalating costs and questions regarding the mission of the school began to take hold. Schools began to close, especially in the inner cities. By 1991, enrollment was at 2,550,863. As finances continued to be a major problem and tuition rates rose in order for Catholic schools to survive, a charge of elitism was made. Urban area schools show the most danger of being closed due to financial reasons.

In the late 1990s there was an upsurge in Catholic school admissions. In 1999, Youniss and McLellan wrote:

The system of education that took over in the nineteenth century and reached its apex in 1965 is unlikely ever to be reconstituted. That system produced results that have been of obvious worth to the Catholic Church and the nation at large. There are still many contributions this system can make. But to ensure that they will be made, Catholic schools must be viewed in the context of significant issues in the
Church and nation. Only then can reasonable options be considered realistically from educational, social, and religious perspectives. (p. 10).

The History of the Catholic Schools in New York

In 1685, the Jesuit Fathers began the first Catholic school in the state, which was called the New York Latin School. This school was attended by some of the wealthiest settlers' children. It did not sustain itself however. In 1801, a free parish school was opened at St. Peter's Church. This school was the precursor to the "parish school" we know today and the people of the parish sustained it by their giving. In 1806, however, it was recognized by the state and began to receive public money, along with the other Catholic schools that were already established. In 1810, Father Anthony Kohlmann opened a Jesuit school in New York City called the New York Literary Institute and had 74 boarding students. The Jesuits closed it 3 years later. Kohlmann convinced the Ursuline nuns to come from Ireland and to start a girls' school. That, too, closed within 3 years, and the nuns returned to Ireland (Cohalen, 1999). The Diocese of New York was officially established in 1808.
The New York State public school system began in 1812. Catholic schools were in existence for a long time before the New York State system was officially established. In 1894, the New York State Constitution was adopted and with that Article XI explained the division of church and state as it applied to education.

Section 1. The legislature shall provide for the maintenance and support of a system of free common schools, wherein all the children of this state may be educated.

Section 2. The corporation created in the year one thousand seven hundred eighty four, under the name of The Regents of the University of the State of New York, is hereby continued under the name of the University of the State of New York. It shall be governed and its corporate powers, which may be increased, modified or diminished by the legislature, shall be exercised by not less than nine regents.

Section 3. Neither the State nor any subdivision thereof, shall use its property or credit or any public money, or authorize or permit either to be used, directly or indirectly, in aid or maintenance,
other than for examination or inspection, of any school or institution of learning wholly or in part under the control or direction of any religious denomination, or in which any denomination tenet or doctrine is taught, but the legislature may provide for the transportation of children to and from any school or institution of learning. (New York State Constitution)

This was the beginning of great difficulty for those in private and parochial education and section 3 is better known as the "Blaine Amendment" (Lynch, 2006). Compulsory education was also written into the law during this time, and the argument ensued as to whether that compulsory education had to be from a public school. The basic relationship between the public school district and the Catholic school was and remains today to be a sensitive issue.

In 1886, at the fifth synod, the Archdiocese of New York established a Board of Education. The first superintendent of schools was chosen, and in 1888 Rev. William Deegan began his visitations (Lynch, 2006).
Around 1896, there were only 25% of Catholics in New York in Catholic schools, and the clergy looked for ways to increase that number while being mindful of the financial burdens of tuition on families. During a period of about 30 years, there was a plan instituted by some priests called the Faribault Plan or the Poughkeepsie Plan. Through this plan, parochial school buildings were leased to the local public school district for one dollar a year. The local government took over the care of the property, the hiring of the teachers, and even selected most textbooks. Catholic children then stayed after school hours and received religious instruction. This was considered illegal in 1898, and the process was disbanded (Cohalan, 1999).

Not only was this a secular argument but was an argument among the religious as well. Archbishop Ireland, in a speech given to the National Education Association in his attempt at gaining the audience’s favor, hailed the public schools as the “pride and glory of the country.” He went on to deliver the message that it also had its defects and that there was an injustice done to Catholics by taking away all State money for most areas of Catholic education. The speech received mixed reactions from both Catholics and
non-Catholics alike, leading to a great debate in the
church with Archbishop Ireland in the center (Cohalan,
1998).

There was a rapid increase in the immigrant population
in New York in the late 1800s, which led to the need for
more churches and also more schools to be opened.
Archbishop Corrigan, working during the late 1800s, opened
23 parishes within his first 4 years in office. He also
opened 23 schools and 3 academies within those first 4
years. By 1902, he had opened 75 schools. Corrigan’s
successor was Archbishop Farley who was a great supporter
of Catholic education at every level. During his tenure,
Archbishop Farley opened 50 schools by 1918 and had doubled
the enrollment in Catholic schools. He also saw the opening
of New Rochelle College, St. Vincent College,
Manhattanville College, and the expansion of St. John’s
College to become Fordham University. Under his leadership,
secondary schools also grew including Cathedral Girls High
School, St. Gabriel’s, St. Peter’s and Regis High School.

Archbishop Hayes continued the growth of the Catholic
schools. By 1938, the Archdiocese had 218 schools. There
were 16 boys’ high schools and 44 girls’ high schools.
When Cardinal Spellman took office, he saw the change from the need for national churches. However, he also saw a continual growth in overall needs for his faith community. During his 25th anniversary in New York, the pope commended him for his outstanding work in the steady increase in Catholic schools during his tenure.

By 1960, there was one child in a parochial or private school for every two children in the public schools in the city, and 93.3% of the children outside the public schools were in parochial schools of all faiths (Cohalan, 1999).

In 1970, New York State became the first state in the nation to open an Office of Nonpublic School Services. This office was a result of the Mandated Services Act of 1970, which allowed the state to reimburse schools for certain tasks related to record keeping (Lynch, 2006). Other legal issues relating to Catholic education and its relationship to the State of New York, as found in Long and Schuttloffer (2006) included Zorach, in which children were allowed released time from public school in order to attend religion classes not held on government property. The ruling for Everson was extended to New York in the allowance of government money to transport children to a
nonpublic school. The National School Lunch Act occurred in 1946, the Textbook allowance and the G.I. Bill for tuition assistance to college all have given money to the nonpublic school child to be used for their education. In 1948, Packer Collegiate Institute went to court against the State Education Department. The courts ruled in favor of allowing nonpublic schools to register voluntarily with the state in order to give Regents diplomas but that the state could not mandate curriculum. Money for Catholic Schools from New York State is given from the Bundy Law, 1969-1970, (Long & Schut abolished, 2006).

Terence Cardinal Cooke was installed as Archbishop of New York in April of 1968. He became Cardinal a year later. During the mid 70s, New York City was in fiscal crisis. The changing economy, the shifting population, and the economic problems of many citizens changed the face and enrollment of the Catholic schools.

"Though the primary contribution of the parochial schools is to the Catholic community, which is deeply committed to them, Catholic schools make a major contribution to the community at large too, and the community would have to spend great sums to replace
them. About one-fifth of all the school children in the city attend parochial schools, at a per capita cost of $485, while in the public schools cost is more than $2,500. In the archdiocese more than 40 percent of all the parochial school pupils belong to minority groups" (Cohalan, 1999, p.18).

Catholic schools continue to educate the poor, the minorities, the children with learning disabilities, and the financial burdens on the school and the families continue to grow.

Special Education in the Early Catholic schools

Benjamin Rush was one of the first Americans to identify a need in the education of persons with disabilities. Although he wrote in the late 1700s, it was not until 1817 that Thomas Gallaudet actually established any program. At that time, children with various disabilities did receive religious education classes through some church support (Stainback & Stainback, 1995). Samuel Howe went beyond the support offered by Gallaudet and advocated for all children in the mid 1800s. It was a long road ahead, and education in this manner did not
become established until the mid 1900s (Stainback and Stainback, 1995).

The early 1900s saw specialized schools and custodial institutions emerge. The initial vocation of special education in Catholic schools was to form schools for the purpose of serving students with a specific special need or handicapping condition.

One of the earliest departments of special education formed in a Catholic Archdiocese was the formation of a department in the Archdiocese of St. Louis in 1950. This was 25 years before the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (DeFiore 2006). During the 1950s and 1960s there was a ground swell of political presence and organizations, and politics allowed for special education services to be provided. The disabled were beginning to have a voice in the government with many advocacy groups springing up. In the late 1960s and 1970s, the concept of Least Restrictive Environment developed.

The Catholic school system was a popular and necessary choice for all Catholics all the way through to the 1960s. In 1959, Catholic school enrollment stood at 4,101,792 in elementary schools alone.
Special Education in Catholic Schools Today

A study of special education in Catholic Schools was conducted in 1983 in Tennessee (Humphrey, 1983). It was found that although the percentage of students suspected with handicapping conditions in the diocesan parochial schools was 5.3% of the total population, the local education agencies only provided screening and verification for 1% of them Humphrey (1983).

Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of New York alone in the last 6 years have lost more than 20,000 children. Across the nation, the number is 60,000. Many have gone to the local public schools, to home schooling, or to other private schools. Some of these children have been diagnosed as learning disabled and have left because of many variables, including the lack of services available to them in the Catholic Schools (Council for American Private Education, 2004).

To stem the flow of children away from Catholic schools in order for them to receive services for learning disabilities, Catholic school administrators must reflect on their own policies regarding learning-disabled students in their schools. Catholic educators are asked to mirror
the just and caring attitude of Jesus Christ. Knowledge of the other transforms us and compels us to work for equitable educational structures that will benefit all learners. Administrators must also continually be aware of and informed about the rights of students with learning disabilities in their schools and be knowledgeable about school law as it pertains to learning disabilities (Depp-Blackett, 1997).

Teachers in Catholic schools must also be aware of those children who have been diagnosed as learning disabled and their education needs. They must work to the best of their ability in the service of these children. Teachers must be aware of the warning signs of learning disabilities so that those children do not fall through the cracks or become labeled as lazy or as behavior problems. Many times Catholic school teachers are unprepared for, or are not knowledgeable about, the best practices with which to teach a child with a learning disability (Hunt, Ellis & Nuzzi, 2004).

Many Catholic school principals are not knowledgeable of the rights of their students or their ability to receive services from the local public school districts.
Students with special needs in some ways mirror the plight of other oppressed groups. Church documents such as To Teach as Jesus Did or Welcome and Justice for Persons with Disabilities provide a mandate for Catholic educators to treat students with special needs in a manner that is just, caring, and ethical (Martin & Litton, 2004, p.77).

The National Center for Educational Statistics shows that during the 2001-02 school year, from parochial, private and diocesan schools, 2.2% of students were placed into special education programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). With those students listed as nonsectarian (under private), another 11% were added. The total number of children from Kindergarten through Grade 8 students in private school, with an allotment for ungraded students, was 85,579 children in special education across the United States (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2005).

According to the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002), the goals of a Catholic school include a set of educational goals that are distinctive, that there is a school identity rooted in gospel values, a study of
culture and a sense of respect and sharing responsibility with the Church. One goal is to educate academically, socially, and in all other areas to ensure future success in the world. The second goal is to transmit the faith to the next generation. (Long & Schutlloffer, 2006) Parents of children with special needs in Catholic schools want these two goals for their children as well.

In 1978, the bishops of the United States presented a pastoral statement laying the groundwork for inclusive education in both religious education programs and in Catholic elementary and secondary schools. This statement was the precursor to the 2005 document, Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium (USCCB, 2002).

In September 1989, the 18th Synod of the Archdiocese of New York was held, and the directives for the Education and Formation of the Church were written. According to the Synod, Catholic schools should be available in every region for those who wish to send their children to them. Catholic schools should be available to those with special education needs and should be affordable. The Archdiocese should keep the schools as a priority (USCCB, 2002).
The Holy See presented a document for the International Year of Disabled Persons. In that document, the Vatican stressed that all persons have a right to fully participate in every aspect of the life of society. Their primary focus was the family as the ultimate responsibility for the education of the disabled. However, Pope John Paul II stated, "Families clearly need adequate support from the community" (John Paul II, 2000). The USCCB went further when it stated that the family was one piece and that the whole Catholic community had the responsibility to continue the goal of allowing an accessible and affordable Catholic education available to all Catholic students. (Defiore, 2006)

The USCCB Study of 2002

In 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops produced a study of Catholic school children with disabilities (USCCB, 2002). There were over one million students sampled across 21 states and 32 dioceses. The findings were remarkable. The study found that Catholic schools do service children in all disability areas. However, it also found that the Child Find process by which the LEA actively seeks Catholic school children with
disabilities is inconsistent and difficult for parents of children with disabilities in Catholic schools to access.

Information for additional study includes the finding that Catholic school children with a suspected disability are less likely to be diagnosed by a public school evaluator than by a private evaluator. The study found that Catholic school students with disabilities are not receiving sufficient services through IDEA and that in the absence of those services, the Catholic school faculty and staff themselves are innovative in accommodating those children (USCCB, 2002).

One other point of this study was that six percent of the Catholic school students referred for Child Find were denied an evaluation. Of those who were evaluated and found not to have a disability, they were re-evaluated outside of the public school system. Of those, 90% were found to have a disability by a private evaluator.

In conclusion, the USCCB study finds that seven percent of all children in Catholic schools have been diagnosed with a disability and that less than one percent of these children receive services funded by IDEA. The USCCB (2002) found that the Child Find process was
"fragmented at best." The findings also included that the local level deviated from the state and the federal level in interpretation. Although funding is limited, as are other resources, the USCCB found that the Catholic schools serviced children with disabilities in similar proportion to the LEA.

The six key findings of the USCCB Study on Children with Special Needs (2002) are as follows:

Finding 1: Catholic schools serve special needs children in all disability areas.
Finding 2: The Child Find process is inconsistent and difficult to access for parents of children in Catholic schools suspected of having a disability.
Finding 3: Catholic school children are less likely to be diagnosed with a disability by a public school evaluator than through a private evaluator.
Finding 4: Catholic school children with disabilities appear to be enrolled in roughly the same proportion by ethnicity as their non-disabled peers.
Finding 5: Catholic school students diagnosed as having a disability are not receiving services through IDEA sufficient to adequately address their disability.
Finding 6: Catholic schoolteachers, counselors, and administrators utilize innovative strategies for accommodating students with disabilities, even in the absence of IDEA services (USCCB, 2002).

This study will look at whether these key points have changed in light of the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004).

We have looked at the history of Catholic education, the history of special education, the history of special education in Catholic schools, the history of Catholic education in the Archdiocese of New York and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops data relating to their 2002 study entitled Catholic School Children with Disabilities, and this dissertation will next analyze current practices through personal interviews relating to the research questions. The research questions for this dissertation are as follows:

1. To what extent are children diagnosed with disabilities in Catholic elementary schools in New York in 2006?
2. To what extent are children in Catholic schools who are diagnosed with a learning disability receiving services for that disability?

3. What services are available for prescriptive teaching in the Catholic schools?

4. Where are prescriptive services given to children with learning disabilities in the Catholic elementary schools in New York?

According to Shaughnessy (cited in Depp-Blackett, 1997), Catholic schools are not required to meet the needs of every child. However, because many schools do not have the availability of services in their own buildings does not mean that a student who attends a Catholic school has no right to those services.

According to Public Law 94-142 and to IDEA, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004), students in private schools have the right to request and receive an evaluation, and if necessary, an Individual Education Plan or IEP. The LEA must make a reasonable effort to provide services to those children, even if they remain in the Catholic school system (IDEA, 2004). In 2003, Shanon Taylor published a dissertation entitled, The State
of Special Education in Tennessee Private Schools. Her dissertation included a survey and study that closely aligned with the USCCB study of 2002 and its research questions. Her findings mirrored those of the USCCB.

Two components of their studies were identical to this one—determining the extent to which children with disabilities were educated in Catholic schools, and examining the manner in which students in Catholic schools receive special education services (Taylor, 2005).

Reauthorization of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

The regulations of the new IDEIA 2004 are not much different for Catholic school students with disabilities as was the previous IDEA. There are some differences between the two that will be discussed. One of the more significant differences is that the services that are allowed move from services to children residing in a district to services to children attending private schools in a district.

The Child Find process was originally focused just on those private or parochial students who were residing within the district in which the private or parochial school was found. The new ruling encompasses students who
attend private or parochial school in one district but live within another district. For the private or parochial school principal, this is a more centrally focused system, which allows them to consult for evaluations and for services with one district rather than with the special education offices of multiple districts.

The change in Child Find proceedings is also significant. The reauthorization of IDEA (IDEIA, 2004) incorporates regulations that require the school districts to use comparable Child Find proceedings for both public school children and for private and parochial school children with suspected disabilities.

Another major change in the law is there is a more stringent requirement for documentation of consultation on the part of the public school district. New regulations require that they keep accurate records of the consultations that have occurred with private and parochial administrators in regard to the new law and its effect on those schools. It also requires that districts obtain letters of confirmation from private and parochial schools that consultation has occurred.

The provision of services requirement has also
changed. The new IDEA allows for services to be provided as before, but the addition of third party service providers or other arrangements for services is now part of the law.

Under procedural safeguards, if a parent of a child with a suspected disability who attends a private or parochial school finds that the LEA fails to or is unwilling to provide equitable services and participation, that parent has the right to an independent educational evaluation (DeFiore, 2006).

DeFiore (2006) writes about efficiency and says that it may prevail with some of the new regulations but the reauthorization may not allow for significant changes in the way children with suspected disabilities who attend private or parochial schools are treated.

Even if more children are found and diagnosed properly, and if consultation improves and better reports are made, the fundamental problem persists:

The gap between the demands for services and the resources to provide them remains essentially unchanged (DeFiore, 2006, p. 463).
The facts of IDEIA remain that individual public school students are still given proper identification, diagnosis, and treatment for disabilities through local, state, and federal funding. Catholic school and private school students as a whole are given a proportionate amount of that funding.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of the reauthorization of IDEA on Catholic school children with learning disabilities in New York. This study also offers an analysis of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops document entitled Catholic School Children with Disabilities. The researcher’s intent was to establish the impact of these documents on the identification, assessment and diagnosis of students with learning disabilities in Catholic schools in New York. Research questions, interview questions, and USCCB findings were matched to ensure data answered the research questions.

Multiple realities exist in any given situation. A Judge’s Desk Book on the Basic Philosophies and Methods of Science says the following about qualitative research and the allowance of each subject’s perspective to be brought forth:

These multiple perspectives, or voices, of informants (i.e., subjects) are included in the study. The researcher,
the subjects, the reader all are part of the emergence of information. (Dobbin & Gatowski, 1999)

Research Questions

1. To what extent are children diagnosed with disabilities in Catholic elementary schools in New York in 2006?

2. To what extent are children in Catholic schools who are diagnosed with a learning disability receiving services for that disability?

3. What services are available for prescriptive teaching in the Catholic schools?

4. Where are prescriptive services given to children with learning disabilities in the Catholic elementary schools in New York?

The research methodology or design of this study incorporated qualitative data collected through personal interviews from a sample of 13 Catholic school principals from the five of the outer counties of the Archdiocese of New York. Reply forms were coded to ensure that as responses to the invitation were returned, they were sorted according to county. Subjects were then chosen using a systematic sampling method. The purpose of this method was
to allow each county to have a representative sample and allow for unbiased choosing of subjects. The researcher was unable to have a representative sample from Sullivan and Ulster county schools. The population of principals represents Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, and Westchester counties. Petton (2002) and others suggest a process called Epocche as an initial step in data analysis. According to Katz,

Epocche is a process that the researcher engages in to remove, or at least become aware of prejudices, viewpoints, or assumptions regarding the phenomenon under investigation. Epocche helps enable the researcher to investigate the phenomenon from a fresh and open view without prejudgment or imposing meaning too soon. This suspension in judgment is critical in phenomenological investigation and requires the setting aside of the researcher’s personal viewpoint in order to see the experience for itself. (Katz, as cited in Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p.123)

Chapter 3 examines this qualitative design as well as the interview questions that were developed, the participants, the data collection methods, and the data
analysis. The dates of this study began with the initial contact by written letter in September 2006 and continued with personal interviews through February 2007. After data collection was complete, data were analyzed to determine patterns and themes addressing whether or not identification and services of children with learning disabilities in Catholic schools has changed.

The focus of this dissertation is an investigation of the influence of the reauthorization of IDEA (IDEIA, 2004) on Catholic school children with learning disabilities in New York as well as an analysis of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops document entitled Catholic School Children with Disabilities. Both documents were reviewed with reference to their impact on Catholic school students with learning disabilities.

The design of this study incorporates qualitative data gathered through a 12-question interview regarding Catholic schools and children with learning disabilities from a sample of 13 Catholic school principals from theouter counties of the Archdiocese of New York. The dates of this study began with the initial contact for permission in September 2006 and continued through completed interviews.
in February 2007. Data analysis garnered patterns and themes and characteristics to determine the extent of identification of and services to children with learning disabilities in Catholic schools in New York. Research questions allowed for answers as to whether or not identification and services of children with learning disabilities in Catholic schools has changed since the reauthorization of IDEA. This also relates to the United States conference of Catholic Bishops study entitled Catholic School Students with Disabilities.

Participants

Participants of this study were 13 Catholic elementary school principals of the Archdiocese of New York from the counties outside of New York City. All 50 Catholic elementary school principals in the counties outside of New York City in the Archdiocese of New York were contacted by sending a written invitation through the mail to participate in a personal interview. Thirteen elementary Catholic school principals were selected from the respondents, a representative number from each county. The Archdiocese of New York maintains a Website and a directory listing of staff and departments. Those listings are also
shown in the Kenedy Catholic Directory, which is the official listing of all Catholic agencies in the United States. Information from both sources was culled in order to obtain a valid list of principals to whom to send invitations.

Instrument

The interview question instrument was a modification of two existing interviews. The interview instrument was comprised of questions taken from an original interview instrument written by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops entitled Survey on Students with Disabilities in Catholic Schools - Follow-up Telephone Interview (2002) and also an interview instrument entitled Special Education in Tennessee Private Schools - Qualitative (Taylor, 2003). Questions from both interview protocols were combined to form the interview protocol for this dissertation. The questions were reviewed and approved by a jury of 11 experts comprised of Catholic school principals. It was determined that the questions measured the extent to which children with learning disabilities are identified, evaluated, and serviced in Catholic schools. The interview questions were designed to determine the extent to which
elementary Catholic school children with learning disabilities are identified, assessed, and serviced for those disabilities. Interview questions are as follows:

1. How would you describe your school’s educational mission?

2. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e. are testing or interviews needed)? What modifications (such as alternative tests) are allowed for any of these procedures?

3. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic school?

4. What are your procedures for “counseling out” students with learning disabilities who are not achieving, academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of your school?

5. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms?
6. What resources are available to you from your local educational agency in order to assist children with learning disabilities in your school?

7. What do you view as major obstacles to including students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms in your school?

8. The recent reauthorization of IDEA should have brought (or was intended to bring) some significant changes. What has changed, if anything, in your school?

9. How available is the Child Find process to you in your current position as school administrator?

10. How has consultation been addressed by the local educational agency? How often has consultation occurred?

11. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated? If they are denied an evaluation by the local educational agency, what do they do?

12. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services?
Procedures

Data Collection

Personal confidential interviews of 13 principals of Catholic schools in the Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, and Westchester counties of the Archdiocese of New York were analyzed using a qualitative method to determine patterns and themes. An initial letter requesting permission to contact principals was sent to the Superintendent of Schools of the Archdiocese of New York in August 2006. Permission was granted to contact the principals, and a letter of invitation was sent to the 80 principals of the counties outside of New York City asking them to participate in this study. A reply form and informed consent form was included in the initial mailing along with a self-addressed stamped envelope. A code was placed on each reply form to ensure stratified systematic sampling. This allowed for a broad wealth of information from principals in five counties in the Archdiocese of New York. Upon completion of the interview process, only five of the seven counties were represented. Thirteen principals were chosen from the respondents based on equitable distribution from all counties. Principals’ identifying
information was kept confidential through the method of coding responses and coding of transcriptions of interviews. No identifying information was revealed relating to principals or to the schools in which they are the administrators. Personal interviews were scheduled over a 4-week period of time in January 2007 into the first week of February 2007. Interviews were conducted either in the principal's own office or at a convenient location. Interviews were audiotaped, and the tapes transcribed for accuracy.

**Data Analysis**

Data collected from the interviews were analyzed using qualitative methods. Qualitative data produces a wealth of information by their nature of questioning.

Qualitative analysis transforms data into findings. No formula exists for that transformation.


Participants were asked open-ended questions and allowed a greater degree of freedom in response, which differs from a purely quantitative method of collecting larger amounts of succinct data. School information gathered through these interviews was analyzed to determine
the characteristics of the school, the extent of identification of students with learning disabilities, assessment of those students, services offered to and utilized by those students in the various school districts in which the schools are located. Coding of principals' answers assured confidentiality. Data collected revealed themes and/or patterns as well as characteristics of the schools and their populations (Creswell, 1998). Principals from Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, and Westchester counties were asked to participate in personal interviews rather than telephone interviews after consideration of a suggestion made by a representative of the Superintendent's office. The researcher analyzed transcripts of the audiotapes.

Data Reliability

The interview instrument was a modification of two existing instruments. This instrument was comprised of questions taken from a study completed by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops entitled Special Education in Catholic Schools—Follow-up Telephone Interview (2002) and also an instrument from a study entitled Special Education in Tennessee Private Schools (Taylor, 2003). The
instrument was reviewed and approved by a jury of 11 experts comprised of Catholic school principals. The instrument was sent out three times for comment and review. It was determined that the instrument analyzed the extent to which children with learning disabilities are identified, evaluated, and serviced in Catholic school.

Summary

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of the reauthorization of IDEA (2002) on elementary Catholic school students with learning disabilities. Catholic elementary school principals from the Archdiocese of New York were contacted for participation in a 12-question interview. Principals were located in the counties of Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, and Westchester. The research design was a qualitative method of analyzing interview questions to determine the extent that children in Catholic elementary schools are identified, assessed, and receiving services for learning disabilities.

The initial problem as stated in the Introduction was the problem of the hidden child in Catholic elementary schools, the one who goes undiagnosed and not serviced
according to his or her needs. This research design related to the findings in the Literature Review in reviewing the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops study entitled *Catholic School Children with Disabilities* as well as the dissertation written by Shanon Taylor entitled *The State of Special Education in Tennessee Private Schools*. The Literature Review also served to examine the influence of the reauthorization of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (2002). This research design attempted to collect data from a sample of principals from the Westchester, Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, and Westchester counties Archdiocesan schools.
CHAPTER IV
PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of the reauthorization of IDEA (2002) on Catholic school children with learning disabilities in New York. This study will also offer an analysis of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002) document entitled Catholic School Children with Disabilities as well as the document, the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004). Qualitative research methodology was utilized in order to analyze information gathered from a representative population of elementary Catholic school principals from the Archdiocese of New York. This study adds to the body of knowledge regarding the children with learning disabilities in Catholic elementary schools in upper counties of the Archdiocese of New York.

Nature of the Study

The population of principals chosen for this study was a representative sample of Catholic school principals in K through Grade 8 schools in the upper counties of the
Archdiocese of New York. The principals had been in their schools for more than 2 years. Eighty principals from the counties of Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster and Westchester counties were contacted and were asked to participate in this study. There were 21 responses to the 60 invitations to participate. Five people responded that they could not participate, because they had no children with learning disabilities in their school, and they said they felt they could not offer any information to this study. One respondent volunteered to participate but was not chosen because she was a first-year principal. Two principals did not respond to requests for interview appointments after agreeing to participate and so they were not interviewed. In the end, the principals interviewed were a representative sample of principals from Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland and Westchester counties.

The principals were asked 12 interview questions relating to their mission statement, their criteria for admission, and the school’s strengths and weaknesses related to the enrollment of children with learning disabilities. Questions were also asked relating to the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities
Education Act (2004) and how that reauthorization has affected the students in their school.

The questions in the interview were related to the research questions and to the findings of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002) document evaluating the diagnosis of learning disabilities, services given to children with learning disabilities, the teaching of children with learning disabilities, and the location of the evaluations and prescriptive services for those children.

Presentation and Analysis of Findings

The interviews took place in the offices of the principals, with the exception of two principals who agreed to be telephoned at home. All interviews were recorded on audiotapes and the audiotapes were transcribed. At times, the interviewer clarified the questions or explained some of the concepts such as Child Find and Consultation. According to Seidman (1998), researchers connect to the interviewee in order to encourage the participants to continue reconstructing their own thoughts.
Mission Statement and Enrollment Procedures

The first three questions asked related to the admission policies of the schools. The first question was a description of the school’s educational mission. The reason for this question was to look for inclusive language. The second question asked for enrollment procedures and whether modifications were allowed if testing was warranted. The third question was the criteria established in order to determine whether a school was able to meet the needs of a student with a learning disability.

Strengths and Weaknesses Pertaining to Learning Disabilities in the Schools.

The next set of questions related to the learning disabled student already enrolled in the school. The strengths and weaknesses of the school and the resources available to the school were also described. The procedures for "counseling out" a student who is not achieving academically and behaviorally were analyzed.

Reauthorization of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

The last five questions related to the reauthorization of the IDEA and whether there were changes seen by the
schools. The location of evaluations and reception of prescriptive services was given.

Analysis of Research Questions

The research questions were matched with the interview questions in order to ensure that the research questions were being answered. Those two sets of questions were then matched with the six major findings of the USSCB (2002) document for cross-reference to previous research.

Research Question 1
To what extent are children diagnosed with disabilities in Catholic elementary schools in New York in 2006?

The questions cross-matched from the interviews relating to the diagnosis of children with learning disabilities in Catholic elementary schools were questions 3, 4, 9, 10, and 11. This relates to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002) key findings 2 and 3. For this question, most principals responded that they were never denied an evaluation. Many principals request that the family makes the contact with the LEA. One principal was denied twice, one principal’s students have been offered only cursory evaluations in some instances, and one
principal stated that the LEA talked the family of a child with a suspected learning disability out of an evaluation.

Principal 1 answered that her school is small and has limited resources and space. The Child Find process and consultation are available to her in her present position. According to this principal, the public school does evaluate the children. They have never been denied an evaluation.

Principal 2 also described her school as being small and lacking space and resources for accommodations such as alternative testing. Principal 2 also reported that the communication with the district has diminished over the last few years, and she states that “we’ve gone down hill” in relations with the district in which her school is located. Twice an evaluation was denied, and both times the families went to a private evaluator.

Principal 3 had one contact with her district for Child Find but no consultation. The district did send a resource teacher to her at the beginning of the year. Some children who are diagnosed wind up leaving the school. Principal 3 requests that the parent initiate the
evaluation process. They have never been denied an evaluation.

Principal 4 has had no child find contact and no consultation this year. This principal stated that although they have never been denied an evaluation, sometimes the parents choose to have the child evaluated through a private person.

Principal 5 has a good working relationship with her district of location, and they readily do evaluations. She has resources available to her through the district as well as on her own staff. She has never been denied an evaluation.

Principal 6 stated that the district has requested that the parents not contact the district directly. The district has also requested a successive platform of school-based intervention before children are sent to the district for an evaluation. She has never been denied an evaluation, but it is a lengthy process to arrive at an evaluation.

Principal 7 has had no contact for Child Find or any for consultation. She has never had a child denied an evaluation. She requests that the parents make the initial
contact for an evaluation by letter to the district to ensure an evaluation. This year, the school’s budget is more limited than before. She has never been denied an evaluation.

Principal 8 has had consultation with the district, and Child Find appears to be linked with that consultation. She considers the parent the strongest advocate in getting the child evaluated. She has never been denied an evaluation.

Principal 9 had contact for Child Find once and has had no consultation. He considers the “school of choice” as working both ways. Many times people go to a private evaluator rather than go through “red tape.” He has never been denied an evaluation.

Principal 10 has had neither Child Find nor consultation. They do search out a school for alternative placement if a child cannot remain at the school. They have never been denied an evaluation.

Principal 11 stated that they have not had anyone denied an evaluation, but some evaluations appear to be cursory and not complete. In those cases, the child is not given a full battery. One parent was contacted regarding
the child’s evaluation and no such evaluation occurred. Principal 11 has never had Child Find nor has he had any consultation.

Principal 12 had an evaluation denied last year. She has never had contact for Child Find but was contacted once last year for consultation.

Principal 13 states that no one has been denied an evaluation as long as the parent requests it. This principal has had a request for Child Find this year but there has been no consultation.

Research question 2

To what extent are children in Catholic schools who are diagnosed with a learning disability receiving services for that disability?

The questions cross-matched from the interviews relating to the prescriptive services given to a child with learning disabilities were questions 2, 5, 6, and 8. This relates also to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002) study key findings 1 and 5. Many principals stated that they have lost children to the public schools, because they could not get services or the LEA convinced the parent to move the child to the public school.
Transportation and scheduling issues made the reception of services difficult to attain for some children in the Catholic schools. Almost all participants said that there were no changes since the reauthorization of IDEA with the exception of two schools that now have resources from the LEA on premises. Most principals also talked about their own faculties as very devoted and willing to provide whatever they are able to provide to assist a child in their classroom with learning disabilities. Two principals noted that a teacher on their own staff would not work with a child with learning disabilities. Some principals had their own in-house support or child study teams and when hiring, looked for teachers with special education background.

Principal 1 does not have children serviced through the public school district. They have limited on-site accommodations for extended time, or if a child needs material read to them. If she cannot get services from the LEA and she cannot meet the child’s needs then she cannot take the child. This principal states that she has lost children to the public school because they have convinced the parent to move the child there in order to receive
services. Principal 1 also states that nothing has changed for her school due to the reauthorization of IDEA.

Principal 2 has a resource teacher from the LEA on site twice a week for two hours. This principal does not see any positive change from the reauthorization of IDEA. Principal 2 sees fewer services now, and the amount of support is less now than has been in the last 2 years. With a new district person in charge, this principal feels that her families are not supported and that communication has gone down.

Principal 3 has her own support staff through her faculty to offer limited services. Most of the children do not have IEPs, although this principal thinks that some of them should. There is a resource room teacher from the LEA 2 hours a day, 5 days a week. Some services cannot be accommodated.

Principal 4 has not seen any real changes from the reauthorization of IDEA. There is an Academic Intervention Services teacher from the LEA who does work in the building. The students in Grades K through 4 are bused to resource, but according to Principal 4, it has been impossible for the middle-school children to get any
services. Principal 4 works with the families of a child with an IEP to try and meet their needs in the Catholic school.

Principal 5 has seen the LEA take responsibility for servicing the children with learning disabilities in her school. They have been given a full-time resource teacher on staff in order to work with the students.

Principal 6 has limited in-house support. She states, "If we could offer in-house services that would address the needs of some of these children it would be a boon to Catholic school enrollment and education because we don't have it here and I think there are more and more children that need it. We can only take them so far." They have their own remedial teacher on the faculty.

Principal 7 is more limited than ever financially and with resources and recently lost her resource teacher on faculty. She has had to turn children away when she cannot provide services. Sometimes the LEA will make an accommodation and bus the child to their school. At times, the child is given private tutoring. Sometimes if they cannot service the child and the accommodations cannot be
worked out with the district, then the child cannot attend the school.

Principal 8 states their own policy is flexible in determining whether they can service a child. It depends on the population of the classroom and the degree of need. The faculty uses differentiated learning to help to stretch the definition of “what is the norm.” There have been changes in administration twice in recent times. This principal feels that the district is more responsive to a learning disability than to an emotional disability. She has not seen any real change since the reauthorization of IDEA except a tremendous amount of anxiety from other districts. Principal 8 also has people who come in to work with her children, but she brings them in herself. Some children do receive services in the public school.

Principal 9 states that his LEA makes scheduling and transportation issues so paramount that they have no choice but to send the child to the LEA to receive services. He has lost families, because the LEA would not accommodate the parent and the schedule. Principal 9 also has seen more difficulty for the parents to get services in the school of their choice since the reauthorization of IDEA.
Principal 10 states that her faculty is well degreed and familiar with learning disabilities. This year they set up a learning center or resource room. They do not receive resources from the LEA. Principal 10 has not seen any change due to the reauthorization of IDEA. Anything that has changed in her school is due to the faculty decision to implement.

Principal 11 states that some districts openly ask parents whose children attend his school and have learning disabilities why they have their children in his school when the services are in the public school. Some of his districts make it very difficult to transport the children. Principal 11 has no personnel on staff or funding to supply special services. Principal 11 does have two students who go out for services at the LEA.

Principal 12 does not accept children with IEPs, because she has no resources to help a child who needs special services. Principal 12 does have a private agency psychologist who comes to the school biweekly. It is a consultative position but also involves counseling. The public school appears to encourage the parent to enroll the child in the LEA.
Principal 13 looks to see if a potential child has a 504 accommodation plan to determine whether they can enroll and may dissuade them because of inability to provide services. There is a Title 1 program on premises and one of their own teachers tutors for free. They do send some children to the LEA for services.

Research question 3
What services are available for prescriptive teaching in the Catholic school?

The questions cross-matched from the interviews relating to what services were available were questions 1, 3, 4, 5, and 8. This also relates to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002) key findings 4 and 6. It was noted from the answers to this question that limited resources and limited personnel made it difficult for many principals to allow for services in their buildings, without the support of the LEA. Some principals hired their own resource staff.

Principal 1 states that children can have tests read to them or can have extra time on tests. Those are services from their own faculty. There are no pullout sessions or special teachers available. This school only has two
children who go out for speech and none for services for learning disabilities

Principal 2 does not have the capability to allow alternate testing sites. Parents are counseled during the evaluation process at the LEA to believe that they would be negligent if they did not put their child in the public school for services, according to Principal 2. There is a resource consultant from the public school district.

Principal 3 can offer resource room with a public school teacher, but if a small teacher pupil ratio is mandated, she cannot comply. Principal 3 states that the LEA is really, really slow in offering services to the Catholic school. Principal 3 has her own extensive academic intervention services program through her own faculty. Principal 3 states that they do not have the level of services that they need for some students, and that is why they have to say no to their enrolling or they have to counsel them out.

Principal 4 tells parents upon enrolling that they will try to meet the needs of an IEP, but if it is not working, they will deal with it at that point. They can offer extended time and have lowered the passing grade in
order to allow a child to graduate. They have a resource room on their own, and the LEA staffs the AIS program.

Principal 5 states that modifications are made to testing; testing is read to some children and they have the availability to read back. One child’s recommendations from the LEA are for the child to leave the Catholic school and enter the public school in a special program. Principal 5 has resources on staff in the form of textbooks, a psychologist from the LEA, a resource teacher from the LEA, as well as her own resource person. There is a blind child in the school who receives a teacher and specialized equipment from the LEA.

Principal 6 has a learning center on premises with a remedial teacher. These are paid for through her own budget. The teacher is well versed in Wilson, Orton Gillingham who can assist children with reading difficulties, although she is not a special educator. Principal 6 was told by the LEA that there are too many children in special education, even from the public school.

Principal 7 states that some children do go out for resource to the LEA. Small class sizes allow teachers to utilize groups and to work more closely with the children.
Sometimes children are allowed to use laptops or computers to scribe. Principal 7 has a few tutors that she recommends to parents outside of school.

Principal 8 states that some children with profound learning disabilities go to the public school to receive remedial services. This principal has a group of retired professionals who come in and work with their children, but they are not from the district.

Principal 9 states that there is a Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT) on staff from the LEA who will work with other children in the PreK, even though they are not assigned to that person. Principal 9 states that his faculty is like a family, and they go out of their way to work with the children. No other services are offered in the Catholic school.

Principal 10 states that they can offer extended time and modifications to tests or preferential seating. They cannot offer separate placement. This year Principal 10 set up a learning center and has two teachers who staff it. This is from her budget. Principal 10 acknowledges that this is minimal and this is only for Grades 5 through 8. There are limited resources in the lower grades. Principal
10 has rearranged the school schedule to accommodate one or two children who have gone out to the LEA for services.

Principal 11 states that he has limited manpower and resources, and accommodations such as having tests read to the child cannot be met. Extended time, preferential seating, and clarification of directions can be accommodated by his faculty. No support staff enters the Catholic school building from the LEA to assist in the teaching of a child with a learning disability at that school.

Principal 12 does not have services for prescriptive teaching available in her school. There is some remedial support available from the faculty. Principal 12 states "all these things I keep losing kids to the public school."

Principal 13 utilizes her Title 1 program and staff. Some of her own faculty hinder support to a child with a learning disability.

Research question 4
Where are prescriptive services given to children with learning disabilities in the Catholic elementary schools in New York?
The questions cross-matched from the interviews relating to where services were given include 7, 11, and 12. This relates to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002) key findings 1 and 6. With the exception of one school, all other principals noted that children had to leave their building to receive services from at least one, if not all, of the districts that service their schools. Some schools only had speech available on premises, and some only had resources from a district available on premises. There was no standard for the administration of services.

Principal 1 states that the only children who go out for services to the LEA are a few children for speech. There are no services given on premises.

Principal 2 states that the children with learning disabilities receive some services in her school and some at their local public school.

Principal 3 states that if a child just needs resource room, they can get it in their school. Speech, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy are given at the LEA.

Principal 4 states that speech is given in their building, resource is given to the child in their own
district, middle-school children are not accommodated, and some people have private tutoring in their own home.

Principal 5 states that the children receive services in the two resource rooms in her school, or in their classrooms. There is also a speech teacher, an occupational therapy teacher and a teacher for a visually impaired child who all come in to the Catholic school and service the children there.

Principal 6 states that children who need speech services go out to the LEA. Children with services for learning disabilities are also sent out to the LEA. Informal in-house services are offered through the school’s learning center by the school staff.

Principal 7 states that some of the children receive services from her own staff and some from a private tutor. Some go to the LEA.

Principal 8 states that some children receive services at the Catholic school through their own staff. Others receive services from the LEA.

Principal 9 has a SEIT on site for one child, but all other services are given at the local public school, or in
the case of one outside district, they sent the child to the LEA rather than transport to the outside district.

Principal 10 states that of the 10 districts that service the school, two provide speech in the LEA, another provides a psychologist who works with one child in the building, two children go out to another district, and the school provides assistance through their own faculty.

Principal 11 states that the few children who do receive services receive them in the local district. The LEA has been invited repeatedly to offer services in the Catholic school but has refused.

Principal 12 states that if the services are something that her faculty can handle, then she will give them in the Catholic school. There are no special educators on premises. The LEA has not offered services on their premises.

Principal 13 states that the LEA transports the children to their local public school building for services.

Summary

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of the reauthorization of IDEA (2004) on Catholic
school children with learning disabilities in New York. Chapter 4 reported the interview findings of 13 Catholic elementary school principals from the upper counties of the Archdiocese of New York as they related to the four research questions and to the key findings of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002) study on children with special needs. The overwhelming response was found to be that there was no significant change since the reauthorization of the IDEA in the way that the children with learning disabilities in Catholic elementary schools are diagnosed, receive services for their learning disability, and where they received those services. The findings of the original USCCB study appear to remain the same. Those findings were that Catholic schools serve special needs children in all disability areas. The Child Find process is inconsistent and difficult to access for parents of children in Catholic schools suspected of having a disability. Catholic school children are less likely to be diagnosed with a disability by a public school evaluator than through a private evaluation. Catholic school students diagnosed as having a disability are not receiving
sufficient services through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004).

In the absence of IDEA services, Catholic school teachers, counselors and administrators utilize innovative strategies for accommodating students with disabilities (USCCB, 2002, p.3).

In one or two situations, principals reported that the availability of evaluations, services to the children with learning disabilities, and services given on Catholic school premises all had improved. The majority of the principals saw no change and in one case, the principal reported that the relationship between the school and the LEA had diminished. Two principals appeared to have no relationship with their LEA. They were not offered consultation; there was no testing of students and no services given to students with learning disabilities. It is interesting to note that those schools further from a major metropolitan area appeared to have more offered to them from their LEA. Further study is needed to determine whether or not this is significant. Chapter 5 will include a summary of the responses, an analysis of those responses, and recommendations for further research.
Figure 1 is a chart which relates to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002) findings 1 through 6 and whether that information has changed since the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 as seen through responses to the four research questions from this study. The research questions relate to the interview questions as asked of the 13 principals interviewed.

Figure 1. Principals' Responses to Research Questions

Principals' Responses to Research Questions

Research questions and how they relate to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops 2002 study.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of the reauthorization of IDEA (2002) on Catholic school children with learning disabilities in New York. This study also offered an analysis of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops document entitled Catholic School Children with Disabilities as well as the document, the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (2004).

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter 1 presented the problem of the impact of the reauthorization of the law on children with learning disabilities in the Catholic elementary schools in New York. According to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002) document, one of the findings was that Catholic school children with a suspected disability are less likely to be diagnosed by a public school evaluator than by a private evaluator. The study also found that Catholic school students with disabilities are not receiving sufficient services through IDEA and that in the
absence of those services, the Catholic school faculty and staff themselves are innovative in accommodating those children (USCCB, 2002).

Responding to diversity is nothing new for us; it is intrinsic to Catholicism. Ultimately, a Catholic response to (cultural) diversity is based on the inherent dignity of the human person, in all of the diverse manifestations of that humanity (Martin & Litton, 2004, p. 29).

Chapter 2 reviewed the literature as it pertained to the history of Catholic education in the United States, the history of special education in Catholic schools, the history of Catholic education in New York and an analysis of the documents from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002) and the reauthorization of IDEA (2004). The six key findings of the USCCB Study on Children with Special Needs are as follows:

1. Finding 1: Catholic schools serve special needs children in all disability areas.

2. Finding 2: The Child Find process is inconsistent and difficult to access for parents of children in Catholic schools suspected of having a disability.
3. Finding 3: Catholic school children are less likely to be diagnosed with a disability by a public school evaluator than through a private evaluator.

4. Finding 4: Catholic school children with disabilities appear to be enrolled in roughly the same proportion by ethnicity as their non-disabled peers.

5. Finding 5: Catholic school students diagnosed as having a disability are not receiving services through IDEA sufficient to adequately address their disability.

6. Finding 6: Catholic school teachers, counselors, and administrators utilize innovative strategies for accommodating students with disabilities, even in the absence of IDEA services (USCCB, 2002).

Catholic school administrators must reflect on their own policies regarding students with learning disabilities in their schools. Catholic educators are asked to mirror the just and caring attitude of Jesus Christ. Knowledge of the other transforms us and compels us to work for equitable educational structures that will benefit all learners. They must also continually be aware of and informed about the rights of students with learning
disabilities in their schools and be knowledgeable about school law as it pertains to learning disabilities (Depp-Blackett, 1997). A study of special education in Catholic schools was conducted in 1983 in Tennessee (Humphrey, 1983). It was found that although the percentage of students suspected to have handicapping conditions in the diocesan parochial schools was 5.3% of the total population, the local education agencies only provided screening and verification for 1% of these students (Humphrey, 1983). Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of New York alone, in the last 4 years, have lost more than 20,000 children overall. Across the nation, the number is 60,000. Many have gone to the local public schools, to home schooling, or to other private schools. Some of these children have been diagnosed as learning disabled and have left because of many variables, including the lack of services available to them in the Catholic schools (CAFE, 2004).

Students with special needs in some ways mirror the plight of other oppressed groups. Church documents such as To Teach as Jesus Did (USCCB, 1972) or Welcome and Justice for Persons with Disabilities (USCCB, 1998) provide a
mandate for Catholic educators to treat students with special needs in a manner that is just, caring, and ethical (Martin & Litton, 2004, p.77)

Chapter 3 was a description of the methodology used in this study including the interview questions and demographics as they relate to the participants. The research methodology or design of this study incorporated qualitative data collected through personal interviews from a sample of 13 Catholic school principals from five outer counties of the Archdiocese of New York.

Chapter 4 was a summary and analysis of the results of the interviews conducted with 13 principals in five of the upper counties of the Archdiocese of New York. The overwhelming response was found to be that since the reauthorization of IDEA (2004), there was no significant change in the way that the children with learning disabilities in Catholic elementary schools are diagnosed, receive services for their learning disability, and where they received those services. The findings of the original USCCB study appear to remain the same. Catholic schools serve special needs children in all disability areas. As we see from the responses of the interviews, most of the
principals of the Catholic schools used their own resources in order to service children with learning disabilities. The Child Find process is inconsistent and difficult to access for parents of children in Catholic schools suspected of having a disability. Some of the principals reported that the Child Find process is not available to them in their current positions. Catholic school children are less likely to be diagnosed with a disability by a public school evaluator than through a private evaluator. Although most principals reported that they were never denied an evaluation, some reported that the evaluation did not produce a diagnosis, and no services were given. Catholic school children with disabilities appear to be enrolled in roughly the same proportion by ethnicity as their non-disabled peers. Mission statements of each school showed inclusive language, and ethnicity was not a variable in the research. Catholic school students diagnosed as having a disability are not receiving services through IDEA sufficient to adequately address their disability. As seen from the results of the interviews, principals reported that Catholic schoolteachers, counselors, and administrators utilize innovative strategies for
accommodating students with disabilities, even in the absence of IDEA services. It was evident from the answers to the interview questions that principals were resourceful in implementing services in their buildings.

Chapter 5 is the interpretation of data, summary, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

The Council of American Private Education (CAPE, 2004) is a coalition of national and state organizations that serves both elementary level and secondary levels private schools. According to CAPE (2004), although IDEA has provided for the assistance of children with learning disabilities in Catholic schools, the same scope and quality of services has never been provided as has been given to the children in public schools. Only a small portion of the funding allocations and special education services available to their public school counterparts are available to the children with learning disabilities in Catholic schools.

The reauthorization of IDEA (2004) was written to address some of these issues. Key points of the reauthorization of IDEA include new statutory language,
consultation, written affirmation, Child Find, equitable services, data collection, and compliance.

Key point # 5 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA, 2004) states the children with disabilities placed by their parents in private schools should have the following Equitable Services:

1. Proportionate share of federal funds to be expended for services (formula may be clarified in regulations)
2. On-site services allowed, including at religious schools to the extent consistent with law
3. Can include direct services/Inclusion of services as necessary
4. Provided directly by LEA employees or through contracts/Provision of services
5. Must be secular, neutral, non-ideological (including materials and equipment)/Compliance

There were four research questions, six USCCB (2002) findings, and 12 interview questions that were related and analyzed to determine the impact of the reauthorization of the IDEA on Catholic elementary school students with learning disabilities in New York.
Research Question 1:
To what extent are children diagnosed with disabilities in Catholic elementary schools in New York in 2006?

This related to two of the key findings of the USCCB document entitled Catholic School Students with a Disability. They were: The Child Find process is inconsistent and difficult to access for parents of children in Catholic schools suspected of having a disability and Catholic school children are less likely to be diagnosed with a disability by a public school evaluator than through a private evaluator.

There were five interview questions relating to this research question. They were:

1. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic school?

2. What are your procedures for "counseling out" students with learning disabilities who are not achieving, academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of your school?

3. How available is the Child Find process to you?
4. How has Consultation been addressed by the Local Educational Agency? How often has consultation occurred?

5. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated?

For this research question, 7 of the 13 principals were invited by their local LEAs to submit names of their students for Child Find. Five of the 13 principals were offered consultation. Principals made statements such as, "The major obstacle to having students with disabilities in our classrooms is the attitude of the district chairperson for the CSE because the parents are counseled to believe that they would be negligent if they didn't put their child in the public school." Other statements included, "The local school districts have not taken one step beyond compliant. They have openly asked parents why they are sending their child to Catholic school." Most principals responded that they were never denied an evaluation. Many principals request that the family makes the contact with the LEA in order to ensure that the evaluation takes place. One principal reported that twice evaluations to children with suspected learning disabilities were denied, one
principal's students have been offered only cursory
evaluations in some instances, and one principal stated
that the LEA talked the family of a child with a suspected
learning disability out of an evaluation. Many principals
stated that although they were never denied an evaluation,
receiving services from the LEA was difficult to achieve.

Research question 2

To what extent are children in Catholic schools who are
diagnosed with a learning disability receiving services for
that disability?

This relates to the USCCB (2002) key findings 1 and 5.
They are Catholic schools serve special needs children in
all disability areas, and Catholic school students
diagnosed as having a disability are not receiving services
through IDEA sufficient to adequately address their
disability. The interview questions that related to
answering that research question are as follows:

1. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e. are testing
or interviews needed)? What modifications (such as
alternative tests) are allowed for any of these
procedures?
2. What resources are available to you from your Local Educational Agency in order to assist children with learning disabilities in your school?

3. How has the reauthorization of the IDEA impacted special education, specifically learning disabilities in your school? What has changed?

Many principals stated that their schools have lost children to the public schools because they could not obtain services, or the LEA convinced the parent to move the child to the public school. Transportation and scheduling issues made the reception of services difficult to attain for some children in the Catholic schools. Almost all participants said that there were no changes in the way that children are diagnosed and receive services for suspected learning disabilities, since the reauthorization of IDEA with the exception of two schools that now have resources from the LEA on premises. Most principals also talked about their own faculties as very devoted and willing to provide whatever they are able to provide with their limited resources to assist a child in their classroom with learning disabilities. Two principals noted that one of their own faculty members would not work with a
child with learning disabilities in their school. Some principals had their own in-house support, hired on their own budget, or they had child study teams and when hiring, looked for teachers with special education background.

Research question 3
What services are available for prescriptive teaching in the Catholic schools?

This relates to the USCCB key findings 4 and 6. They are Catholic school children with disabilities appear to be enrolled in roughly the same proportion by ethnicity as their non-disabled peers and Catholic school teachers, counselors, and administrators utilize innovative strategies for accommodating students with disabilities, even in the absence of IDEA services. The interview questions that answered this research question are as follows:

1. How would you describe your school’s educational mission?
2. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic school?
3. What are your procedures for “counseling out” students with learning disabilities who are not achieving, academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of your school?

4. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms? How has the reauthorization of the IDEA impacted special education, specifically learning disabilities, in your school? What has changed?

It was noted from the answers to this question that limited resources and limited personnel made it difficult for many principals to allow for services in their buildings without the support of the LEA. Some principals hired their own resource staff. At least four principals formed Child Study Teams with their faculty. Principals spoke of the dedication of their teachers, even when there were no services given to a child with a learning disability. Most principals considered their faculty a strength to including a child with special needs in their school. Principals spoke of having parents cry in their offices when they had to make the decision to take their
child out of the Catholic school and register him/her in
the public school because they could not receive services
or because services were difficult to obtain. Many
principals spoke of losing a child to the public school,
because the child had a learning disability and they could
not get an evaluation, or they could not receive services,
or services were very difficult to schedule. In two cases,
principals now receive a resource teacher from the LEA on
the premises for their children with learning disabilities,
but most principals allowed for their own staff to provide
for the inclusion of a child with learning disabilities in
their school.

Research question 4
Where are prescriptive services given to children with
learning disabilities in the Catholic elementary schools in
New York?

This relates to the USCCB (2002) key findings 1 and 6.
They are, Catholic schools serve special needs children in
all disability areas and Catholic schoolteachers,
counselors, and administrators utilize innovative
strategies for accommodating students with disabilities,
even in the absence of IDEA services. The interview questions relating to these are:

1. What do you view as major obstacles to including students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms in your school?

2. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated? If they are denied and evaluation by the Local Educational Agency, what do they do?

3. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services?

With the exception of one school, all other principals noted that children had to leave their building to receive services from at least one, if not all, of the districts that service their children. Some children who are in Kindergarten through Grade eight are required to take a bus to the local public school, traveling in some cases an hour a day. Some of them have to leave their home school at some point in the morning, travel by themselves to another location, and re-enter their class later in the day. It is tremendously disruptive to the child, according to most
principals. Some schools only had speech available on premises, and some only had a resource teacher from a district available on premises. Two schools were offered teachers on site this year. There was no standard for the administration of services.

One interesting phenomenon noted by the researcher was that the schools that were located farthest from the metropolitan area were offered the most services by their LEA. This should be investigated further in future research.

Principals talked about their staff as being very dedicated in offering assistance to children with suspected learning disabilities who were not diagnosed or serviced by the LEA. Some principals dedicated classroom space for resource on site, whether for a teacher from the local public school, or when a teacher from the Catholic school conducted the resource. Some principals related the following statements in response to this research question: "They receive them (services) in the local school district. Although they've been invited here repeatedly", "kids go out to get the services. So I have made an agreement with parents- and this is a nightmare- that if you can get the
kids scheduled from 8 to 9, I will fix the schedule. It’s okay for what I call the grammar school but for the junior high it becomes a nightmare. Readjust my schedule so the child comes in and is not missing a major class. But we’ve done it”; "If we could offer in house services that would address the needs of some of these children it would be a real boon to Catholic school enrollment and education because we don’t have it here and I think there are more and more children that need it. We can only take them so far.”

Most principals expressed frustration at the lack of services provided to their students from the LEA, the difficulty in scheduling and transportation, and the inability to provide for students with learning disabilities in their schools. Most principals related that they had lost enrollment because of this inability to provide services at the Catholic school.

As we see from this study, in general, principals reported no significant change in the evaluation of and services to children with learning disabilities in Catholic elementary schools in New York since the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act of 2004.
Recommendations

Policy Recommendations

Those who are in position of authority in the Catholic schools systems across the country must work to ensure that States are fulfilling their responsibilities to the students with suspected learning disabilities in the Catholic elementary schools. Advocating for the rights of the children with suspected learning disabilities in the Catholic elementary schools must continue. Catholic school superintendents who are in the position to contact State legislators must use their influence to ensure that legislators realize and work toward equity for the children in the Catholic elementary schools with suspected learning disabilities so that they are diagnosed and receive services for their needs in a timely manner and without undue disruption to the school day.

Future Research

It is recommended that research continue in other parts of the United States to determine whether there has been a change in the diagnosis of and services to students with learning disabilities in Catholic elementary schools since the reauthorization of IDEA (2004).
A study is recommended to determine whether the information contained in this dissertation has impacted the New York State Education Department in influencing budgetary issues related to special services to non-public schools.

A study is recommended to determine whether schools in New York City and suburbs surrounding New York City have been affected differently through the reauthorization of IDEA than the schools in the outer suburbs and in rural areas.

A study is recommended to determine to what extent economically disadvantaged districts identify and service students with learning disabilities in Catholic elementary schools.

A study is recommended to determine whether other non-public schools in New York State and in other parts of the country have been affected in the same way as the Catholic elementary schools in upper counties of New York since the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (2004).

It is recommended that research be conducted relating to exit surveys of students in Catholic elementary schools.
for the purposes of quantifying the number of students with learning disabilities who have left the Archdiocesan schools because of an inability to be diagnosed and serviced through the LEA.

Practice Research

A study is recommended in which the Archdiocese of New York investigate the possibility of hiring teams of resource personnel, possibly one team for each county, in order to assist the Catholic elementary schools in providing diagnosis of and services to students with learning disabilities.

A study is recommended to broaden the scope of this dissertation to study physical and emotional disabilities in order to determine the extent to which those students are currently enrolled in Catholic elementary schools.

It is recommended that research specifically relating to middle-school students with learning disabilities in Catholic schools be conducted.
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Appendix A

Superintendent's Letter
July 31, 2006

Dr. Catherine Hickey
Superintendent of Schools
Archdiocese of New York
1011 First Avenue
New York, New York 10022

Dear Dr. Hickey,

I am currently a doctoral student at Seton Hall University in the Education Department, Leadership, Management and Policy program. I am writing my dissertation as partial fulfillment of the Executive Ed.D degree. I am asking for your permission to contact principals in the schools in Westchester, Putnam, Orange, Dutchess, Rockland, Sullivan and Ulster counties. I will randomly select 20 principals out of the approximately eighty schools that service those counties.

The purpose of my study is to investigate the identification, evaluation and services provided to students with learning disabilities in Catholic schools. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops conducted a study in 2002. It was hoped that the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act would be influenced by their findings. My study will look at current information from schools to see whether children are identified, evaluated for and serviced for learning disabilities in those schools.

Principals will be contacted by letter and asked if they would participate in this study by telephonic interview. A series of twelve questions will be asked. All telephone conversations will be held in complete confidence and principals who agree to be interviewed will be given a copy of the questions beforehand. None of the procedures are experimental. Questions used will be similar in nature to the questions from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops study of 2002 entitled Catholic School Children with Disabilities. The telephone interview will last approximately 45 minutes. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed for data analysis. Participation in the study is voluntary. If a principal decides not to participate, that fact will not be divulged.

Coding responses to interview questions will preserve anonymity. No identifying data on principals or their schools will be published. The researcher and dissertation committee are the only ones who will have access to the data. Results are for research purposes only. All subjects' data will be held in confidence and placed in a locked safe by the researcher.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Frangella
Principal
Appendix B

Principals' Letter and Reply form
St. Patrick’s School
State Road Box 290
Bedford, New York 10506

September 16, 2006

Dear Principal:

I am a doctoral student in the Department of Education Leadership, Management and Policy at Seton Hall University. I am asking for your participation in research that examines the extent to which children with learning disabilities in Catholic schools are identified, assessed, diagnosed and serviced by the local public schools. Dr. Catherine Hickey has given me her permission to contact you.

In 2002, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops wrote a document entitled Catholic School Children with Disabilities. The study from which the document emerged was a study of 32 dioceses in 21 states with over one million students enrolled. Since that study was completed, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act has been reauthorized and changes have been made to the law. This study will investigate whether the changes to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act have had an impact on Catholic school children with learning disabilities in light of the Bishops’ document.

This study will be comprised of a series of twelve interview questions relating to the children with learning disabilities in your school. Twenty principals from the outer counties of the Archdiocese will be randomly selected to participate in a one on one interview. Interview questions will be related to the identification of, assessment of and services provided to children with learning disabilities in Catholic schools.

Interviews will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time in your office. The interview should take approximately 45 minutes and will be audio taped with your permission. Audiotaping ensures accurate data collection. Notes and tape will be coded by number for confidentiality and no personal identifying information will be revealed.

Participation in this study is voluntary, and if you decide not to participate, that fact will not be divulged.
Audiotapes and transcribed data will be kept in a locked safe at the researcher’s office for a period of three years. Results of this study are for research purposes. The researcher and the dissertation committee will be the only ones to have access to this data.

The data will be analyzed using a qualitative method of looking for patterns and themes. Data will be transcribed and analyzed by the researcher. There are no risks or personal benefits to the volunteers associated with this research. The twelve interview questions are enclosed for your review. If you decide to participate, please reply with the enclosed form. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Frangella
Principal
Reply Form

An investigation of the influence of the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act on Catholic school children with learning disabilities in New York.

Name: ______________________________________

District: _________________________________

County: _________________________________

Telephone number: _________________________

Best time of day to be contacted: ___________

Enclosed please find a self-addressed stamped envelope for your response.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Elizabeth Frangella
Appendix C

Informed Consent Letter
Informed Consent

Researcher’s Affiliation

Elizabeth Frangella is completing a doctoral dissertation in Education Administration Leadership, Management and Policy at Seton Hall University, College of Education and Human Services.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act on Catholic School Children with Learning Disabilities in New York.

Procedures

Principals will be asked to participate in a one on one interview in their school office. Principals will be contacted by mail requesting their participation. Interviews will be audio taped for accuracy of data collection and the researcher will take notes. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes and no identifying information will be made public. Notes, audiotapes and personal information will be coded by number to ensure confidentiality.
Instrumentation

The interview instrument is a compilation of eight open-ended questions relating to the identification of, assessment of and services provided to Elementary Catholic school students with disabilities. An example of a question is: What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with special needs in general education classrooms?

Voluntary Nature

Participation in this study is voluntary and permission may be withdrawn at any time. Principals are under no requirement to participate and if they discontinue, that information will not be divulged. There is no penalty for discontinuing.

Anonymity

Since this is a face-to-face interview, there is no anonymity. However, there is a coding system in place to ensure that confidentiality is sustained. Information gathered by note taking and by audio tapes will be coded and will be kept in a safe in the researcher's office for a period of three years.
Confidentiality
All information will be held in the strictest confidence and held in a secured, locked safe in the researcher’s office. No personal identifying data will be revealed at any time.

Confidentiality of Research Records
Only the researcher and the dissertation committee will have access to the research data.

Risks
There are no risks associated with this research.

Benefits
There are no personal benefits to the volunteers associated with this research. The results of this study may help educational leaders in Catholic schools influence policy makers in the areas of identification of, assessment of and services given to Catholic school children with learning disabilities.

Compensation
No compensation is offered for participation in this research.

Alternative Procedures
Alternative procedures do not apply to this research.
Contact information

The following individuals may be contacted for answers to pertinent questions about this research:

Elizabeth Frangella, the researcher and student at Seton Hall University may be contacted for answers to pertinent questions about this research. Contact information is as follows:

Elizabeth Frangella
St. Patrick’s School
State Road Box 290
Bedford, NY 10506
(914) 234-7814

Dr. Anthony Colella, Ph.D, Researcher’s Mentor
Seton Hall University
Department of Education, Administration and Supervision
466 South Orange Avenue
South Orange, New Jersey 07079
(973) 761-9389

Dr. Mary Rusicka, Ph.D, Director, Institutional Review Board
Seton Hall University
Department of Education, Administration and Supervision
400 South Orange Avenue
South Orange, New Jersey 07079
973-313-6314

Audio Tapes

Signing this Informed Consent grants the researcher permission for audiotaping. The subject has the right to review the audiotape of their interview and also has the right to request that the audiotape be destroyed. The audiotapes will be held in a locked safe in the researcher’s office for a period of three years.

Copy of Informed Consent Form

A copy of the signed and dated form will be given to the subject.

__________________________________________  ________________________
Subject or Authorized Representative       Date
Appendix D

Interview Questions and Protocol
Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. I am a doctoral student at Seton Hall University and will be receiving my degree in Education Leadership, Management and Policy. This interview will add to the knowledge base of information that I am collecting about Catholic elementary school students with learning disabilities. You have been selected to participate based on your knowledge of your own school and the students who attend. This interview should last no longer than 45 minutes and all information will be held in strict confidence. I would like to audio tape our conversation today in order to ensure the accuracy of my notes. As part of the protocol, I have a release form for you to sign. Please be assured that all information is held in the strictest confidence and that your participation is voluntary. You may stop at any time if you feel uncomfortable. Thank you for agreeing to participate. There are twelve questions. I would like to begin with your school’s mission statement.

1. How would you describe your school’s educational mission?
2. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e. are testing or interviews needed)? What modifications (such as alternative tests) are allowed for any of these procedures?

3. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic School?

4. What are your procedures for "counseling out" students with learning disabilities who are not achieving, academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of your school?

5. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms?

6. What resources are available to you from your Local Educational Agency in order to assist children with learning disabilities in your school?

7. What do you view as major obstacles to including students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms in your school?
8. The recent reauthorization of IDEA should have brought (or was intended to bring) some significant changes. What has changed, if anything, in your school?

9. How available is the Child Find process to you in your current position as school administrator?

10. How has consultation been addressed by the Local Educational Agency? How often has consultation occurred?

11. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated? If they are denied an evaluation by the Local Educational Agency, what do they do?

12. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services?
Appendix E

Research Questions
**Research Questions**

1. To what extent are children diagnosed with disabilities in Catholic elementary schools in New York in 2006?

2. To what extent are children in Catholic schools who are diagnosed with a learning disability receiving services for that disability?

3. What services are available for prescriptive teaching in the Catholic schools?

4. Where are prescriptive services given to children with learning disabilities in the Catholic elementary schools in New York?

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Appendix F

Transcripts of Interviews
Principal 1 Interview Questions

1. How would you describe your school’s educational mission?

That’s a really tough question. Our educational mission is the same as all Catholic schools—to teach the children and not to teach them just educationally but also spiritually and psychologically and physically and to take care of them. So, I would say that. To the best of our ability we try to accommodate as many children as we can.

2. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e. are testing or interviews needed)? What modifications such as alternative tests) are allowed for any of these procedures?

We don’t test, we just interview. We don’t do testing we look at the students’ report card from the school they’re coming from because we don’t want any child to come here and not do well. We look that over. We want to make sure that if they have an IEP that we can accommodate them. We only do interviews. We don’t do testing.

3. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a
learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic school?

We go over the IEP. We, as a small school, have very few accommodations so we make sure that the Public school can accommodate them if they have special needs. And if they can’t, then we usually meet with the parents, go over the IEP and make sure that we can accommodate them. If it’s simply having the test read to them or needing extra time we can always accommodate that kind of a child. But if they need a pull out session— that we really can’t. We really don’t have the accommodations here for that because we’re a small school. We don’t even have a room to put them in if we had to do that.

4. What are your procedures for "counseling out" students with learning disabilities who are not achieving, academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of your school?

We usually meet with the parents. We’ve had a few situations where we’ve had to sit down with the parents and discuss, you know, what we can and cannot do for the child. There have been children who’ve had
to go to other programs because we couldn’t accommodate their special needs. Academically, it’s a little easier to counsel them because we can suggest tutoring, afterschool programs or have them tested through the public school and see if they can accommodate them that way. Behavioral is a little different. It depends on what the behavior is and how severe it is. Some children have had to go to other programs because we haven’t had the counseling available here to help them.

5. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms?

Since our school is small and we have small class sizes it’s easier for the teachers to accommodate children who need extended time or need the material read to them, because we can accommodate those conditions. We do have a nurse’s office where the teacher can go or we can have an aide go and read the test to children who need them read to them. Obviously extra time is easy. We have small class sizes so that’s an easy accommodation. Anything more
significant we really can’t. Anything that requires a pullout session or special teachers we really can’t accommodate that unless the public school accommodates that. We do have a couple of children who are pulled out for speech from the public school. So that works out well. Otherwise, we really can’t accommodate them.

6. What resources are available to you from your Local Educational Agency in order to assist children with learning disabilities in your school?

As I said, we do have a couple of children who are pulled out for speech who go to the public school and receive accommodations. We really don’t have any other children who are pulled out for any academic programs. Now, if they did, the public school would accommodate them. What usually happens is if children have special needs the public school tries to convince them to go to the public school to get the accommodations because it’s easier to get them that way. And that has happened. We have lost a few children to the public school because they’ve convinced them that that’s the place to be. It’s easier to receive the programs there. Other than speech we really don’t have any
children who are pulled out for special needs. The public school is not particularly accommodating.

7. What do you view as major obstacles to including students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms in your school?

I think one of the biggest obstacles is the fact that we have a very small school and very limited accommodations. Because we have a small school, we don’t have extra funding to hire somebody else to do things like counseling or to do pull out sessions in reading or ELA. So those are some of our problems. There really— even if we did it— even if we had the money— there’d be no place to put them to do it as far as rooms.

8. The recent reauthorization of IDEA should have brought (or was intended to bring) some significant changes. What has changed, if anything, in your school?

Nothing. Nothing.

9. How available is the Child Find process to you in your current position as school administrator?
Yes, we really don’t have anybody other than the two children in the lower grades who have speech. They did contact this year.

10. How has consultation been addressed by the Local Educational Agency? How often has consultation occurred?

I meet with them about two or three times a year. This started a year or two ago. I guess it’s been going on for two or three years.

11. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated? If they are denied an evaluation by the Local Educational Agency, what do they do?

We’ve never had anyone denied. They’re evaluated through the public school system. They have never denied us an evaluation so that works out for us.

12. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services?

The ones with speech are picked up by the bus and brought to the public school.
Principal 2 Interview

1. How would you describe your school’s educational mission?

   The mission of our School is to provide a sound educational foundation based on the values of Christian living and learning in the 21st Century. We strive to educate children spiritually, intellectually, physically, and emotionally.

2. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e., testing or interviews needed)? What modifications such as alternative tests are allowed for any of these procedures?

   Our enrollment procedures for students applying for grades other than Kindergarten include a review of records from previous school including records from all previous grades, and standardized and state assessments as well as interview of child and parents. In some cases, a teacher may be called upon to give an evaluation to determine the child’s current status relative to the achievements and expectations at our school. This generally occurs more in the upper grades in the subject areas of Math and Reading. Beyond grade 1 there is an interview and a placement test in both
reading and in math. Based on the results of those, we make a determination whether or not we will accept the child. We have never had a reason for alternative testing.

3. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic school?

To determine whether or not our school is able to meet the needs of a child with a learning disability we look at the IEP and consult with our regular classroom teacher and the resource consultant from the public school district. The modifications and requirements of the IEP are viewed in light of the resources available in our building. To determine what modifications or special services are required. We don't have space for a time out room or alternative testing site, so we cannot service a child with that requirement.

4. What are your procedures for "counseling out" students with learning disabilities who are not achieving, academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of your school?
Basically, we keep a paper trail. The teachers document the child's conduct. We write progress reports, at any time, even if it is not progress report time. Anytime we need to formally notify parents we send a report. We call conferences for conduct and the teachers keep a journal. We make use of the special ed teachers to do informal observations etc. It is only after exhaustive attempts at meeting the child's needs. Parent conferences are documented and a paper trail that is supportive of the school's attempts at meeting the child's needs is brought into evidence of the school's decision.

5. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms?

The major strength that does facilitate the inclusion of learning disabled children in our classrooms is that we are small, we have a close knit faculty and have a family atmosphere. Being small and family oriented, the teachers communicate with each other. The continuity of communication and effort by our dedicated faculty mean no child slips through the
cracks. Within our faculty room, teachers make use of the expertise of the 5th grade teacher. Our fifth grade teacher has a Masters in Special education so we have that resource right here.

6. What resources are available to you from your Local Educational Agency in order to assist children with learning disabilities in your school?

Our local school district provides their personnel for speech help and we also have a teacher/resource teacher in our building twice a week for the last hour of the day and for one hour after school to provide support to our faculty and to work with children who have IEPs and to talk to teachers. She comes after school is over to work with kids. She comes in at 1:30 to 2:30 and then 2:30 to 3:30 she works with students on tests. The district also provides a Speech specialist in our building two mornings a week to work with students who are classified as having a speech/language disability. Occupational therapy and other services are provided to our children off-site.
7. What do you view as major obstacles to including students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms in your school?

Parent attitude. The major obstacle to having students with disabilities in our classrooms is the attitude of the district chairperson for the CSE. Currently the parents are counseled during the evaluation process to believe that they would be negligent if they didn’t put their child in the public school for services. The special ed people in the district try to convince parents that they can be better serviced if they go to their location. Other times there isn’t “enough of a discrepancy” in the testing even though the child isn’t functioning in the classroom. Parents want the best for their children. They want them to succeed in Parochial school.

8. The recent reauthorization of IDEA should have brought (or was intended to bring) some significant changes. What has changed, if anything, in your school?

The recent reauthorization of IDEA has brought no positive change. The district would prefer to pretend that we don’t exist. We now have fewer services. We
never get a clear-cut answer for anything. We are always told that it is not enough of a discrepancy and that the student can’t be classified. They have cut back on the amount of time special ed is in the building in the last two years. There is a new person in our district in special ed and they don’t support our families.

9. How available is the Child Find process to you in your current position as school administrator?
   Up until last year it was very available. We never received a letter. I would say we’ve gone down hill. Paper work is available for us to recommend that a child be evaluated.

10. How has consultation been addressed by the Local Educational Agency? How often has consultation occurred?
    It used to be three to four times a year, and so far this year-- and this is January-- no consultation at all. For the past several years we had 2 or 3 meetings with district administration. This year there has been no outreach from the district whatsoever.

11. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated? If they are denied
an evaluation by the Local Educational Agency, what do they do?

We submit the paperwork with modifications and what we see. A specialist comes in and does and informal observation. They notify the parent and then they do a psychological and an ed eval. The children are evaluated through their home district but the school district does the evals here in my building. We use the small band room for that purpose. Twice and evaluation was denied and both times the families went to a private evaluator.

12. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services?

They receive some services here and some at their local public school. We have a kindergarten child who spends mornings here and is sent to the local public school. He is bused out in the afternoon. We also have one who gets Occupational Therapy in the local public school in the afternoon. If they are denied an evaluation by the district, parents may go privately, especially if they can get some insurance coverage if
they suspect a medical condition as a contributing factor.

Principal 3 Interview

1. How would you describe your school’s educational mission?

I am going to give you this in hard copy so you don’t have to write it down. There are two key paragraphs that are critical in light of what you are doing. The first paragraph I’ll just read it to you and I’ll give this to you because this is our handbook says:

We at [school name omitted] believe that children learn best in a secure, well-managed, yet relaxed and pleasant environment. We affirm that each child, created in the image and likeness of God, is blessed with unique gifts, talents, and needs. Our task, then, is to draw out these gifts and attend to these needs in order to afford each child the opportunity to develop to his or her fullest potential. And then that leads into our mission statement that says our calling as a Catholic school is to offer our students an environment in which they can learn and can live their faith as part of a secure, loving community so that they will grow to become educated, caring, moral
adults, well-equipped to carry on the mission and message of Jesus Christ and His Church. So I’m going to give that to you.

2. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e. are testing or interviews needed)? What modifications such as alternative tests) are allowed for any of these procedures?

Definitely— for kindergarten everybody is screened and I have a copy of our kindergarten screening that I’m also going to give to you. It’s one that’s filled out of a student that didn’t end up coming here because they opted out of it but we do have a kindergarten screening. Sometimes when I have a doubt about a child in first grade we might do a modified kindergarten screening for someone in first grade. As far as any formal screening instrument for upper grades we don’t use them. What I do ask for is standardized tests, things like that. I look at that. I ask the parents if the child has an IEP in place. I look at that. As far as kindergarten goes, if they don’t pass the first time if they take the -usually we do the kindergarten screening in February, late in February, we offer them at least two more opportunities to take the screening
to see whether - cause children that age mature - it could be from one month to the next that something might click with them. We do do that. I definitely have the parents in. I talk to them. For children in grades one and up we invite them if the opportunity is there we invite them to come visit the school for a day and spend the day with us. This way the teacher can get an idea of whether we’re going to have a match or not. I can and the student can too. The kindergarten test is very informal. It’s not real formal or scary. It’s actually done by two separate people. One of the people does the gross motor part of it and the kindergarten teacher does the other part of it. She doesn’t modify the instrument but she might say this child is borderline, let’s give it a shot.

3. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic school? That’s a tough one because right now, just this year we got a resource room teacher from the public school in this school. We’ll look at the IEP to see what it’s recommending. If the IEP recommends - let’s say - a one
to twelve ratio all the time, generally we know that
's not a good match. We'll read the IEP very
carefully. We have learned since an experience we've
had last year with an 8th grader that we accepted that
we had a very difficult time with—not behaviorally but
academically—we've learned now to read between the
lines of an IEP as well. I guess Live and Learn is the
philosophy. We do our best to accommodate students
with various ability levels and needs but I would say
if a child is already classified as learning disabled
the IEP is the instrument I look at more than anything
else to see whether we can possibly service the child
in the confines of our situation. If they need a
resource room, now we have it. If inclusion is
recommended we might tell the parents that maybe,
since there's a resource room here, maybe that can be
considered an option. If it's a small ratio that's
needed or something like that we'll say we just can't
do that and encourage the parents to speak to the
district and see whether—cause it's really the
parental intervention that gets these things happening
in our school. Our district has been really, really
slow with offering services to the Catholic school.

It's just this year that we've gotten anything in the building.

4. What are your procedures for "counseling out" students with learning disabilities who are not achieving, academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of your school?

We generally will have the parents in from before the first conference in November all the way through the year. If we can manage to hold on to the child for the year we will. Generally, my take on it and the teachers' take on it is we try to talk to the parents to tell them that this is really the best thing for the child. That it's just not working out for the child here. We haven't had too many occasions where we've had to do that. Usually what happens is we'll spot a child we might need to see and they'll get tested and they might end up leaving the school anyway based on what's recommended in the IEP, like at the end of the year. As far as behaviorally goes, it's pretty much the same thing. We have a -you can look at the handbook but—we have a pretty well stated
discipline policy. Children get demerits and if the demerit accumulates to a certain point there has to be a conference. I think I can count on the fingers of one hand in the time that I’ve been here at our school where we’ve actually had to ask a child to leave for behavioral issues. And again, that’s a process where we have the parents in over time—things build up over time. Maybe the child has had many detentions, in school suspensions, out of school suspension and finally we’ll say, “Look, this is just not working out”. Again, generally that happens at the end of the year. It’s not mid year.

5. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms?

One of the things that we have in place is a very extensive academic intervention services program that starts at grade one and goes all the way up through the grades. We have—right now our seventh grade teacher is—she had four classes a day of social studies—three of social studies and one of religion and the rest of the time she’s our academic
intervention services teacher. She’ll take small groups of children for extra help. Some of them are classified with learning disabilities and some of them are not. She’ll work with them in a pull out program where she’s pretty much paralleling what’s going on in the classroom at the same time. Only with small groups. We also use our 5th grade math teacher, She has—she takes 4th grade math students five days a week in small groups for forty minutes. Our fifth grade teacher is—has a background in differentiated instruction and in social work so she generally does her AIS instruction in class. Our 6, 7, 8 grade language arts teacher takes small groups of upper hall children and works with them. This is our AIS schedule of grades 3 through 8 so you can get an idea of how much support these kids get during the course of the school day. Basically it’s using the teachers that we have already in place here. As far as the little ones go, we have a couple of people who come in. They’re paid aides that work with—individually or in small groups—with the little ones that need extra help and I’ll give you that schedule too. The one woman that comes
in is actually just a mom who is really great with kids. She'll come in—she comes in Monday, Wednesday and Friday in one time slot she'll take one little girl in the second grade who she has an IEP—she was recommended for inclusion in the public school and this was before we knew we had a resource room teacher in the building. She is qualified for speech, she goes to speech. But she takes her and she works with her three days a week one on one for 1/2 hour. We have another little boy in first grade who gets five days a week, 1/2 hour one on one plus another 1/2 hour period one day a week one on one. And that same mom who takes the groups also on Fridays will take an enrichment group of kids that are flying. I think because we have all these things in place with our pretty much extensive AIS program and the aides that help out in the younger grades. I feel like that helps us to accommodate kids with learning disabilities in the general ed classroom. Question: Where did the specifications come from? Was that from the public school? Answer: No—that's just from us. Most of these kids don't even have IEPs. Some of them probably should. This little
guy doesn’t have an IEP yet but he’s got trouble
reading and a lot of trouble reading. This little girl
does have the IEP but no, the public school had
nothing to do with any—no—this was just us.

6. What resources are available to you from your Local
Educational Agency in order to assist children with
learning disabilities in your school?

Prior to this year, anything that we got was the
children had to be bused out of here. The best that we
ever got out of the public schools prior to this year
was they would agree to do it either first thing in
the morning or at the end of the school day which
would be least intrusive on the normal flow of things
for these kids. This year due in very large part to
one of our parents who has a son who had an IEP, has
an IEP, her advocacy, they finally put somebody in
here. She’s here five days a week for about two hours
a day and then she goes over to (the neighboring
school) and services those kids. It’s a resource room.
We still haven’t gotten speech in building. That’s
something that we’re working on. We don’t have any-
like— if a child were to need an aide or something
like that—we haven’t had any luck with anything like that yet. I’m so glad it finally happened because every year we get more and more students who have needs. And it’s so hard to bus them out at the end of the day or at the beginning of the day to a school that’s foreign to them. There’s much less give and take between the teacher—the two teachers too. If somebody else is in a different building, I feel very grateful that we at least have that right now.

7. What do you view as major obstacles to including students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms in your school?

Obviously I don’t think we have the level of services that we need for some students and that’s why we have to say no to them or have to kind of counsel them out. If it seems as if they need more than, let’s say a resource room or the AIS that we have to offer, I think that’s an obstacle. More of the teachers are willing to work with kids that are not mainstreamed but there’s a little resistance there in some cases, especially with the teachers that have been here for a while. They may be willing to do it but they just
don’t know how. They’re used to the teaching of the whole class instruction and it’s really difficult to change. If they’ve been in the classroom for many years and that’s all they know, they might want to do it but they just can’t bring themselves to do it for whatever reason. I see that as an obstacle, but not as much. I think that’s about all.

8. The recent reauthorization of IDEA should have brought (or was intended to bring) some significant changes. What has changed, if anything, in your school?

The thing that’s changed most is that we have the resource room teacher from the district. The nice thing about that is that we have one student from another district that has an IEP and we were not sure since they’re actually not—they don’t—they’re not obligated to do this until next year is my understanding, but the (neighboring) district is actually paying (our District) district to service this little girl from (the neighboring district). So that was a great thing too, because we were not really sure that was going to happen. This little one would have to be bused out to (the neighboring district).
It's by a bus it is probably a half hour. In a car it’s fifteen minutes. But you know how the bus is. It would not have been very good. She’s only a little third grader and it just would have been hard. Those two things or the fact that we have a resource room person in the building and the fact that they’re servicing someone from out of the district, that’s huge. Where we went from nothing to—you know. It’s funny because a lot of the other districts surrounding me are more progressive with this than (our district). (Another neighboring district) has had people in the Catholic schools for a long time and (name) the principal I told you about before, she has had a multitude of services in her building for a long, long time. Even though (our district) is behind some of the districts surrounding it—ever (another neighboring district) I think provides in building support and has been for years. It’s better than some others, I guess.

9. How available is the Child Find process to you in your current position as school administrator?

I have no—I am aware of the Child Find process. I know exactly what to tell parents to do. We actually this
year developed a Child Study team for one of our students in the sixth grade who is not classified because the mother doesn’t really want him classified but he’s diagnosed as bipolar and we kind of came up with a 504 plan for him. So, I would say it’s very available just because I’ve made sure I know about it.

10. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated? If they are denied an evaluation by the Local Educational Agency, what do they do?

It really hasn’t. If you are talking about the consultation that they were supposed to have in order to put this whole IDEA into place? I actually sent a letter out last year, actually two letters to the special ed director in [our district] saying that it’s my understanding that we’re supposed to be involved in some kind of consultation process. When is this going to happen? And the only response I received from them was at one point at the end of the year last year they called and asked how many students I had with IEPs. That was it. Nothing else. Nothing else. So, that’s been disappointing. However, we did end up getting the
resource teacher, which came as a total surprise to me. The parent of the child who is doing all the advocating was actually the one who told me.

11. How has consultation been addressed by the Local Educational Agency? How often has consultation occurred?

Where they’re evaluated differs. Sometimes the psychologist will come in here, sometimes the parents will take the child to the public school and they’re evaluated there. There’s no rhyme nor reason to it. I can’t say that one district always does it one way and one district always does it another way. I think a lot of the special ed services are school based, so depending on whatever public school the child would have been enrolled in, had they gone to the public school that determines what any particular school will do. Like, if maybe they’re supposed to be in (another town) - the psychologist from (another town) may come here, if they’re supposed to be in another school that sometimes they have to go to that school. There is no rhyme nor reason to it. Obviously, the observation, they’ll always come in and observe the child in class here. No one’s ever been denied— to my knowledge— an
evaluation. We’re pretty—we tell the parents if they request it the district has to respond. They’ve been denied services but not to my knowledge—nobody’s ever been denied an evaluation. So that is not an issue. We never call the district directly to request an evaluation. I always tell the parents they have to do it. They have to take the first step and request the evaluation because that’s the only people that ultimately; by law the district has to listen to.

12. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services?

If they just need resource room they get it here. We have a few students who receive speech and that’s at the local public school that they would have gone to had they not chosen to enroll here at (our school). We have one little girl that gets OT and PT and that’s again at the end of the day at the Public school. But the resource room is here. We have students from Kindergarten through fourth grade right now who qualify for resource.
1. How would you describe your school’s educational mission?
   The educational mission of (Our) school is to educate the child from where they are and to achieve their fullest potential academically, but also to teach them the faith and to carry on the faith.

2. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e. are testing or interviews needed)? What modifications such as alternative tests) are allowed for any of these procedures?
   Basically, our enrollment procedure is that the parent comes in and fills out an application; they are interviewed by the pastor to see whether or not the parent is willing to have their children educated in the faith. I do a second interview as the principal and I repeat some of those things but also talk to the parent about the education of their child and ask them why they are coming to (our school). If it is a child in Preschool or a Kindergarten, it is always necessary to take parishioners first and if we have room anyone else. If the children are coming through the grades we look at report cards and the educational records from the other schools. I do ask the parents...
if the children have an IEP or if they've been tested
and if we do get a child that comes in with an IEP,
basically we find out what modifications are needed
and I tell the parent that we will try and that in
consultation with them if this isn’t working we’ll
deal with it at that point. But I’ve never had to turn
anybody away. We don’t test them.

3. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not
your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a
learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic
school?

Basically what I do is I talk to the parent and ask
them what is required for their child. I had a child
who came in to me in 6th grade level who was very
learning disabled and it was the child’s desire to
come here because his older brothers had come. So I
said to the mother that we would work with him. We did
give him some extended time. He never went to resource
room He didn’t want to go, and the only other thing I
did to modify his educational program was that I
lowered the passing grade from a 70 to a 65 and he was
able to do that. He graduated from (our school). I do
have a resource room but he wanted to be here so we made it work for him. Whatever we can do we do. The parents know that we can't do as much. Some of them opt to send their children here and let us help as best we can. Some of them do private tutoring which can help but it depends on the child and the parent and how much they're willing to work with us. But I've never, as I said before, I've never turned a child away if this is what their parent wants. We must have a working relationship with the parent. If the parent dumps the kid and doesn't want to help then it doesn't work.

4. What are your procedures for "counseling out" students with learning disabilities who are not achieving, academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of your school?

As I said before, it's a partnership that we have with the parents and usually what will happen is that those parents know we are doing our best. Ninety percent of the time it is the parent who comes and says, I don't think this is working. I think I want to try removing the child and putting them in the public school. And
my answer is always, if it doesn’t work you’re welcome back. I can tell you a story about a young man that I had here who had ADD and he had some dysgraphia and the parent did remove him and put him in the public school for a time where he spent in resource room and everything. A couple of years later she came back and she said, “This isn’t working”. So, I did take him back. He then moved to New Jersey and he got into another school just like here. But she did come back and she said we saved her child’s life because even though we couldn’t reach him academically but did emotionally and socially, giving him an elevated self esteem. So sometimes it is not all about academics. It is more about helping the child to achieve whatever potential they have. And sometimes its not that they are going to be an A student but they are going to be the best student that they can be.

5. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms?

 Basically it’s the devotion of the teachers. The fact that the teachers are willing to give their best. I
mean, sometimes it's a bit frustrating if you have one child who's sort of out of the norm and they will come in and complain but you just keep going back to -- Catholic schools are about academics, yes, but they're also about the values, that we are all God's children and that some of us are less endowed than others would be in academic abilities but everybody could achieve and I know that in some ways it makes it a lot harder for teachers and parents too. If they truly want this, we will give them our best. Our children leave here and the High Schools want them. Even if they are the lowest achieving, they want them because they have wonderful study skills. And they have a quality about them, and I say this only because this is what I've been told. I know that we have a good reputation because I had a call from the principal over at Burke, I had a student who transferred in from (a neighboring Catholic school) in the 8th grade and I knew what the high schools would want.

6. What resources are available to you from your Local Educational Agency in order to assist children with learning disabilities in your school?
We have a speech person who comes into our building once a week; we have an AIS program where they send somebody here before school that meets with our children 5 days a week. The one works with children that have language needs and that works because she comes from the High School after the High School hours. She starts when the other school day ends. And then, if we have a child in K through 4 that needs resource room, the bus will pick them up and take them and they try to work around my schedule. I have to say my children in sixth, seventh and eighth grade because they’re middle school children and the middle school runs on our hours, it has been almost impossible for them to get any services. They try but they just can’t get the help. We try to arrange for a time for them to be out, for example during Spanish 5 days a week. When they make their schedule, and then they want me to change my entire school to meet their schedule, I can’t do that. So most of my middle schoolers don’t get any services.
7. What do you view as major obstacles to including students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms in your school?

I don’t really think there are any. And I know that that almost seems like looking at the world through rose-colored glasses, but I just think that there are no real difficulties in the sense that as long as the teachers engage and the parents are willing to help, we can do anything. We can do anything with less.

8. The recent reauthorization of IDEA should have brought (or was intended to bring) some significant changes. What has changed, if anything, in your school?

Not really except that I was told recently that what we’ve been told is that starting next year, if the child is out of district, they will be serviced in the district that the school resides. But there have been a lot of changes here in (our district) across the street. I’m not sure how that is going to affect us. I am not sure if somebody will come in to service my kids. So I haven’t seen any real changes this year. When testing children is involved, I make the parent make the first request from the public school.
Sometimes the request from us shows the child at a higher level so I make the parents make the request. This is all confidential so I can tell you that sometimes we have to play games in order to get an evaluation. It’s all about the children and they don’t like to hear that the parents have chosen an alternative to public education. Some people in the district are opposed to us and it’s like why are you trying to get our children to move. We have a nurse 5 days a week and every once in a while when a public school nurse is not in, they threaten to take our nurse away from us.

9. How available is the Child Find process to you in your current position as school administrator?

They haven’t made contact with us this year yet. In past years they did, but in the last two years it has changed. They have changed heads two times and the last person reached out to us. This new person has not made any contact yet and my thought is that she is going by the book. If I have a child that has special needs, I contact her. It is very different from years ago when there was a lot more conversation.
10. How has consultation been addressed by the local Educational Agency? How often has consultation occurred?

This year there has not been any consultation. I have not been invited to any meeting this year. And the sad thing is that they seem to forget that it is all about the kids. Last year they contacted us in April and asked us if we had any children with disabilities but that was with the other director before she left. There was no letter or invitation, it was a phone call. This new person has not made any contact. So it has changed negatively.

11. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated?

If they are denied an evaluation by the local Educational Agency, what do they do? It depends on the age of the child, certain parts are done in the local public school, some are done here. We have a room where they meet when they come here. The social worker comes here. Many times the elementary school students are brought to the local public school around the corner by their parents. We've never had anyone denied an evaluation but sometimes parents choose to go
private and find an outside evaluator because they don’t want their child labeled. We have one child who is out of district and the district is very good in busing the child back and forth to us where he gets resource five times a week.

12. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services?

We have speech here in our building, usually before school. If they are in resource, they go to their own district. We have three kids in 6th, 7th and 8th grade who go no where. We do modifications for them for testing and for learning in the classroom and they are doing okay. One other family pays for tutoring.

Principal 5

1. How would you describe your school’s educational mission?

To take any childGod sends us.

2. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e. are testing or interviews needed)? What modifications such as alternative tests) are allowed for any of these procedures?
We do an interview process. I do a testing process only if the report card and/or standardized test scores warrant or an IEP warrants it depending on what they're bringing to me in what grade level. I don't do a testing process for PreK or kindergarten and rarely for one. We would do a reading inventory for one. But then I kind of work on an individual basis depending on the child coming in to the school. Question: What modifications are made, if any. Answer: We do modifications where the test is read to the students where it's done on a one on one basis where the students read to us so we know if they have an understanding of the words that they are trying to cope with. We have aides that help along with this.

3. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic school?

We have a Child Study Team and the Child Study Team -- and if I had a question about a child coming into the building with an IEP, the Child Study Team would meet with that grade level teacher and we would determine
whether or not we would have the facilities available
to meet the requirements of the IEP. If we don’t or if
I can’t arrange for those requirements, then I can’t
take the child. But we have a good resource available
to us within our building. So, we’ve been very blessed
with that. We’ve been able to accept a lot of kids
with IEPs. I even have a blind student in the
building. We were able to, with the help of the
outside agencies and the (the local district) district
and BOCES to supply for the needs of the IEP right
here in the building. If we had to start shipping that
kid out, I wouldn’t take them.

4. What are your procedures for “counseling out” students
with learning disabilities who are not achieving,
academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of
your school?

First the Child Study Team meets to determine what the
basic problem is and why it’s a big problem, why the
child is not coming along with the program. We rarely
eliminate a child. I would probably leave the Child
Study Team—would recommend the district retest the
child to see if there’s been a major shift in their
learning concerns and then based on that testing— we
would—and their future recommendations for an IIE then
sit with the parents and you know, very honestly some
times tell them that we just don’t have the ability to
be able to meet their needs. We have high percentage
of IEPs in this building so we’ve come to use—going
back to our mission statement—if I take every child
that comes, therefore I have to take that child with
all its paperwork. So the teachers have really bought
into that. When I look for a teacher to work in this
school, I look for somebody who has a Masters degree
in special education because all children are special.
We do a lot of one on one talking with the parents and
by the time we get to that point the parents are ready
to make that decision themselves. But most of them
just leave their kids here. We have one with severe
learning disabilities who’s in seventh grade now and
even though the recommendation from the public school
is to get him out of here and into some kind of
special programs in the public school, the parent’s
choice is still the parent’s choice for Catholic
education. So we still have that child.
5. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms?

I think the strength of my teachers is the strength that we have that every teacher has really come on board with accepting each child the way they are, the way God created them and is willing to accept this responsibility to educate those children and to work with these IEPs. And the biggest reason for that I see in this building is when we started a Child Study Team because they feel like they're not working alone. We meet on a monthly basis and if they're having a problem with a child, they bring that to the four or five teachers that are meeting and they can go into different kinds of recommendations for alternatives, this that or the other thing. Modifications for this. We have lots of textbooks that we use to look up— if this is the problem— We have some really simplistic books that state the problem at the top of the page and then give us wonderful recommendations. We use those to see if they work. We have one behavioral child with ADHD, severe ADHD that is "trying". The
whole school works—it's like having eleven mothers here. They all work to correct this child and keep him in a structured environment and he works well in a structured environment. Question: How old is he? Answer: He's in seventh grade—13. He has four younger siblings.

6. What resources are available to you from your local Educational Agency in order to assist children with learning disabilities in your school?

The (the local district) district has taken very seriously the new IDEA and they used last year as its Child Find year because that's what it was told to do. This year as the implementation year. So this year we received a full time (the local district) special ed teacher here in the building and two speech teachers here in the building. Plus the school pays for on a per diem basis three days a week we have a resource room teacher that is part of our school staff. We have two resource rooms downstairs that they use. So we have support. For our blind child we have daily intervention through BOCES. A visual teacher comes in three times a week for him and he also receives
resource room through the (the local district) teacher. Nobody leaves the building this year- for anything. So no matter what district they come from, this year -and we have seven districts servicing our building, (the local district) has taken the responsibility to -for the education piece for all our kids with IEPs. The other districts do the testing but (the local district) supplies the services recommended by that IEP. So for the (neighboring district), (neighboring district), (neighboring district), - wherever they- (the local district) is doing exactly what it is supposed to do. That’s what the law says, so that’s what they’ve done. One thing that has made us credible in the eyes of (the local district) is our child Study Team. They told me at our last meeting that if the non public schools they service do not have a Child study Team they think it’s a legal issue that they don’t have to service them because they’re not doing their part, which I found to be a very strong statement because they know that when we recommend a child for testing we have already gone through a certain protocol. They’ve never found a
child that was not in need of services after we've
sent them for testing. So it's given us a good
credibility. We've had the Child Study Team for five
years. It's so simple to start. We just meet
informally and we use the guidelines and talk about
the kids and at a faculty meeting if a faculty members
have a problem with a child—he's not grasping this
that or the other thing, they'll have a time at the
faculty meeting to discuss kids. That brings us all
together for the good of the children.

I've had all the district psychologists involved
when we first started the Child Study Team they were
introduced at the meeting. Our district superintendent
came and all the others so we introduced to all the
local districts that we had this vehicle in place and
we would be using it. And they took— they take it very
seriously.

1. What do you view as major obstacles to including
students with learning disabilities in general education
classrooms in your school?

Other parents— they don't want—some of these parents
who come to Catholic education feel that they pay for
private education and they don’t want their kids in with kids who have any kind of disabilities or problems. So my greatest education was with my parents and I have to—at the same time—give as much emphasis on the upper grades to the enrichment part of it as well as to the IEP part of it. So that from the fifth grade up we divide our classes. It’s departmentally—departmental by ability. So language arts and math are taught in ability groups. We have an advanced class in both language arts and in math. So once they turn the corner the older kids regular class stays on the regular curriculum and the advanced class can stay on the regular curriculum sometimes but it is taught in a different way and a little more in depth than the other the one class. the one group is only five students so their writing skills have soared. You can give a lot of attention to it, so it’s worked. The parents are really happy that all their brilliant children are being serviced. It also has kept our numbers strong in the upper grades and they turn the corner here and go in the upper hall. We don’t lose them to the public school. So it’s worth—we have an
extra teacher but it's worth the extra teacher. It's kind of a natural divide. The kids don't bring it up to each other, which is amazing. Four grades divide into eight parts so it's scheduling a nightmare. Very large poster board and post its method. You have 7-1 doing something, 7-2, 8-1, 8-2 as so forth. I do it on the dining room table and then it comes out looking like this. And then we get lots of pieces of paper that look like that and you have each class and each day and each time where each class is going. It takes me weeks. And you never eat at the dining room table until it's done. I have white out all over the place. The first day of school I stand here and I hold my breath waiting for them to climb all going into the same room at the same time. But with so many groups we had to even put down places. Where are you going today? They're moving all over the place and the kids love it. The teachers get used to it. I have to keep this handy or else I forget where I'm going. I teach eighth grade religion. Last year we had to cut back on budget so I didn't have an extra person, so I taught 6,7,8 grade religion and 6th grade vocabulary. I
taught all morning. That was too much. This year I just took 8th grade religion. That way it gave the science teacher an extra period off so she didn’t have to teach the religion with the science. That gave her an extra period to prepare for labs and clean up and get that ready so that’s worked out fine.

6. The recent reauthorization of IDEA should have brought (or was intended to bring) some significant changes. What has changed, if anything, in your school?

The infusion of the public school teachers in our building—the resource room teacher full time, and the speech teachers and the OT if needed. OT will come in depending on what the IEP is. It was a long summer dealing with meetings and whatever to make sure that was going to work and paperwork, making sure that everyone had copies of the IEPs to be distributed and whatever. In the long run it was well worth it because now it’s established. Question: Do they only use the resource rooms or do they go into the classrooms?
Answer: My teacher, the one paid by my school will often go into the classroom and do a whole lesson as an adjunct in the class and not pull the kids. So
there's more flexibility with mine. The public school
does not do that. She has her schedule of resource
room that she works on and she just pulls the kids for
that reason. She does—depending on the child—there are
a couple of the older kids that are one on one and the
younger kids are groups of three—three or four. It
depends on what the need is. Some of them she teaches
as a complete resource room others take the roll as
consultative teacher. She's the same person but
fulfilling different needs on the IEP. It's wonderful.
The hardest part—I had some of the districts who
didn't participate and all of a sudden they realised
all they had to do was pay a bill. Finally I said,
"you don't have to send a bus, you don't have to have
a teacher, all you have to do is accept the bill from
(the local district)." "Oh, no problem". (the local
district) had the conversation but I went, I go to all
the IEP meetings and one district was bucking us until
I said that and they said, "Oh, shared services". We
only have one child from that district but the poor
child wasn't getting—the mother refused to have him
bused because it was an hour bus ride one way to the
school and then an hour back because we're not even near the (another local) district. This year has been wonderful.

9. How available is the Child Find process to you in your current position as school administrator?

It works. It's very available. Last year we did Child Find in conjunction with (the local district) to identify all the students within the building. They asked for copious lists of kids no matter what district so they'd have a handle on how many they'd have to educate. Then they implemented it this year.

10. How has consultation been addressed by the Local Educational Agency? How often has consultation occurred?

Last summer we met three times. The superintendent in charge of special---Pupil Services over there, she calls a meeting whenever she needs to have something clarified or she calls me on the phone. And every time we have an IEP meeting in (the local district), with the psychologists and the head of the CSE committee, sometimes we'll wait after the meeting and discuss how things are going. So it's a very open relationship. We don't always have formal meetings. They feel free to
walk in this building. (Name) who is our testing person, our child psychologist, he’s stationed at (the local district) Elementary which is right down the street but he considers this his annex and we consider him part of the faculty. He’ll just walk in, walk around, ask the teachers how they’re doing or take a kid’s file or whatever. There’s a nice rapport with him. He’s a Catholic school graduate himself. Most of the people I work with in (the local district) are Catholic school graduates and most of the (the local district) teachers send their kids here. We have a collection of (the local district) schoolteachers’ children here. Two of them are special ed teachers in (the local district) and one of them has their special ed child here, and not in the (local district) program over there. So, it’s an interesting cross between the two districts—the two schools.

11. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated? If they are denied an evaluation by the Local Educational Agency, what do they do?
They're evaluated in their district. (Another neighboring district) evaluates them in their own schools. They'll come and observe them here but they may do some of the testing in their own school. That's the only time they're pulled out of the building. (The local district) will do all the evaluations in this building. (The neighboring district) does it in their building. They'll do the eval in their building, so you'll have kids out for a day or so because they are not through with their testing process. Speech eval is all done here. They send a speech teacher over here. (The local district) does the speech eval for every district. They come in and evaluate all our kindergarten class as a matter of course every year. They cam in every school year by the middle of September they're here and they evaluate the entire kindergarten and they make recommendations as to which children need services and which districts they're from. Then, if there's an (the local district) student the services they get immediately and if it's an out of district one we have to then apply to that district and services begin as soon as possible. They
are never denied an evaluation. I've had them deny services because of the evaluation, which is fine. But they never deny an evaluation. I have a couple of parents that go private but as I tell them— and then they want services—I tell them I'm sorry I can't give you services because the services come through the district and it has to be a district evaluation. So they're pretty well, they really do listen to me when I say don't go. You don't need to do that. There's a boy who has severe learning disabilities in the upper grades whose mother is a special ed teacher, who was evaluated by (the local district) but she also went private. She wanted it backed up. She got a worse evaluation from the private one than she did from (the local district). Then (the local district) did use that doctor's evaluation to enhance his IEP so she was able to use both of them. They'll recommend take this to your pediatrician take this to a pediatric neurologist, bring back that report and we'll see where that leads us to. They're really very open to everyone's opinion about a child. And they really do
believe that the service follows the child. It’s a good thing.

12. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services?

Well, basically they receive services in our two resource rooms, and in their classrooms. I keep the aide with the special need—the blind child because they really do need an extra set of hands because there’s an extra set of machinery in that classroom. The child is an albino and has very limited peripheral vision so he has to have things totally magnified. All his work has to be blown up on big paper and then he uses a special magnifying machine. So we’ve got two of the machines, one upstairs and one downstairs. They’re supplied by BOCES. It took awhile to get that all organized. But now that it is, it’s..... This is his second year. We have one family who adopted eight children and all eight of them are in this building. He’s one of the adopted children. First time I’ve ever had a family of eight. This is totally a family of thirteen and eight of them are adopted. Eight of them
are in school right now. Multiples in - two in grades because they adopted the same age.

Principal 6

1. How would you describe your school's educational mission?

(Our) School is a catholic co-educational institution of learning for PreK through 8 and we seek to provide a total program of instruction. We look at the spiritual, moral, intellectual, social, cultural and physical development of each child. We try to provide a creative environment. In a God centered atmosphere provide a life enriching experience which will take a child from the point they come to us and help them to thrive and grow, and always in a God centered atmosphere.

2. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e. are testing or interviews needed)? What modifications such as alternative tests) are allowed for any of these procedures?

If someone comes from a preschool, they're coming with a recommendation or some kind of paper work from the preschool that's sending them—or coming to kindergarten that would be. If they're coming to us
for the first time as a preschooler, basically there's not a test that we give them. We would look at the - have an interview with the parent and they would come for an Open House and they would spend some time here. If it seemed as if there was a problem, then the next step would be to try to identify what the situation is, and of course work with the parents in developing some kind of a solution for that problem. If it's an older child coming in from another school, someone in the grades, they have records and they have their standardized test scores and they have their report cards and teachers comments and things of that sort.

When somebody comes in an older grade the procedure we follow here is that I meet with the parents alone first and we take the parents on a tour of the school. And we ask the parents—"Do you think this is a good match for your child?" because different schools can be right for different children. Sometimes when children are transferring from another school it takes a while to get to the real reason why they're transferring. It's hardly ever that we're given the real true reason right away. And so in the course of
visiting with the parents you may get a little more of an accurate idea of they they're coming and what they're looking for. If after that point the parents feel they would like to go ahead with it then we invite them to bring their son or daughter for a ½ day which would include a lunch time and they spend the day with the class that they would be enrolled in and I invite the parents to speak with the child after that and also get their input. At the same time our teachers are looking at this child to see if they feel it would be a good match for this child, and without any detrimental effect to the students we already have. If all that seems to be on target, then we would accept the child. The records are fine and it looks like everything's okay there still would be a probationary period that we would say "if it does not seem to be working out, you the parents or we the school can back out of the contract" if you will, without any hard feelings or anything like that. Now, if its somebody that has an IEP we just look at - in addition to what I've already told you we would look at the IEP first and then see right off the bat if
what the accommodations lists—if what’s an—that something we can do here and if we reasonably could do it then we could go through the procedure we just described. But if it looks like, you know, what we really are not going to be servicing your child here any better than they already are it's not going to solve the problem going from one place to another, it’s not the answer. Then I would just tell the parents outright you know. ‘I’m sorry but we’re not able to do any better than what you’ve got now. We do not have an entrance test into school. No.

3. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic school?

I think I touched on it already—you know, a learning disability is a very broad term and if it’s an IEP learning disability then you know exactly what you’re dealing with. But there are so many other degrees of disabilities that really don’t even show up right away. So that the child may be coming in and may be having some trouble learning but no one’s ever
discussed it a learning disability per se. So its kid of a vague problem that nobody is sure about and so you could get a child that’s, you know—We end up being the ones saying this child should be tested and this child has a learning disability. Those are the easy ones you know. If there’s such a span of children who need just that little bit of extra and I think maybe that’s difficult to know as the child is enrolling. You only really find that out after the child is here.

4. What are your procedures for “counseling out” students with learning disabilities who are not achieving, academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of your school?

All right, first there would be intervention in the classroom. Primary teacher would probably have an interview with the parents and discuss you know, “these are the patterns. This is what I see” and see if we can get any more information. Sometimes the parent can take care of it. It—sometimes it’s just that simple and the child just needs to be put back on track. So I you get the parent on board with you that
might work out. The next step would be we have a learning center here. We have a remedial teacher. So if the teacher has already tried classroom intervention and the parent has worked with the child at home and we’re not really getting anywhere and we feel that the child needs a little extra boost—this would be the younger children up to grade four—then we would suggest, or sometimes the parents would ask for the child to be able to go to the learning center which is a smaller group of children doing basically the same things as their counterparts in the classroom. Now the teacher down there is very well versed in—she’s not a special ed teacher but she’s very well versed in various types of learning styles and she’s familiar with Orton-Gillingham and the Wilson approach and various kinds of learning, so they go there. We also, kind of skipping ahead—but we also do have—this is the answer to number 5 besides the learning center we have an educational aide and she is full time and she is paid for by the district. But to get back to number four, after the learning center and we’ve talked to the parents and we still aren’t making
the progress that we would like to see, the parents would want perhaps to do some medical testing first and see if there's anything along those lines that needs to be addressed and then the school contracts the district. The school cannot contact the district unless we are able to document that strategies have been tried, these are programs we've done, the child has possibly been tutored by the— you know— through the parents and we've done— essentially we've done everything we can do with the facilities that we have available. So, we'd like to have this child tested, parent would like to have the child tested. Now just this year, the (the local district) district pupil personnel director has requested that we not have the parents calling him directly. Cause sometimes parents can do— jump the gun a little bit on that— and they don't have all the information that we could give them. Those are the strategies, these are the interventions, these are the results that we've already done. So, that's kind of— it's not really new but it's something that we're trying to reinforce as far as the parents are concerned. We need to be the contact with the
public schools. Then after that if they do the testing, you know, there’s a CSE meeting and it’s decided whether the child is going to be considered as having a disability and classified or not. And then, you still have to make the decision; --well-- can the public school give them a little more than we can? And one of the things I always caution parents about is that a lot of times public schools will say they have--you know, they have a collaborative classroom, or they have a learning specialist, or they have a pullout -or they have these different terms for things but make sure that your child is going to get it. And make sure that your child is going to get enough of it that it’s going to make a difference and make it worthwhile to be pulled out of the environment that they’re comfortable in. And while we don’t have all the bells and whistles, we’ve got a very good firm foundation and it’s a very nurturing place. So it’s a trade-off always, just-you know- you are certainly free to put your child wherever you want but make sure you’re gonna get what you think you’re gonna get. Just because it’s available doesn’t mean your child is
going to—you know—for legitimate reasons, scheduling or whatever, but just to be wary of that. I do always caution parents about that. So then they're faced with the decision whether they're going to leave the child here and work with what we have. And sometimes developmentally things change and the child becomes more mature. The parent becomes more accepting of the child's true ability. I think when the children are young, there's a tendency for the grades to be higher and then they hit 3rd/4th grade then all of a sudden the grades start to fall because it's more difficult. And right away there's that quick knee jerk response of if there's something wrong. No not really. It's just that in fact your child is a B or a C student and the work is harder. There is no disability and it's not a quick fix. So there are all of those components that you have to consider. There's something else that I was just going to say, I forgot now. The average percentile for this school last year in the ITBS was the 81st percentile. So while the 50th is average, not for this school. So somebody who is in the 50th percentile maybe someplace else would be okay, but in
this particular school with this particular environment and enrollment at this time with all those factors it’s the 81st percentile that’s average. And so that’s way skewed and so you’ve got to have a lot of children who are maybe struggling here may not be struggling someplace else. You know, my daughter teaches in Colorado and the parents, she said you know it’s very different. The parents are very happy if their child is in the 50th percentile because that’s average and it’s fine. And they’re okay with that. See, our parents not be okay with that. Your parents wouldn’t be either. So you’ve got that component as well for the child who may be fine someplace else is struggling a little bit here. So, know I think we touched on five a little bit—the strengths of the school? So we talked about the educational aide, the learning center, the possibility of parent involvement in the sense of direct parent involvement and tutoring, services and we have a very highly professional teaching staff. They’re here a long time. The average length of stay is eleven years now. It was longer but we lost a couple of long term teachers and
we got a couple of new ones so it shifted that. But, you know, these are people who are really very experienced teachers and so that is also a strength.

5. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms?

Well, first of all we have a good relationship with our public school districts. Our main districts are (another local district), (the local district) and (another local district). So those would be the ones that we would deal with the most. They will do testing for us. They will sometimes provide transportation if it's necessary for somebody to go to the public school for a special service - sometimes. Lots of times it will be the parents who will be the ones to do that. I think, it doesn't happen all that often but it ends up to be a matter of scheduling. For instance, we had a child who - that they were able to schedule to go to the first period for extra help and so the parent drove the child to that school and then it's quicker of the parent to bring the child over here. But if the parent has to go to work, then that's not available. So it's
kind of on an individual basis. We’ve had children leave from Kindergarten and go for speech and a bus will come in here and pick them up. The problem always is they’re missing so much when they leave and you’re adding the transportation time as well. That’s a big problem. It’s very hard on little kids to have to leave and go to someplace they don’t really know. It really is. Let’s see, what else did I want to say about that? Question: So basically they give you transportation and they give you services? Answer: They have—I’m not saying it would be an automatic thing.

6. What resources are available to you from your Local Educational Agency in order to assist children with learning disabilities in your school?

We don’t have a big support team here as far as specialists. I think we have more than most Catholic schools do, but we don’t have people that are going to be able to sit with the child in the classroom on a one on one basis or an educational aide that’s going to be actually available at any given time. They’re scheduled for the day and they work with the children
that are assigned to them so if there's someone in the classroom other than those children in the general education classroom, we don't have other people—we don't have speech therapists here and occupational therapists and different extra learning specialists to support that. The other thing I think I would have to say that is an obstacle is that there's a certain and we touched on this before—there's a certain amount of pressure to accomplish the curriculum in a certain manner and that comes from various sources. You know, you're expected to perform as a school and even with the state testing and the ITBS testing you're expected to have certain kinds of results. So I think that would be a general obstacle in a way. I've heard stories, and I don't know if they are true that sometimes, in not Catholic schools but in other schools, certain children are invited to be absent on the days those tests are taken so the results are not affected. We would never do that in a million years. Never! But I think that that is something to look at. That some people might see that as an issue. We test everybody. Everybody we have, we test. And we have had
children who've had IEPs for the whole 8 years that they've been here. You know, we need to help them get through school the best that we can and the best that they can. And they're not going to really do any better anywhere else and we all know it And they're comfortable here. And their parents want them in a Catholic school, in a Christian atmosphere and that overrides anything else. Because they're really not gonna do that much better in a different environment that has all the things that we're saying public school has to offer. Because they are truly disabled and they're gonna be disabled wherever they go. So, we've done that too, you know, we've run the gamut. We really have.

7. What do you view as major obstacles to including students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms in your school?

Answered with question 6

8. The recent reauthorization of IDEA should have brought (or was intended to bring) some significant changes. What has changed, if anything, in your school?
From what you've described before, I don't think that we've seen any significant changes yet. And also for question nine for the Child Find process, generally it goes from us to the public school and we say that this is a child in need. It doesn't really come from the other way. Although, this past week I got a call from a woman in (another local district) who is the Pupil-she's not really pupil personnel so then I'm not sure what her exact title is but she told me she wants to come over and visit our PreK and she wants to see the children in the (another local district) School district that she will be seeing all of them. I said, "Well, this is something new to me" and she said "Well, I'm new here and this is the way I'm going to be doing it". So I don't know if that's part of, you know, this. I don't know if she has to let those parents know that she's coming to observe or if she's just coming to observe in general. She's not the coordinator. She's probably one of the therapists. I'm not positive exactly what her title is. She's just somebody who comes to be on the evaluating team I think. And she is coming to actually look at one of
our children who goes for speech, but it's done privately, through the district but it's private. We have nothing to do with it because the parent elected not to have that child miss school time. So essentially, she's coming to look at that particular child and the parent knows it. But she did say that she has plans to come and see all the PreK students that we have that are in that district. I don't know exactly how that's going to play out because it seems like a very unwieldy job if she's going to visit all the PreKs in the area. We'll see how that works out.

9. How available is the Child Find process to you in your current position as school administrator?

Answered with question 8

10. How has consultation been addressed by the Local Educational Agency? How often has consultation occurred?

I would have to say that the Pupil Personnel Director from [the local district] did come over here this year. He called, he made an appointment and he came over here. He sat down with me and with the learning center teacher and discussed pretty much the protocol of how testing is done now and things of that sort. I
think I would have to include in that that there was a sense of "we can only do so much for everybody". I think it was an overall presentation because what he was basically saying they have too many children that are being referred in general and they really can't handle all of it. Not just from our school. They're talking about from their own school. So I think they are revisiting their whole program and trying to make sure that address the needs of the children who are in need. I would have to say—I would have to say that that wasn't a consultation kind of meeting. They haven't come here before—certainly not in the last few years.

11. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated? If they are denied an evaluation by the Local Educational Agency, what do they do?

Well, as I said before the evaluation is the last piece of a process that we initiate here so I don't thing that they're going to be denied an evaluation because by the time they get to that point we've already documented that there's a need for this. So I
don't think that's an issue. In the past they've been evaluated in the district where they reside, where the child resides. I think that's still in place but the new law will be such that the evaluation will all have to be in- within the (the local district) district because that's where the school is. That may in fact have impacted the consultation visit they're looking at now the population of 350 here as opposed to be 4 of that pretty much would have been (the local district). So we just doubled the pool from which they might have to pick. I don't know, I'm just putting that together now to tell you the truth. So the learning center does informal testing we might do something. If the parent comes to me and says, you know, my child is having trouble in math, my next thing is - of course they've already talked to the teacher- so now we're going to the next step. My next thing would be "well, I'd like to have them go to the learning center and have some testing done". It's not the same kind of testing that you would have done for a learning disability, you know, to establish a learning disability. It's just general ability testing
and how do you learn. So we would do that and then we would go from there. That gives us some information for the parents. Our learning center primarily and some would go out for speech. But that changes. It's a kind of a fluid thing depends on what the needs would be I guess. We don't have a speech therapist here. So if it's speech, they have to go someplace else. If it's something that our learning center teacher feels is beyond what we can do here we can ask to have them participate in a program. We have done that, at the public school. The parents have to be on board with that too, because then they are missing the work here and that has to be made up. So, it's a kind of a snowball effect. Sometimes you fix one problem and you create others. It's definitely a problem. If we could offer in house services that would address the needs of some of these children it would be a real boom to Catholic school enrollment and education because we don't have it here and I think there are more and more children that need it. We can only take them so far. When you reach a point where the child isn't thriving and isn't growing and it's not working
then we’re doing a disservice by saying—by not saying something about it. Then they should go elsewhere. Then you can’t do what the child needs. We’ve done that.

12. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services?

Answered with question eleven.

Principal?

1. How would you describe your school’s educational mission?

Our schools’ educational mission is to first and foremost instruct our children in our faith; our Catholic faith and we would hope that they would receive both book knowledge as well as practical experience in living their faith. Beyond that it is our desire that each child would develop to become a life long learner. We are very active in pushing reading, math skills, inter---- skills in communication between people and children on different levels. We would hope that each child would reach its potential. In the past we have had the opportunity of
offering a remedial resource teacher for our children in both math and in reading extra help. Due to economic circumstances this year we are not able to offer that help but we have put an alternate plan in progress but we would hope that one day we would get back to having that.

2. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e. are testing or interviews needed)? What modifications such as alternative tests) are allowed for any of these procedures?

Both, We interview the family of our prospective student. Then, if the family is asked to visit the classroom and spend quality time in the classroom that the child is attending. So, for instance if a child is enrolling for third grade next year, they come and they would visit the second grade classroom for forty five minutes to an hour then have fifteen minute interview with that teacher on that level then sent the parent to the third grade classroom so that they could see what that class is like. If they are still interested in our program, they come back with their child and their child spends two consecutive full days with us and a student in our school. So they would
come for the second grade and spend the entire two consecutive days with us. The first day the child is here just to kind of get a sense of what we're like, you know, to build a rapport with the other students and with the teacher. The second day the child is tested in reading and in math to see what their level of ability is. Depending on their age level we could read the test to them. If they are an upper grade student we give them the testing on their own. And then we evaluate that. We also ask for copies of their current report card, and their standardized test results and a sample of their schoolwork. I also tell parents if they've come to the point then after all of that where they really still are committed to enrolling their child in our school, before they burn bridges behind them with the school that they're coming from then I would ask to be in contact with the child's homeroom teacher, or classroom teacher, you know, whatever, or guidance department depending on the child's level. So there is a process to that. And then depending on their results we either take them into the school or not. Sometimes we will admit a
child with the stipulation that they will be tutored over the summer, or they'll complete a work packet over the summer that we give them. Sometimes we will tell a student that they will come in but that they're on probation depending on their academic ability. Sometimes we'll tell them that they can come to us but they have to repeat a grade. It really depends on the individual's ability. We once had mother who came to transfer her child who came in. He was dysgraphic, and so when she came she told me. So we knew that ahead of time. So some of his testing was to bring a writing sample from home that had already been done. He used a laptop for a while here and interesting enough he said it got in his way. So he no longer uses a laptop. What I find very interesting is he manages to hand in his work at home you know if it is an essay or something he will have it all typed but he takes his own hand written notes now. He had great difficulty with the little Sandisk memory stick; I mean he broke it, he lost it he had it hanging around his neck, and he had it in his ear. He had it every place but where it was supposed to be. And he was an upper grade student. He
himself said the laptop was an annoyance at this point so he didn’t use it. So if we had a child— a couple years back who really did poorly on the math part of it, the knowledge on the test for his grade level was 3 or 4 years below his grade level and what we did was so the teacher sat with him and said to him how did you learn this, did you learn that. It turns out that he had tremendous gaps because he had moved from so many different schools. He had such gaps that it wasn’t so much that he was learning disabled but that he just really just didn’t learn it, didn’t remember it, didn’t know it or never saw because he was constantly, he had moved like three or four times over five years. He had moved all over. So we demanded that in order to be admitted here that he had to go to intensive tutoring for math over the summer and we mandated a number of hours that he had to do, and then he had to come for extra help and plus we put him in resource room. So, I mean, he is now, he will be graduating this year with us and he is— I would say he’s almost on grade level. Ok— still plays the game a little bit, because part of that is avoidance on his
part too; you know it is learned behavior. He had real
difficulty doing that but we tried to make an
accommodation for him. You know I would say that in
that testing mode though, in the testing area we
really don’t know unless a parent tells us ahead of
time. So they would receive the same test. Now, this
young man was dysgraphic and his mother told us that
then we could address that. Because at the beginning
you don’t know, we don’t know. And sometimes parents
don’t tell you. Sometimes you don’t know until you get
them and then you say “Oh my goodness”. I had a boy
who tried transferring here from a very exclusive
private school whose tuition is maybe five times what
ours is and when he took the testing he could not even
write a paragraph and he could hardly form a sentence.
No capitalization, no punctuation, half of them were
fragments and so the mother said to me “Yeah I noticed
he can’t write” and so I said to her “Did you say to
the school, you know you are giving them a lot of
money to teach him” and she said to me “They said to
me We should get an outside tutor” and I said to her
“Okay, but you told me there are only four children in
his class. If there are four children in his class why do you need an outside tutor? If there were 20
something children in his class the teacher doesn’t
have time but with 4 students in his class somebody
has to have the time for him. Somebody has to sit him
down and say this is how you write a sentence; this is
how you write… I was really afraid he would not pass
the ELA. He was from a regular private school. I had
another child who went to a special school because she
had learning disabilities and she was told to get a
special tutor and the mother said she didn’t have time
for that. The mother came back to me and she said to
me, (Principal’s name) would you take her back I took
her out because they promised me extra help for her
you know, in a special setting and, but she said that
for them to say get a special tutor, I could keep her
here and get a tutor. But when she was here you always
gave her extra help. The teacher made time for her. We
sent her to extra math, I mean, you know I don’t
understand. She came back to me, she’s back six weeks
and she is happy as a clam and she’s doing good. She
does have some disabilities but I think she has an
organizational problem and structure. There are other
issues that could help that, you know she is slightly
disabled but not to any great degree.

3. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not
your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a
learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic
school?

What I really do is I really, if a child comes to me
with and IEP and sometimes it does, then I will look
and see if I can supply the necessary remediation. If
within my program and this year I am more limited than
I was last year when I actually had someone who would
staff my resource room, if I can provide those
services I will take the child in. If I cannot, I am
very honest with the parents. Then I tell the parent
that I cannot give you what your child needs.

Sometimes, depending on where the child is coming from
the local school district will make an accommodation.
So the child can continue to go for extra resource in
math or for special help in reading. Sometimes they
work it out so they can go at the beginning of the day
or the end of the day and the transportation is
provided either by the parent or by the bus. Sometimes the parent will provide the transportation because it is easier and they will drop them off and they pick the kid up and the child goes straight home in the afternoon. Sometimes the bus is provided first thing in the morning where the child would actually go there. Now, depending on what time our start time is too. We moved to an earlier start time for the last five or six years we've had a really early start time at ten to eight but prior to that, the first couple of years that I was here, I here... the first 5 or 6 years that I was here we didn't start to 9. So what they would do was they would take the child over at 8 o'clock in the morning and they would have their remedial service and then bring them back here. Since then its been the opposite end of the day because we end at 2:20 and maybe they would pick them up at 2:15 and the child would go over for the extra help or the mom would pick the child up at 2:15 because we close at---we start dismissal at 2:20. So that gave the child accommodations. Sometimes if I cannot service
the child and that can't be worked out with the
district then the child doesn't come.
4. What are your procedures for "counseling out" students
with learning disabilities who are not achieving,
academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of
your school?

Usually what we do is we have meetings with the
parents, we have with those children who are
experiencing difficulty we probably meet with those
parents maybe twice a month at least sometimes more
frequently, it depends on the child. We do a lot of
incentives, you know, with your assignment pad at the
end of the day, sometimes there is constant there is
daily contact with the parent you know where you put a
smiley face, a flat face or a frown you know depending
on how the child is progressing, or sometimes there is
just a note. We have a standardized assignment pad
throughout our building and there is a place for you
to write the daily assignment and a place for the
parent to sign off in as well as the teacher and there
is a place for a note because sometimes there is a
note that is sent via that. There's a standard thing
where say, at the end of the day we fax the child’s assignments to the parent so that the parent receives this so that we are all on the same page. Sometimes there is the afternoon phone call to the parent it depends on the child’s age. We also will ask for a further testing if we feel that that’s necessary. We always like to have an outside objective look at the child, you know, is it just behavioral, is it educational, is there a disability, is it disinterest where the child doesn’t want to be here but wants to be someplace else. The key is the constant communication and I think that maybe after a while doing that it comes to almost a mutual agreement you know that the child doesn’t isn’t being best serviced here. Our primary responsibility is to educate the child and if we can’t deliver the education then we are being very dishonest, we are stealing these people’s money. I truly believe that. I have said to people who wanted to put their child here—There’s this one lady two or three years ago who came to put her child here and her child was in sixth grade. Her child had severe learning
disabilities. Her child was getting reading 5 times a week, she was getting math 5 times a week, and she was getting—not speech but language assistance 3 times a week. She was in resource room more than she was in her homeroom setting. I said to her 'you know there's no way I can give her that. There's no way I can accommodate her schedule to allow you to take her out to receive that. So I said to the mom—do me a favor, just go and sit in, she would have been departmental at that point 6th, 7th and 8th and I said just go and sit in each of those classrooms, follow the 6th grade around, you're sixth grade for each of these classes and see what this child has to cope with and you come and tell me if you think your daughter can handle that. Then come and let her spend two days with us and let her say to you either she can or she can't. We'll discuss it. I said, go and see. And she came back to me and she said she couldn't function here. She said there is too much going on, she's very distractible and she said you are right (Principal's name) there's a lot of independent work and she would never be able to put the resource time in. And I said to her, I
can’t give you that. I have one resource room teacher in the whole school. The mother said to me, I would love for her to be here if she was a different child. But she won’t function here. I said to her, that’s all right, because if she had strep throat, you would give her medication. This is what she needs to function and to be a whole person. So, we are not part of what her prescription is but that does not mean that she is not a wonderful child. I think the mother was looking for some alternative to this but she had to realize that this is what the child needed to function now. Now she’d be in high school and that woman never came back. I said to her let me know how she makes out but she never called back. It wasn’t that I was pushing her out but I knew that I couldn’t give her the services that she needs. That wasn’t fair. I mean I don’t think it’s fair.

5. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms?

One bottom line is that we have small classes and I think with smaller classes there’s no place to hide.
There's always an opportunity for someone to realize that you are not getting it, you're struggling. You need a little extra help at this now. The flip side of that too is that with the smaller class you can divide your class into groups, which can be manageable, and you can still have time to get around to other groups and you can take one child aside to help. I also have to say, and it may sound self-serving but I have a very dedicated faculty that's really concerned and they try the best they can to help each child. I have teachers who come in at 7:30 in the morning to give extra help. I have someone who will work through lunch with them or stay after 15 minutes in the afternoon or say to a child I tell you what, instead of going to lunch right away— or go to lunch right away and take 15 minutes for lunch then come in and I'll help you for 15 minutes to see if you get it. Or we'll pull a child back from the beginning of art class, we'll ask what are you doing today in art and I'll send you in 10 minutes later— you know, they are willing to go the extra mile. Up to this year I was able to --I had a resource room teacher who was able to deliver
resource services for reading and math. This year we could not afford it and to their credit, the faculty has stepped up to helping their own children in the classroom and helping a neighboring class, which I think is good. It’s not the same because it does put a burden on the teachers themselves. And sometimes it’s not -- I like having a resource room teacher because it is a different perspective or a different outlook, different training, or a different mindset on the teacher’s part. But, you know beggars can’t be choosers. We take what we have and they’re willing to help. So we have that. We have different materials too. We use, we do have a lot of computer software. One thing I’ve been stringent about is ordering the software that goes with the textbook series so there’s always the re-teaching and the enrichment piece. Sometimes a child with a learning disability, you know, like I said you have to send a child out of the room to take a test. We used to have that with one of the children if they have untimed testing there’s always a spot for them to go, there’s always someone willing to oversee that. We have let them use the
computer, if they needed that to write their answers, or have someone read it to them. I had a child some years back who had difficulty in reading the test to themselves but new the material. We would have some read the test or the questions to them and they'd answer. We had a resource teacher two full days a week and she did reading and math on those two days. She would split it between the two. And then depending on the need, if we had more math people then she'd do more math hours. We paid her a per diem salary, which was really great. I'd like to get back to that next year, although I don't know how.

6. What resources are available to you from your Local Educational Agency in order to assist children with learning disabilities in your school?

They give me resource money, I get my Title 1 money. I don't take a teacher. A couple of years back-- many years back I used to have a part time teacher who came and that the public school actually paid her salary. She only came one day a week and it lasted until the end of the Title 1 money. That was like a couple of months and the school paid the difference. But at
those times, she was getting what—$50.00 a day or something like that; I mean it wasn’t like a lot of money. Now today, forget it it wouldn’t last. Because the money ran out and it was always a haphazard thing we decided that instead of asking for the money for a teacher’s salary we would take the money in supplies and we paid our own teacher to do it. We used their monies to buy different kinds of learning materials and things like that that really were good for us to use and that we wouldn’t have had the resources to pay for ourselves. Sometimes, like I said, in the past they’ve given extra help to a child whether it was the child was classified and the child was still here they’d take the child for resource room in the morning for extra reading or math. Whatever it was, organizational skills, language development but it’s been a number of years that really happened. People do seek sometimes help outside the school privately. There’s a couple of tutors that we recommend to people, that I recommend to people who are special ed teachers that have special ed backgrounds so they’ll help the child. Sometimes it just becomes
overwhelming and it seems to be that the children who hit fifth to sixth grade it's more than the parents can deal with and sometimes --parents get tired. They get tired of them struggling. We do give more homework than the public school. We make more demands than the public school and I'm gauging that on what people tell me when they transfer their children out. They'll say I can't do this any more. A lot of times the public school will say to them at the CSE meetings we recommend a child for testing, they say, if you come here we will give you this, this, this and this. If you stay there, we can't guarantee that. Or, we'll have to bus the child out and usually the child who is getting bused out is the child who needs the least disruption but now we're giving him the most disruption. I'm in this system long enough to remember when the Title I teacher came from the public school to the school building and provided the services here, which was wonderful. We had language services here in the building. Now the law said, it went to the point where the law said they didn't have to. Now the law says they can if they want to. And most of them will
say to us it is scheduling, it's costly to us. Our children that go to speech go to the (local elementary) School which is the local public school right down the street and they are bused over and bused back and they are actually mixed in with the public school students who are receiving services so they all have the same articulation issue. They might be in with one (our) student and 3 (local elementary) students, or vice versa. There might be one (local elementary) student and 2 (our) students with the same articulation issue. So they are co-mingled. They say it is more cost effective for them. They don't lose time with a teacher traveling to the school and then going back and then having to pay for the gas for the teacher and time and travel you know. It's more cost effective to bus us because it is cheaper. They own their own buses. I don't know.

7. What do you view as major obstacles to including students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms in your school?

Providing the support services. That is the biggest obstacle because sometimes they just need more than
listening to the directions two different times or
three different ways. We've had accommodations for
students that we've had recommendations where someone
will say, you know, set a clock on the time on task.
We've used it for all the class and tried to work you
know that everyone needs time to process so everyone
needs 15 minutes time on a task. Then we move it back
to 14 and 13. But sometime if a child needs almost
like an aide, a personal aide, or a one on one aide I
can't provide that, I cannot provide that. I would say
to you that parents seek out the public schools they
feel the child needs all those services because they
feel that they have more staffing that is particular
to that child's needs. They have special ed teachers
that are trained in those areas.

8. The recent reauthorization of IDEA should have brought
(or was intended to bring) some significant changes. What
has changed, if anything, in your school?

Nothing. I don't know if that is because the public
school is not willing to do it or that the parents
just feel that it's easier to opt out. I have people
who tell me that they are going to take their child
out because they’ll get this that and the other thing and they’ll always say to me, you know (Principal’s name) we loved your school and it has nothing to do with it but my child can get so many more things there. It’s least disruptive in the child’s day then to have them try to be bused out or constantly moved. How much time will they lose moving from here to there. That’s 10 minutes one way, ten minutes on the way back, that’s 20 minutes. My child already feels that they don’t fit in in the classroom. This only makes them feel even more self conscious about not fitting in because they can’t do everything that everyone else can do. Now they’re being pulled out. I don’t feel that it’s changed anything for us. I really don’t.

9. How available is the Child Find process to you in your current position as school administrator?

Do you mean the individual child or do you have children with disabilities and what do you need from us? Never. The only thing I can say is that they ask me when I’m submitting my Title I for children who need extra services those who come from an
economically deprived area. Up here we have very few
but I still get some funding for that. They don’t send
me anything. I send it to them, from Cathy Squillini
and I’ll call them and say how many... they may call
me and ask how many Title I kids I have and they’ll
ask me—because they are always changing special ed
directors. They’ll say to me what are your criteria.
My criteria is tuition assistance because we don’t do
free lunch in our school but tuition assistance
because of some people who are getting some kind of
subsidy because of it. That’s always been accepted.
That’s how I do it. They’ll ask me do you have any
Title I kids this year, how many do you have? Is it
two, is it three? It’s always less than five. A lot of
times when we send a child they don’t get classified.
They say they have issues but it is not enough to
classify them.

10. How has consultation been addressed by the Local
Educational Agency? How often has consultation occurred?
We don’t have any. We are not contacted.

11. Where are the children with suspected learning
disabilities in your school evaluated?
If they are denied an evaluation by the Local Educational Agency, what do they do? They’re always evaluated in their public school district by the public school. Sometimes the public school district -- we have a child who is being evaluated now-- they subcontracted out to BOCES, and the person from BOCES will come here. Sometimes it is in my building. When they subcontract out like BOCES, they do it here in the building anyway. (The local district) is our home district. That’s close enough that they usually ask the parent to bring the child over to them. So it’s kind of a mix and a match. I would say most-- our largest population comes from (the local district)-- most of them are done on (local district) property. At some districts will actually send a psychologist here or the educational tester here. We do have, speech will come and do a classroom observation--will always come here. Sometimes they do a part of the evaluation like an interview with the child they’ll do it here. It’s kind of a mix and a match. We always write a letter-- I have the parent write a letter. The parent
always initiates by writing a letter that says in the wording of the letter that it is interfering with the child's ability to learn or to achieve their potential, something like that. I've never had an evaluation denied. They'll say, "we're backlogged" or "it'll take a while". Usually that phrase gets us like 30 days=school days to get the child tested. If it's over the summer, if the staff is not around they'll say, "We'll do the best we can". Sometimes they'll subcontract out over the summer. I've never had them downright out and out deny us. I've never had that happen ever with any of the school districts. And I can't say that we send them a thousand kids either. Usually I'll the teachers to write something up, we send progress reports or records or something like that. But I've never had them say no.

12. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services?

Some of them receive them here from our own staff.

Some of them on the outside from a private tutor. Some of them in the last few years in the public setting,
unless it was just articulation services—speech and language services but that’s not even learning disabilities, I’m just talking about special services. I would say to you that mostly if the child cannot function here that they are so severely learning disabled that they get classified, that they parents usually transfer them out. I had one that went to the public school and he actually wasn’t on grade level and stayed for second grade and came to us in the third grade and we worked like trojans with him the teachers were amazing and at the end of last year he left. It had nothing to do with us or the fact that we didn’t try to help him or try to accommodate him in fact we did as much as we could but it was just too much time for him. He really needed a lot more concentrated, specialized help which he could get there just in the normal course of the six hours a day as opposed to tagging on another hour at the end of the day or twice a week or whatever. Taking him out of a class to go to resource room. You know when you play that game where he’s going for extra math but you don’t take him out of math class. Or if he’s going for
extra reading, you don’t take him out of reading class so you take him out of spelling or you take him out of social studies. But then he misses that piece of the day and those are the kids where you see the frustration level and you just look at them and they are ready to cry. Then they have to go back and try to do the social studies on their own and I find a lot of times, and maybe it’s just my experience, that children with learning disabilities become good listeners. Depending on their disabilities, they may have other disabilities, like a visual disability but they require the interaction in the classroom, that listening, the conversation when they go over the questions because they’ve developed their memory, they’ve trained their memory so that they listen and they can pick up a lot of information that way that they can’t read. On the other hand you have the child who has the auditory processing problem who needs, he really needs to be in that classroom and focusing on that book for 20 minutes because he goes the other way. I find sometimes just the other children listening to them, understanding. It’s like they’re
almost penalized. It's like that mother last year who said it was almost too much. And you know what, I have to tell you he was focused. He was happy when he came back to my school. He was here for kindergarten and preschool. He loved it here and we loved him. Did he make progress last year? He sure as heck did. Did he receive as much as he would have received in a special ed setting? Probably not, but he didn't lose a year. He didn't lose it. And his mother actually said to us that what he did learn was organizational skills, he learned time on task, and he learned to work to the end of the task where he was expected to complete it. She said he actually pushed himself. He drove himself. This was only a third grader. To get a nine year old to do that, I think that says volumes, not only about his tenacity to the task but to our persistence in making him tenacious to the task. He was happy. He wasn't unhappy. There were days that he was frustrated. But you could see the progress in him. It's a challenge. I would say to you that his theme tests in the beginning were not good. He did very poorly. In the end he could pass on his own—he could
pass on his own. There was progress. Was he frustrated? He sure was. But I don’t think it was a lost year here. You know sometimes you think—I took him in. And I told her what I could give him. She was willing to do the private tutor besides it and she really wanted him here. The other brother is here. You say to yourself, did I cheat him being here. But he learned other things. She said that was—he didn’t lose a year. She felt good about him being here for the year but she felt that he needed to go back. He went back to the public school. The brother had learning disabilities also but he was never tested for them. She put them both back in the public school. You wish you could have done more, to help them, to enable them to stay. Sometimes, it sounds awful but you have to be able to say I cannot give you what you need and they can be better served elsewhere. In his case I would have to say I have no qualms saying he is being better served in the public school because he needs more than I could give him. As much as you hate to lose a child, it is not fair to rob him of his
opportunity to learn either. That's it? I think I talked a lot.

Principal 8

1. How would you describe your school's educational mission? Our mission is to educate Pre-K through 8th grade students using the New York State and the Archdiocesan curriculum. We also, because we are a Catholic school, that it is part of our mission, our basic mission, but because we are a Catholic school we impart the teachings of Christ, we look to develop life long learning and we promote peace and citizenship through character education. The portion of peace is very important to us. The peace pole is our symbol of our school and we try to make that a - the centerpiece of what we do each school year.

2. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e. are testing or interviews needed)? What modifications such as alternative tests) are allowed for any of these procedures? We do, we try to have students come in. If they're coming from another Catholic school, we usually, we look at the Catholic school report card. We look at any testing that they took, teacher comments on their
report card, If we find that there isn't anything that we're concerned about any areas we're concerned about that would be sufficient. The students report cards from another school. We do have a parent interview. It's nice for the principal to get to have a little interaction with parents, to see what they are-how they are comfortable handling their concerns. Get a sense of their style in dealing with concerns about their child-advocating for their child. If it's a child new to us or without any -much of school records then perhaps coming from a public school district or a parent who comes in has concerns about this child, we have a mid year screening we could use for each grade and we have an end year screening that we can use. We do that usually. The teacher that the child is going into whatever grade will do the screening while the principal interviews the parents. So we try to have two people involved. We don't typically have alternatives if something comes in and we know a child has a learning disability we look to see-to see what records-there has to be some records if they have been diagnosed. We really take a good hard look at those
and see what their education, what they've been able
to do in their own educational setting. We do set a
lot of store by what they come in with.

3. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not your
school is able to meet the needs of a child with a learning
disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic school?

We try to see what is the degree of need. There must
have been an assessment at some point, so we'll look
at the recommendations either of the local school
district. Sometimes children will come to us with
private evaluations having been done, and we'll look
to see the recommendations of those. That's our first.

The principal and the teachers will discuss that
record together because that— it does really depend on
what grade that child is. It does have some influence
what grade the child is going into. What's the
population of the grade? I can't say we have one set
policy because it sometimes depends is the grade
crowded? Is there room for a little extra time? There
are some factors that are very specific to that grade.
The teacher, what are the child's particular needs
before we set that?
4. What are your procedures for "counselling out" students with learning disabilities who are not achieving, academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of your school?

We have a person who's got academic difficulties from a learning disability. What they're getting on their report card allows us to bring parents in; that they're getting on their assessments through the year allows us to open up a dialogue with parents. We're hoping that parents are - come to the same conclusion that we are working together. We might bring a parent in after the first six weeks of school - here are some of our concerns - here are some of our concerns. Parent teacher might discuss a plan. We definitely have to have their support at home. So here's what we'll do in school, here's what we'd ask you to do at home. Or the parents may have very good ideas about what their children need - particularly in time management or in support from the parent of what they need. So we'll make a plan and then come back. You have to give it at least six to eight weeks, which is another marking period. And eventually we're coming to the same
conclusion. I’ll tell you behaviorally that’s a whole-
for me that’s been a whole different ball game. If we
have behavioral problems we probably have a pair of
behavioral problems. Parent-child, that could be very
problematic. If it’s the first child in the family,
it’s very frequently denial. So a good portion of our
time is spent seeing parents more often, so they can
see what we’re seeing from our perspective. We can
describe it, sending things home to give them a sense
of their child. But if - we’ve been very lucky. We
haven’t had too many behavioral problems. But I can
share with you the ones we’ve had they’ve been
inherited. That’s why I think the parent interview has
helped us out so much. If you’re sitting here and you
spend a little time with parents and you talk about
what if you had a concern, what do you do? It reveals
itself pretty quickly. You can get a sense of where
that parent’s going to be and whether they work with
you or they’re at loggerheads with you. You get that
pretty quickly. I have turned some people down not
because of their children, but because of their
parents. You know they’re a problem after you’ve spent
a little time with them. Sometimes you get a feeling but it can be confirmed for you in the fact that they may be very evasive. That’s when you want to have more and you want to follow up with them. If you follow two or three times you get a feeling if there’s something they feel that they’re not being candid about something they don’t want to share with you. Or they get testy about answering questions about their child. That gives you a good feel for where things are going.

You do need to have some rules of thumb.

5. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms?

I think we have flexible— the teachers over the year have picked flexible materials. They do try to use a lot of manipulatives so that give them a lot to draw on. They select series that do have some flexibility. They might pick a series that always has in the teacher’s guide a challenge point for the child who is a little more advanced of a remedial point. So they’ve made some good choices with regard to their basic material they use with children. So, that lets them
include different types of children. They have been interested in differentiated learning which supports the learning disabled child in the classroom. There's been some in-service work here on learning differences so that I think perhaps what in the rush might have been called a learning disability might now be called a learning difference. There's a little less of a decision that "oh this is something I'm going out of my way to deal with. I hope that over the past few years we've been able to stretch what's the norm. That there are differences that are not so different that we can't address them.

6. What resources are available to you from your Local Educational Agency in order to assist children with learning disabilities in your school?

We're in the (local district). They have recently had 2 charges of administration in the special ed program. They haven't bottomed out yet and I don't know where they are but prior to that we get a tremendous amount of support from them. They have been very supportive. We can or the parent can refer the child for testing. They are very responsive. They respond with the law
but they really are out of their way, I think. They do quite a bit. We have students who are getting speech services. Did you want—would you be interested in getting that specific? A: yes. We have children who are getting speech services. We have children who are getting occupational ed for physical limitations. And I don’t mean serious limitations. I mean some people—lateral, left/right coordination things. Children like that. Pencil grips, fine motor as well as gross motor movement help. They’ve been very responsive not just to the school but to the parents as well. The parents do have quite a they can advocate for their own child. So, they might ask us for help but when a parent comes in and asks for that, if the school agrees, we’ll say yes we agree. We’ll support them and send them on their way. We had a little information sheet—I don’t know if I can lay my hands on it now. Go to the school, you’ll have to register but you’re not enrolling you’re just registering. And they’ve been supportive about that. I think they’re more supportive the physical disabilities, the learning disabilities then they are of the emotional concerns. Emotional
they tend to let slide a little bit until it becomes more acute but I believe that's just resources. They have so many acute problems. They've probably used up all their people that were available for psychological counseling. We have -- when I first came we had 16 different school districts represented in this school. Fortunately we've gone down to fewer. Some are better than others. The home district were in is very good. The others are a little less broad in the definition of what needs services. But all of them do offer something to our students.

7. What do you view as major obstacles to including students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms in your school?

This was a hard question for me to think of--a major obstacle. I think probably it's the changeable nature of the classroom. When students move out, a lot of people in this community, they've been here for several generations. We have children whose grandparents went to school here. But we have equal portion of people, maybe even more that are transient, you know, that come from the Bronx live in an
apartment here for a few years and then move up county. Way up several counties. So some years we’ll have to recruit more in. So a class can change a lot. So I think that’s it. The changeable nature of the class. I don’t think there’s any systematic obstacle, but there are those fluid things that come up. The new person that comes in, the nature of the families that are here that are more or less in a small community the odd stands out. That can be hard sometimes. You’re not fighting a child’s fear of what’s different but you’re fighting a parent’s pre-by then it’s a prejudice, not a fear. So, it’s still rooted in fear—get over it. I have no tolerance for that. I have tolerance for the children.

8. The recent reauthorization of IDEA should have brought (or was intended to bring) some significant changes. What has changed, if anything, in your school?

I had to look this up to be sure and what I read; I’m not quite sure. I had heard recently and I perhaps this isn’t part of it; that districts were going to provide the services for all the children in the school and then bill others. Is that part of it? Ok, I
would say that was the biggest outcry and the biggest anxiety over the past year was, was this going to work? People who had children in other districts were talking about well we don’t know what we’re going to be doing, how’s it going to be billed. I have not seen any change. But I don’t know if they haven’t done it. I’m finding that the services the children had last year, they’re having this year. So either it was an incredibly smooth transition, which I don’t know, could ever happen or it’s the status quo. But our children seem to be getting the same level of service as they were and I don’t notice any significant change. I do know there was a tremendous amount of anxiety in the other districts and with those children. Like we’re in (local district), let’s say a child coming from (another local district) there was tremendous anxiety in the parent brought on by the comments made by that district. Well, we don’t know if you’re going to get services next year because we don’t know what rate they’re going to pay at. There was a lot of anxiety. Either they solved it or they’re still doing it themselves. It’s still the status quo
because the children are all traveling to their home
district. They’re not going to this area and then. Our
nursing supplies are billed to all the other districts
and that works out or our library supplies. So it
doesn’t seem to have taken effect yet.

9. How available is the Child Find process to you in your
current position as school administrator?

Yes—but if we want something—I think in our youngest
grade—our PreK that’s where our teacher is the best
advocate. You get parents who will wait I the door and
they’re still waiting for them to outgrow it. There’s
very little parent—When children get older and they
can come home and say no one will play with me,
everybody calls me retard then they get up off their
duff and they do something. But when they’re that
little, it really is the teacher who has to do the
advocacy for the child. The districts are really
pretty cooperative with the parents. They’re pretty
cooperative with the teachers too. We had a Seitz in
PreK—we’ve had those brought to us by the district
and when that ended parents have talked about being
counseled what they could do next. So, we have held
that and it seems to be successful. But again, I find it has to be whoever is our gate keeper in PreK is really the person who’s going to push for that.

10. How has consultation been addressed by the Local Educational Agency? How often has consultation occurred?

If this answers the question—whenever they do an assessment they ask us to come to the meetings. They’ve been very accommodating if a teacher would like to come but just can’t, they will include him or her by phone. I have found that at the end of every report it usually includes when this will be reviewed again and it has been. They have a community outreach and I think they feel they would—are doing that. But I don’t know that that was the agenda for the consultation. But for the past 2 years I’ve always been invited and then a follow up phone call unless they hear from me. We’ll go and they’ll talk about what the district does have to offer.

11. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated?

If they are denied an evaluation by the Local Educational Agency, what do they do? They’re evaluated
at the local—they go to the—sometimes people will come here. I have found that works with the parent who is a really strong advocate. Most times they'll go over there and be evaluated—or many times. I can't think of a district that doesn't do that if we've asked them to. I've never had somebody say they won't do an evaluation. Many times they won't offer services, but they—I've never had someone say they won't do an evaluation.

12. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services? We have some children that we service right here. We have—in support. Someone will get an assessment it will say that they don't have an identifiable learning disability but they appear to have a developmental delay or they'll give something that says there's something there, or a learning different but not sufficient enough to get services. We have several people who come here and work with our children three days a week. One person comes and works with the older level in math and reading and one person comes and
works three days with the younger children in math and reading. We try to limit to those basic things. They are people we bring in for ourselves because those children aren’t getting serviced. Then we have some children who are being serviced and they go to the Public school but they also work with this group. So you might have a small group, a core group of three or four. We don’t have all that many. In the older grades—we do take some of the talent from the parish. We have a retired person who has a doctorate in some fancy science. But she does know and she works with the 7th and 8th grade getting ready for the exam—people who have needs. So, the people who have profound or diagnosed learning disabilities go to their district. They either go before school—they’ve been very accommodating—they either go before school or a bus comes and gets them after school. They do provide transportation if the parent asks for it. May parents prefer to do their own but they do provide transportation. They are very—they do attempt to be very flexible with the scheduling. And they—we have our own thing we try to do with the children. (Convent
Name) is a retirement community of Sisters-of 5
Sisters-of 5 communities that live together—there are
about 40 of them. Many are teaching communities and
they'll come down here. We do have a convent here.
We're lucky to still have a convent. Two of the former
principals of the school live there and they come over
and work here. And the other place is some parents who
really do feel their children have needs but—we're not
seeing them, the district's not seeing them, many will
go to the private people to work with their children.

Principal 9

1. How would you describe your school's educational
mission?

We strive to nurture the spiritual and emotional side
of every child, one child at a time. That is the model
that we use and it is the shortened, or abbreviated
version of the parish mission. So that everyone knows
it. It is on all of our literature, our website. We
nurture the spirit one child at a time.

2. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e. are testing or
interviews needed)? What modifications such as alternative
tests) are allowed for any of these procedures?
Testing is not, but interviews are required. An interview and tour of the school with the principal is always required for all students who are transferring as well as new students. They'll meet with my secretary to receive informational guidelines, they'll meet with me and I'll ask them, how did they hear about the school, what do they know about Catholic school and their mission overall, what are they looking for. I will then explain to them what our goals are and what our mission happens to be. I will then explain to them, especially in the upper grades what their academic requirements will be and then speak to the children and give them a tour of the school. I interview the kids to find out how comfortable they are without the adults. Little kids I give them some paper and crayons to see what their motor skills are like. Second part of the question-- Part of the informational process is for the secretary that they are required to bring their report cards with them, the latest and the best one that they have. If they don't have that at least some form of their writing sample, especially for upper grade children.
Other than that, especially when they come from other Catholic schools there's not much more to it because I trust, I trust a phone call to my fellow colleague, you know, another Catholic school principal to let me know what went before.

3. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic school?

Interesting--the culture of the school and the faculty have made me aware, when I started here just over a year ago that in most cases we will certainly allow that child to come in and try if the parents are willing to work with us in regards to communication and support. We do have several students with IEPs or other learning issues and we've been able so far to deal with every single one of them individually.

Again, being a small school, it certainly helps. Very very rarely it's been one of those things where it just doesn't work when they've been here and that only didn't work out simply--primarily because of personality issues. The children would have succeeded
and flourished here. However, just to go back to the original question, we don’t really-- unless it is severe and we could not get a Seit teacher or a other type of tutoring, we would take the child in and give them probationary period of one quarter to see can they handle the academic rigor of the building. We do register them. We do have a Seit teacher in our early childhood center this year 2 mornings a week for a specific child. So, if we can get them services from the public school we utilize them in the classrooms. Question-- That Seit is designated for a particular child? That is Correct. Does she only work with that child? What’s interesting is that she is nice enough that she will help other children as well as long as she can give the child the time he needs. She is often willing to help to assist with other children who might have a smaller, less impactful disability. She is quite good like that. And it’s also nice to have another pair of hands around. It makes it easier.

4. What are your procedures for “counseling out” students with learning disabilities who are not achieving,
academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of your school?

Back in the initial interview process the parents are told that again being in a probationary period, even though we will make these accommodations or these necessary changes if it doesn't work out we certainly cannot provide you with that service any longer or it simply won't work out. So they will know in advance, if it isn't working out we will simply say it didn't work out. I try in my interview process to let them know that as a school of choice, the choice kind of works both ways. They're choosing Catholic education, but this climate, this atmosphere; these cultures in this particular parish may not suit your needs. For instance, if this was a child going into grade 6, we would treat him differently than if it were a child going into kindergarten or 8th grade. Impressing upon them that we will deal with your child as an individual. However, they still have to meet our requirements. And if they can, terrific. If they can't then we will have to make that decision and maybe help counsel them to another school that might be able to
do just that. Again fortunately, we haven’t had to have that situation except for once so it’s worked out nicely that the children and parents who come here do everything they can possibly, whether that means a pull out program at the end of the school day for the therapy that they need or simply getting a tutor at home. So it’s really, knock on wood, been very positive so far.

5. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms?

One word- Family. It’s unique to my experience this school- it’s the faculty, the parents, the parishioners do treat one another as a family. So there are times when a hand up is given- that little extra love, that little extra tender care, and there are times when the tough love is given when it is told, this is what is expected, everyone else is doing it. You are a member of the family and you need to do it too. That, without fail, every single faculty member here does support and hold true to their hearts. Every one of them knows that the child in
front of them can learn. They just need to find out how best. And if they can’t they look for support elsewhere—another colleague, a professional counselor or some counseling, etc. They really go the extra mile for these children—the little extra. Even if it is maybe time and a half for this that and the other thing or maybe photocopies of notes for them. They go above and beyond. So they treat one another like family members, their own children, their own brothers, and their own sisters.

6. What resources are available to you from your local Educational Agency in order to assist children with learning disabilities in your school?

I’m going to try to remain politically correct—(I will not use your district’s name in any of my writing so you may use it —) then, my local district is—they have a number of services and they are at our disposal. My only issue in getting those services is that the local district here is very persuasive with my parents in that they make services on site at the local public school location the best way to go. And they kind of make even scheduling issues and busing
and transportation issues so paramount that the parent almost thinks they have to do that. Now hopefully, next year that will ease the issue as the federal law will take effect. But we have a number of services that we do already avail ourselves of between the Send teacher that is provided by the local education agency. We do have several students this year—four of them who have therapy sessions either first thing in the morning and then come to school a few minutes late or leave early at the end of the day where it impacts the family far less. So they—when they can work out to our advantage it works out very well with the public school, the local education agency is willing to work with us on that. However, this year I have to say they were very, very aggressive with my parents and in some cases I did lose a few families because they certainly—they would not accommodate the parent and the schedule. But when it works, it works tremendous. I've seen already in several students tremendous growth and confidence too, especially when it comes to the speech. You know they have that little—whatever it is that holds them back and you
can see it. My little Matthew in first grade, you can see the confidence level that he’s had. So......

7. What do you view as major obstacles to including students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms in your school?

Actually, I would - two come to my mind right away. One I touched on before that is the Local educational agency kind of wanting that done on their site, I presume for their budget keeping their funds in house. So that would be one. The other is actually--- the parents sometimes, either-- there’s two extremes when it comes to the parents, either they want their child to be--if you will-- diagnosed, or they simply refuse, they are in denial. They don’t, they don’t think it’s a problem with the child. They don’t think there’s a ---they think it’s-- Well, quite frankly they think it’s the teacher in the classroom. They don’t like my child; they give him too much homework. It’s too difficult; they’re not doing what they’re supposed to do. So, they throw up all the excuses so. However, that’s less than the first. It seems ironic and maybe it’s a cultural thing that I need to get used to. Many
parents want a reason for the problem and so they want it to be diagnosed. They want that IEP. They want that accommodation whatever it happens to be. You know, give my child extra time on a test. Let them use a calculator or they need the instructions read to them aloud. And I know it comes from their heart. They want to give their child everything they possibly can but it actually obscures the real problem which can simply be—let's face it— it can be laziness or they don't speak well, or they don't want to write because they prefer to type. But the parent wants to have a reason for the pediatrician to say this could be a problem. They want to go to a meeting and be told. So, I don't even, I'm not sure it even fits in to the category as an obstacle to including them but it certainly gets us caught up to other things that prevent us from actually teaching them. This meeting and that phone conference and dealing with parents at home and say this issue is not this, the issue is that he just wants to talk or she wants to play with her hair. You know, it, or whatever, so I'm not sure if technically it would be an obstacle to it but it
certainly prevents us from getting the lesson taught, the activity prepared, etc. So those are the kinds of things that we deal with.

8. The recent reauthorization of IDEA should have brought (or was intended to bring) some significant changes. What has changed, if anything, in your school?

Hard to say—simply because I haven’t been here that long. I will say the one thing I have noticed is and comment on just how much more difficult the local agencies make it for the parents to get the services done in their school of their choice. However, on a positive note— I can say anecdotally—one particular child who does not live anywhere in the district, does have an IEP. Parent fought, kind of hard for it but not too difficult and her local public school district has been willing to pay for whatever services to the local district to provide those services. And it has made a dramatic change in that family in that the mother has admitted to me to being more of a controlling parent. She wants to know everything about everything about this child. And when the boy was having his difficulties she found it very hard to
concentrate, she found it very hard to do her job and she found it very difficult to deal with all the external pressures that this was providing, because she couldn't get the service her child desperately needed. When this agency - this district stepped up and said we'll take care of it for you, we'll reimburse your school of choice for the services, it just created such a change in her. That she could now -- this boy is a rambunctious third grader and he is probably a little bit more uncontrollable than most eight year olds but he is such a fun loving kid. But she's so much more relaxed and calm after having dealt with it. So, in that it would I guess, it comes back to it -- gives the family that one extra thing they've been lacking, that support, that help, that assistance. It really tore that family apart. They have three children and the pediatrician - this boy was not -- the pediatrician would say, put him on drugs, put him on drugs but that was not the problem. It was just he didn't want to do it. So it was causing a lot of strife. Well that seems to have been almost eliminated as much as an 8 year old's strife can be
eliminated. So, it has really impacted their family in such a positive way that he has gotten what he needs. He’s turned into -- I wouldn’t say a completely different child, but a completely different student, scholar. He reads now so fluently where last year he had a -he would come to my office to read as a reward for getting through a book. But it would take weeks for him to get through a book so now it’s just-- that’s the positive that I would see so if there’s any change I can comment on its that one. That family has such a great attitude now because they know this boy can succeed because he’s getting what he needs. I did go to a meeting last year and I brought this parent and several others and I even brought my teacher who is special-certified in special education and during the conversation it was reiterated to us well the law, this year, it gives us the option. So my teacher stood up and said basically what you are telling these parents and myself and my principal is that you could do it if you wanted to, you just don’t want to spend the money on it. And they gave us this-- well, we do have budget constraints. No, she said, all I want is a
yes or no answer. She was very adamant again, being a
specialist in the area she knows that this helps. The
earlier the intervention the better. And what she said
was, you could spend the money but you won't. And we
added to that, and I said well, we find it very
difficult because we just walked up your stairs and
there are two eighty-inch Smart boards lying against
your wall. Now that money for Smart boards may have
been allocated for Smart boards but you can't tell me-
- you can't spend the money. What's the difference in
cost? It's $100.00 a year per kid for the year.
Really. It came down to that: they didn't want to do it
because they weren't being made to do it. This year
they will be made to do it and I'm sure-- that's why
they made it so difficult for some of my parents. I
lost a family because of this-- I had a girl who was
coming to kindergarten who needs services they told
the parents they won't -- I lost another one because
they made the scheduling and transportation-- he would
be in fourth grade this year-- they made the schedule
too difficult. And two boys: one would have been in
eighth grade one would have been in seventh grade. So
I’ve lost four children I can directly point right to the North Salem School district and sending those parents away. And I have mothers crying in my office, crying in my office. And that’s the sad news.

9. How available is the Child Find process to you in your current position as school administrator?

They did do that but they didn’t do that at the beginning of the school year. As a matter of fact it only happened in the beginning of November where they asked us for a list of the students with disabilities in our school.

10. How has consultation been addressed by the Local Educational Agency? How often has consultation occurred?

We’ve never had consultation in that sense. They only contacted us for child find in November for a list of students with disabilities. Other than that, I have not had a discussion with them regarding children with disabilities in my school.

11. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated? If they are denied an evaluation by the Local Educational Agency, what do they do?
As I said before, they are evaluated in the local public school or in the case of the out of district, they were evaluated there but then received services from the local educational agency. Many times, parents don’t even go that route but go to a private evaluation. Sometimes, as I stated before, the parents just go back to the local educational agency rather than going through the red tape.

12. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services?

Well, we have the seit at our site but any other services are given at the local public school or as in the case of the outside district, they sent the child to the LEA to get services rather than bringing him outside the district.

Principal 10

1. How would you describe your school’s educational mission?

Our mission is to teach every child to attain the best he or she can. In other words to your fullest capability- your fullest ability. We work very hard at
doing that. We feel that if each child leaves and has reached their fullest potential, we have succeeded.

2. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e. are testing or interviews needed)? What modifications such as alternative tests) are allowed for any of these procedures?

In order to enroll, you—presently people call and once they call they’re given paper work. They have to fill out an application. Then they have to bring in all the necessary paperwork, which is the normal—baptismal certificate, birth certificate, health documents, etc.

Then once all of that is in, if the child is already in school somewhere else, I require 3 years of records, report cards and standardized tests. Once I take a look at that if the child looks like he or she would be a fit, then we call them in to test them. We have our own tests.

3. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic school?

If a child with a learning disability wishes to enroll, we first of all need to speak with the parent. We need to see whether— if the child has an IEP or a
504 etc. And once we take a look at those we make a
determination whether or not - see we have a resource
room but it's minimal, if you know what I mean. We can
help students out but if someone is severely learning
disabled, we can't. But if a child needs for instance
extended time or a modified test or preferential
seating, we can do that. If a child needs to take a
test alone we can do that. If a child needs to take a
test alone. We can do that. So we take a look at what
is required based on whatever the district has said
needs to be provided and if we can provide it, we do.

4. What are your procedures for “counseling out” students
with learning disabilities who are not achieving,
academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of
your school?

If a child isn’t achieving, first off it must be
documented by the teacher. The teacher must call the
parent, meet with the parent. We usually like to have
two or three meetings to see whether there’s any
improvement or not. If that child still hasn’t
improved, then, depending on the grade level, because
junior high involves one teacher. So we would meet
with the parent, I would meet then after they’ve met with the parent a couple of times and we would go over all the things that feel are reasons for the child not being able to succeed. Now, what we do is, depending on the district we go looking for a school that will accept the child. For instance, (neighboring school district- neighboring Catholic school) ok, I’ve had students placed there when they absolutely could not make it in our school. So we do meet with the parents, talk with the parents then find an alternative placement. We’re in the process of doing that right now for a youngster. We’ll keep the child usually till the end of the year and then they place out. I have had them leave in the middle of the year. Depending on where we can find a placement.

5. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms?

Well, I think of a strength of our school is first of all is I have teachers who are well degreed and familiar with learning disabilities We talk about it at faculty meetings and we meet all the time. For
instance, at lunch I might go down and meet with the teachers regarding an issue. We were able this year to set up a learning center - a resource room if you will and it involved two teachers. One is a retired Catholic schoolteacher and the other is the librarian. What we have done is - we’ve done a couple of things. We- in order to identify for instance in the junior high in each grade level students who really do need help and they go there rather than take a language, While they’re there, they’re getting the help they need because the other teachers in the classroom are say- math, social studies, religion, etc. will send work down that they feel these kids need help in. For instance, right now the science teacher requires a research paper for grade eight and we have six kids that really need the help. They go to resource during Spanish time and the teachers will work with them teaching them how to -research a paper, how to outline it. Now, to do the introduction, how to do a bibliography, etc. I have a good staff, a solid staff. That answers it? Ok.
6. What resources are available to you from your Local Educational Agency in order to assist children with learning disabilities in your school?

No real resources.

7. What do you view as major obstacles to including students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms in your school?

Money—Money. I have a resource room teacher but what we do is while I think its good it’s minimal. And if I had more money let us say to hire another teacher, this teacher handles grades five through eight. I really don’t have an awful lot in the lower grades. But I’ve also found that it takes us two years to identify, usually. And once we do we begin to make our adjustments but if I had more money I could set up a resource room with maybe two more teachers that could accommodate the entire school. It’s really — really, the bottom line is money. I do what I can because I have a great staff but we’re limited.
9. The recent reauthorization of IDEA should have brought (or was intended to bring) some significant changes. What has changed, if anything, in your school?

Because of that? Nothing. In terms of what we do we change ourselves, not because of a mandate. We meet and we make a decision—this is what we need to do. And that is really—our resource room this year has nothing with anything other than my teachers and I met all year last year and said “We’ve got to do something.” And we did it because we felt we needed to not because anything else had any impact upon us to do it.

9. How available is the Child Find process to you in your current position as school administrator?

Child Find? As in? (explanation) No—that doesn’t happen, and I pull from ten districts. It doesn’t happen. No

10. How has consultation been addressed by the Local Educational Agency? How often has consultation occurred?

No—it really hasn’t. It’s only—is address this way. If in fact we have an issue and we say please test this child, they’ll test. And then they’ll call and
say they’re having a meeting. But they don’t contact us at the beginning of the year or any point and say, “Hi, do you have anyone we can help?” That doesn’t happen. What does happen is we identify students periodically who need help but we meet with the parent. And that’s difficult, as you well know. Because when you say to a parent, come in, I think your child has learning disabilities. If we can get passed that and talk to them about the good of the child all we want you to do is be tested by the district because we need to have some kind of a result and some kind of a game plan and they will in fact give us that. Then we can put that into practice. Anything we have with the district we initiate. That hasn’t really happened. That doesn’t mean it won’t eventually. My districts are pretty dog gone full. My districts are not going to come to me and they’re not going to share their money- at all. None of my districts. If I send a child there because the child need testing because I suspect the child has an issue they will of course do the testing. They now they have thirty days to do that testing and they’ll do it.
They'll make suggestions. But very rarely does any provide a service as all. Even once the testing is done because the child usually has to be two years below grade level and that's below their grade level. Don't forget, our grade level is entirely different. Our kids may be achieving— you know if the whole class in 4th grade and they're achieving at a sixth grade level, a child could look to be—we might see difficulty. And if the district tests and says he's on grade level that's where we have—that's where Catholic schools have a bit of an issue. Sometimes our curriculum—we hold to it in a steadfast manner and when we do that, I think our children, they do move ahead they do get an excellent education. But those who we find aren't keeping up sometimes if they were in they public school they'd be right on target. It doesn't work—you know. All schools are not equal.

11. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated? If they are denied an evaluation by the Local Educational Agency, what do they do?
They're evaluated within our own school. Every one of them will come into our building. They test in our library. They observe in class and they go upstairs and they test the children in the library. And they all do. I would say a lot of people will complain about (the local district) but I've had success with (the local district). I had last year somebody come in and test a child and we knew this kid was sorely in need. They guy came in, tested and came back to me and said, "Let's talk". He said, "this kid really needs a lot of help." I said, "I know". He said, "I have to be honest with you. If you place him in the (the local district) district he'll be killed. They'll be too rough." He said, "I'm going to have someone come in and do a different kind of an evaluation. They did all kinds of diagnostics on this kid and they finally got it all together and I—we agreed we would follow their recommendation as best we could. It's made a difference for the child because we do have—you know—he has resource. The teachers understand the entire issue. But this kid would never survive in a public school. I was just very happy that I have a
relationship which allows them to come in and they do the testing and they're free enough to come in and talk and say 'wait a minute, you don't want him in our school.' It has nothing to do with—we don't spend the money. The guy said to me, the district he's coming from and the school he's going to go to this little boy was—he was fragile in every sense of the word—at least he was honest enough. He did get extra testing done so we had more data to work with. And we did. And that's about as good as it gets. We've never had anybody been denied—never denied—never. I have ten towns and we've never been denied. That doesn't mean that once they do it they're going to help us, at all. You understand that. But I'm always thankful for the evaluation because for a parent to get that done on his or her own would be thousands of dollars you know, to go privately. We explain it to the parent. I say to the parent just because he's being evaluated doesn't mean we're taking the child and saying go away. We're saying get us the evaluation so we know what we need to do. And every single town has agreed.
12. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services?

Where? With us. I mean in other words nobody provides services- with the exception- I shouldn’t say no one. (Another local district), (the local district) provides speech and one of them occupational therapy. Okay? Another one provides us with a psychologist who comes in once a week to work with a there year old- no, a four year old. So they- if they’re going to provide a service for us it depends on the town. The locals will come in; they don’t have a problem with it. (The local district) I have two kids who receive services from (the local district) but those kids go out to get the services. So I have made an agreement with parents- and this is a nightmare- that if you can get the kids scheduled from 8 to 9, I will fix the schedule. It’s okay for what I call the grammar school but for the junior high it becomes a nightmare. Readjust my schedule so the child comes in and is not missing a major class. But we’ve done it. But they receive their services depending on the district in
the building or out of the building. Every district’s
different. I have ten and they’re coming and they’re
going. I had a youngster who two years ago we knew was
autistic and they finally agreed. They did have
somebody come in and work with the child til the end
of the year. Before they took the child into their
district and that was (another local district). So,
some of them will work with us in the building and
others say no, if you want the service we’ll provide
it but you have to bring the child here.

Principal 11

1. How would you describe your school’s educational
mission?

I would describe it as our mission to give the best
Catholic education that we could provide for the area.
I would describe it as being inclusive and rather open
to all kinds of different kids and families and all
types of situations— even though we don’t have a whole
lot of that here.

2. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e. are testing or
interviews needed)? What modifications (such as alternative
tests) are allowed for any of these procedures?
Generally speaking when the kids come in to kindergarten and PreK we don’t do a whole lot of testing unless we’ve been told there’s an issue. In the upper grades, and the child is transferring in from another school we do do basic testing in English and math. (You know, English, language arts and math). All of those testing situations are flexible. It’s not like we use we use a rigid, one set of store bought test. We use what we’ve been using in the classes, whether its an old midterm or an old final and chop it up and use the testing that way to get a sense of where the child’s at.

3. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic School?

The criteria is relatively simple in that it all revolves around how much manpower the accommodations would take that we would have to provide. Because we don’t have a lot of manpower besides the normal crew. If a child has an IEP that says they need every test read to them we basically tell the parents we can’t
meet that requirement. We have had parents voice that by the way. They just sign a letter. - We’re agreeing to do 90% of the IEP but we can’t do that and they’re OK with that. It gets a little more difficult when the IEP shows up in the middle of the year and the parents has to make a choice because we can’t provide that. I can’t have a whole other person just to read tests. The other standard modifications that show up on IEPs like extended time and preferential seating and clarification of directions - no problem. The regular classroom teachers handle that routinely.

4. What are your procedures for “counseling out” students with learning disabilities who are not achieving, academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of your school?

The parents are convinced that this would be a good idea to go to the local district and ask for testing. Now if you mean counseling out of the building-like get out of the building? That procedure sort of follows all of those kind of steps that we do for retention, you know where we sit them down and have a chat earlier in the year and say we’re looking at
this. The next thing would be, the testing’s reflecting such and such and then go on to what’s basically a warning and then it’s like we really can’t meet your needs. We’ve found most people reach that realization a long time before we have to tell them.

5. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms?

One of the strengths that I see is that we have intellectually heterogeneous population in the first place in all the classrooms. The classrooms are reasonably small by anyone’s standards. They average 21 kids. The child who requires some type of modification of program doesn’t get looked at askance by either the kids of the teacher. They have seemed to fit in within the constructs of the modifications.

6. What resources are available to you from your Local Educational Agency in order to assist children with learning disabilities in your school?

The local school districts have been compliant with the law regarding the evaluation of the children. They have not taken one step beyond compliant. The (the
local district) district is reticent to over extend itself when it appears that the child is going to need more help. We’ve also heard from other school districts where the parents are openly questioned you know, why do you have your kid in the private school? Why do you have your kid in the Catholic school? These services are here. The (neighboring) district has been awful with us in providing services for the children in the area, which they’re supposed to be. They’re very difficult with transportation. Right now we have one child who is supposed to be receiving services who’s parents do not have their own — how can I say—intellectual capabilities to fight with the district for their child. (The local district)’s been okay. We have two children who go out every day. They get picked up by the bus and get dropped off after school. We have another child who gets dropped off late every day because she’s taking a resource class in the middle school first thing in the morning like 7:45 or whatever, but that’s as far as they go. They adhere to the law and that’s it. It will be interesting when they ever get the other phase of this new change in
place. You have kids from all over the place district wise. They haven’t figured out any of the reimbursement formulas for spending. It has to be very flexible. We invite the public school to do what ever they want to do here and all of the time of course they tell us no. (the local district) is not cutting edge on this whole thin. They’re just cooperating because some kids are getting lots of services and some are only getting a little.

7. What do you view as major obstacles to including students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms in your school?

The major obstacle would be manpower, personnel. We really don’t have any people to use or the money to pay them.

8. The recent reauthorization of IDEA should have brought (or was intended to bring) some significant changes. What has changed, if anything, in your school?

Absolutely nothing. The State doesn’t know what they’re doing. So the districts are not going to do anything unless somebody’s pointing a gun at them.
9. How available is the Child Find process to you in your current position as school administrator?

I guess as available as I need it to be. They have not contacted me. But then again my district doesn’t do anything like that now and I’m waiting to use that against them later. You know those annual meetings we’re supposed to have right now? We’ve never had one. On anything!

10. How has Consultation been addressed by the Local Educational Agency? How often has consultation occurred?

Never had a meeting and this is year six. As crazy as (the local district) was we always had meetings. You had to have Title 1 meetings and I had a Title 1 teacher who we had meeting twice a year to make sure they were in compliance and I was in compliance and everyone was happy.

11. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated? If they are denied an evaluation by the Local Educational Agency, what do they do?

They’re done by the Public School district. But they’re done on site. They come and do everything
here. They don’t do the remediation in the school just the testing. No one’s been denied but we’ve had people given what I’d call cursory exams cursory testing. (Speech story) And they’re stamped No and moved on. There’s a kid I’m thinking about from three or four years ago. They never requested an educational record of any kind they never came and observed the child in the classroom at any time, but they wrote the mom a letter saying, “Yeah, we did this testing on such and such a date at the Middle School and we don’t see that he needs any services.” I told her you can’t take this. The kid was in 5th grade at the time and by the time we were wrangling the whole thing out she was going to put the kid in the Middle School anyway. But she had an older daughter who had been through the system and she knew the way the system worked. I said doesn’t this sound funny to you. She kind of got it that day. I don’t know if the kid got retested when he got to the Middle School. We’ve had a couple of those done where they’re done 1, 2, 3 and they’re doing this because they’ve got 60 days to do something and they pull a rubber stamp out and they say no and move on.
12. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services?

They receive them in the local school district. Although they've been invited here repeatedly. Quite frankly, we don't have enough to justify them coming here. If we had more children with some disability, I could make a better argument but I actually can't even make an argument.

Principal 12

1. How would you describe your school's educational mission?

To educate the child to the best of their ability - academically and in their faith.

2. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e. are testing or interviews needed)? What modifications (such as alternative tests) are allowed for any of these procedures?

They have to fill out an application. It's the Archdiocesan one. I also have implemented for grades - children going into 2nd grade - I usually don't accept students in 8th grade so those children I have a test. It's based on the ITBS, the one they put together. I've been using that and having an interview with the
students and their parents. Looking at their records and their standardized tests that their previous school had to provide. I haven’t made modifications just so it’s fair and standardized.

3. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic School?

Unfortunately, if they already have an IEP I haven’t accepted them. If they have an active one. Now, if I look at their records and I see weakness in academic areas, reading, you know if they’re a grade level below where they should be, or math what I have just started, which I have done in the past but I’ve just started to do here this year, I do have two people who came in part time and do remedial work. I would have them work with them. I’ve also put in Success Maker which is that computer program for the kids so I have that for grades K through 4 and so I’ve been able to do is if they’re weak, I’ve been able to make modifications for them and try to help them in that area. If they’re really, really low, I mean I really
did have one student this year who applied and his grades were not that good. He was coming from the public school and he took the test and he just bombed out. I really wasn’t able to accept him based on the information that I had. But if it’s someone that’s weak in an area and I get a feeling that they’re willing to work and try to boost those grades up, those are the things that I can provide for them.

4. What are your procedures for “counseling out” students with learning disabilities who are not achieving, academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of your school?

Counseling—what I usually — to try to get counseling? Are you talking about getting an assessment for the kids? (Answer) What I try to do is I try to work with the parents to really try to accept and recognize the challenges that the child has. I try to point out— if I am really trying to point someone towards the public school, I point towards their test scores and toward their frustration level. If I can’t meet their academic needs, I’m doing them an injustice by keeping them there. I guess what I’m saying is I really try to
work with the parents because they're the ones who have to move them out. I try to work with them if I think the child needs an assessment through the district. I'll willingly-if the parent wants the information sent to the district, I send it to them. I have my teachers work with the parents along with myself trying to offer them opportunities to go to whatever the meetings are. Try to explain what they might encounter when they go to a meeting. Encourage them to get a parent advocate when they go to a district meeting and go for their final evaluation. But I really think it's working with the teachers. As far as the student I thin in talking and working with the parent that helps the student make that transition. I thin in turn the parent winds up working with the kid to accept it.

5. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms?

I think small class size is one; I think an experienced professional staff. I think a very nurturing staff. I think just that atmosphere. Along
with being able to provide them with remedial assistance and I truly mean just really remedial. I'm also able besides academic support— I also have—if the student has an emotional issue or concern, I have a counselor that comes every other Wednesday. He's a psychologist. He's through (local agency). You know (local agency)? They have a counseling service. It's them and Dr. (name) comes every other Wednesday. He goes the alternate Wednesdays to the other local Catholic school. He's actually been great as far as his ability to go over test scores with—if parents have concerns—looking at those. He will meet with parents and students but he's really there for the students. Helping students deal with anger, frustration, interpersonal relationships— you know friendships, those types of things. As far as those supports that my school has those are my strengths. We really try to address the concerns and the academics not just solely the academics we try to look at the whole student.
6. What resources are available to you from your Local Educational Agency in order to assist children with learning disabilities in your school?

Locally—nothing. The one thing I will say they’ve been able to provide—some of my kids have gone there for speech either before school or early in the morning. Otherwise it’s not a whole lot. If a kid really has special needs unfortunately they wind up getting pulled out if I can’t meet whatever their needs are. The local level is mainly they’ll do an assessment—just of the kids in our district—of their district and speech. That’s been the extent of what I’ve experienced.

7. What do you view as major obstacles to including students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms in your school?

That extra support that you need—either a speech person or a special ed teacher or a resource room or an area that the students you know, might be able to go to in a smaller setting and then reabsorbate with a class. So I think all the things I keep losing kids to the public school.
8. How has the reauthorization of the IDEA impacted special education, specifically learning disabilities, in your school? What has changed?

   Nothing. Is that the one where if your school is in a district they're supposed to provide the services? I was told that was going to occur. I understood that it was—the special needs for students would lie on the district that the school resided in then I was told by my district this past summer "oh no, they didn't do that" and it was still going to be the responsibility of the district that the student resided in. Is that what it is? Really nothing has changed. I mean the rhetoric has going back and forth but I haven't seen any change as far as what the services are.

9. How available is the Child Find process to you in your current position as school administrator?

   (Explained Child Find) Not that I recall. No contact, I haven’t had any.

10. How has Consultation been addressed by the Local Educational Agency? How often has consultation occurred?

    You know that’s why she asked me in last summer. Yeah, I got a call and I actually went and met with her. But
I met with the head of the director of student special services last summer. What she—that when she had said it was falling back on the students' home district. But I haven't been invited—last summer by the director of student special services. We met once.

11. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated? If they are denied an evaluation by the Local Educational Agency, what do they do?

Their individual home districts or the district where they reside. Never had anyone denied. Actually, I shouldn't say that. They balked at one and encouraged the parent not to pursue it. That was probably a year ago.

12. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services?

If after they go through an evaluation, for the most part if they have an IEP I will sit with the parents and let them know what kind of accommodations I can meet. If it's severe enough and I can't meet the child's need then unfortunately what happens is they
wind up going to the public school. They haven’t offered services on their premises. They almost are encouraging the student to go to their school saying “I can’t really” and sometimes I can. For the most part if it’s a student who has a lot of problems—academic problems, emotional problems, speech or whatever it might be then what happens is they almost encourage the parent. Now sometimes I can agree. I have had a couple of cases where I did realize that I couldn’t meet their needs. But other times there were things that—for example I have one student right now who, his parent—his mother is going for him to have an evaluation. But I can meet his needs. He needs behavior modification and he’s probably ADHD. He got very distracted and he is very good in math so I have him taking fourth grade math and fifth grade math. So he moves. I am able to keep him active and stimulated through the course of the day. So his mother wanted to be able to identify what was going on in his learning style. In that case I’m confident I’m not going to lose him. Whatever the modifications may be I might be able to meet with it’s extra class, extra work or
preferential seating or some kind of cues for his behavior, which is not outrageous. He needs focusing. In that case you want to get the information from the district because they also have the full study team and I don’t have a full team. There are situations where I can meet the child’s needs and if there just sort of at a stand still or a block or just shutting down that’s when I know there are many more resources that I unfortunately cannot meet.

Principal 13

1. How would you describe your school’s educational mission?

To educate all students of all faiths to the best of their ability in a Christian setting, that their intelligence would allow.

2. What are your enrollment procedures (i.e. are testing or interviews needed)? What modifications (such as alternative tests) are allowed for any of these procedures?

We do test. We test new children coming in except for children in PreK and K we don’t test PreK & K. But all other students coming in to the school if they’re coming in September we always test them. We give them
a couple of dates usually in August. We try to get a few dates that are mutually agreeable. I test them. I use that ITBS battery that B battery. It tests Math, Language Arts & reading. The only thing I found sometimes I can't use it for 2nd grade and below if I have a lot of children here and I'm by myself because you have to read it to the child. So then I use for those grades I'll use some teacher made end of the year tests. It depends. If it's only one child I've got time and can read it to them then it's no problem. If not, then I give the teacher made tests for the end of the year. For 2nd grade I'll give the end of the year 1st grade end terms in reading, Language Arts & Math.

3. What criteria do you use to determine whether or not your school is able to meet the needs of a child with a learning disability who wishes to enroll in your Catholic school?

What we do is if we are leery, first of all we try to get them to sign on the application that they don't already have a 504 accommodation plan because we don't want to get stuck having to supply whatever goes along
with that. But if we do feel that there might be a problem, if they’re coming from another school and there might be a problem that there is some kind of learning disability or something, what we will do is we will have them come to the school for the day and have them stay with the students. Obviously, we can’t have them do that in the summer but once the school’s in progress, and we do get people registering when the school’s in progress, we do have them come and stay for the day. Then sometimes the teacher will see if the student will be able to perform in the academic setting that we provide. Sometimes they can’t, like we had a little girl come in for PreK and she just didn’t want to listen, she was too— it just wouldn’t work out so we said NO. And then we had someone, the child was slight autistic and we said no. It depends. Sometimes someone does slip through the crack if we find that the child did get into the school and we find this more with PreK and K. Sometimes they try to get the child in the school and they won’t say there’s some kind of problem. Then what we’ll do is we’ll really try to get the parent to take the child out, saying...
that it's for the best interest of their child. Or at least to have them tested and try to work it out. One time we took a girl the first year I was here and she had all kinds of problems and I said to her mother you're not doing her any justice leaving her here you really need to have her tested. She needs a lot of accommodations until the mother took her out.

4. What are your procedures for "counseling out" students with learning disabilities who are not achieving, academically or behaviorally, to the expected guidelines of your school?

We try to get them tested. We do have a Sister that worked here but she's been ill so she hasn't been in like she used to be. She is a certified guidance counselor. I used to have her work with them the first year she was here but then she got sick, so she's not available as much. Then if I do find I have a lot of problems I would get an ADAPP counselor but I try not to because it's very expensive to have them come in once a week. The ADAPP counselor and the Sister used to clash because they had different philosophies.
5. What do you view as the strengths of your school that could facilitate the inclusion of children with learning disabilities in general education classrooms?

The strengths of our school really is the Title 1 program. We are very fortunate here. We have an excellent Title I teacher who was a member of the faculty for like 22 years and then she became the Title I reading teacher. She has a vested interest in the school and she's extremely capable and she can really carry children along and help them. She's really very very good. This year we got a math aid so that also helps the children who need extra help. I wrote a letter to the Board of Education and I asked. I was the only school in the area that didn't have a math aid and I asked them why I didn't have a math aid and if possible that I could please have one and there was one available so I got her. That actually helps the children that need help. The only thing is we really don't have that much to place in 7th and 8th grade. Also I do have some very dedicated teachers that will help after school. I have one teacher that
will help. He doesn’t charge or anything. He’ll do tutoring for the students in grade 4 & 5 after school.

6. What resources are available to you from your Local Educational Agency in order to assist children with learning disabilities in your school?

That would be the Title 1 program for math and reading. Also, they put me on the grants and sometimes I get— I was on the math grant where I was able to get new textbooks for math and they gave me X amount of money. I don’t know if it was my first year or the 2nd year I was here. I was on an ESL grant and I was able to get some things through that. Actually, I got a lot of manipulatives through that math grant last year. I’ve been on it now for 2 years and the last year I got books and I was also able to get a lot of manipulatives. Last year they also did have workshops for us that our teachers were invited to from the public school and they learned different techniques at these workshops and different ways how to teach children like say fractions, division different things like that. You know, a strategy that teaches you if the other strategies didn’t work. I was hoping they
were going to continue it this year but I think they ran out of money.

7. What do you view as major obstacles to including students with learning disabilities in general education classrooms in your school?

The major obstacle is some of the teachers. There is maybe one who really has—she doesn't have any empathy and she would really not go out of her way. You know, it's like my way or the highway. Is that also physical disabilities? (Answered No) Some teachers—this one I'm thinking of in particular—she's a horrible teacher. She would not help anyone who has a learning disability. She's an older woman. She would not believe it. Basically if they don't learn they're lazy— you know that kind of philosophy. That would be a major obstacle. And then there are a few other teachers too that really frown upon it. If you bring a child in they get a little twisted, I would say, if they feel that the child needs more help than normal. So I think that would be a problem. They feel like they really shouldn't be here, they should be in the Public School.
8. How has the reauthorization of the IDEA impacted special education, specifically learning disabilities, in your school? What has changed?

I think we do have kids with disabilities whereas in the past you would not have any children with disabilities. We have children that have to go to OT to speech therapists. We do try to work with children who do have problems, but not severe.

9. How available is the Child Find process to you in your current position as school administrator?

Child Find? F I N D? I'm not familiar with that. (explain) I have filled out papers for that. I'm pretty sure I have. And also, they are aware of the kids that they've screened, that they give services to. I'm pretty sure I had to put down- they wanted to know how many children had to get services from the special ed department for speech and things like that. I did have to fill that out. I do remember filling that out.

10. How has Consultation been addressed by the Local Educational Agency? How often has consultation occurred?
It hasn’t. They do talk—the Title I—I’m invited to all those meetings. We’re always given the agendas and we’re invited to the meetings. They do have some major meetings. They do have some major meetings. Basically, children do have disabilities that go in Title I like reading disability and math. I am invited every year to a symposium that they have every year in August. It usually targets ESL learners. I don’t really remember being invited to any official type meetings other that Title I.

11. Where are the children with suspected learning disabilities in your school evaluated? If they are denied an evaluation by the Local Educational Agency, what do they do?

That’s from the (the local district) Board of Education. You know I think it’s up to 3rd grade they will come here and evaluate the child. After 3rd grade—4th and up the child has to go to the Board and be evaluated. I know they will come into the building—I believe it’s up to third grade. No one is denied as long as the parent’s request it.
12. Where do the children with learning disabilities currently enrolled in your school receive prescriptive services?

A bus comes and picks them up and brings them to a Public School, which is pretty close. It's only up the block. They will send a woman, a bus driver with a little mini bus and they pick them up and they bring them there. And sometimes the parents at the end of the day pick them up at the Public School or they bring them back and the parent picks them up here.
Appendix G

Figure 1.

Principals' Responses to Research Questions
Figure 1 is a chart which relates to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2002) findings 1 through 6 and whether that information has changed since the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 as seen through responses to the four research questions from this study. The research questions relate to the interview questions as asked of the 13 principals interviewed.

Figure 1. Principals’ Responses to research questions

Research questions and how they relate to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops 2002 study.