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# Analysis of Personal and Professional Requirements for Special Education Teachers in Eastern Washington

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ANALYSIS OF PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS  
FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS  
IN EASTERN WASHINGTON



A Thesis  
Presented to  
the Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington State College



In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Education



by  
Samuel P. Rust, Jr.  
June 1966

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

The Constitution and the people of the State of Washington have charged the schools with the responsibility for the education of all children within its borders. In order to fulfill this goal, it becomes necessary to provide special educational services for some children (5:3).

The startling rate of increase of exceptional children in the public schools has created certain problems for administrators (9:10). One of these problems is finding adequately prepared teachers in the special education field. The shortage of qualified teachers was brought to light by Mackie when in July, 1962, she claimed: "It is estimated that 200,000 are needed and only about 50,000 are available" (19:10).

Assuming this to be true, many administrators are asking: "What personal and professional qualifications are necessary for successful special education teachers?" and "What criteria shall I use in hiring these teachers?"

Differences of opinion exist regarding the certification of teachers of special education, but there is general agreement in the areas of qualification and training of these teachers. Adequately prepared teachers of special education are essential to the operation and continued growth of special education programs (1:21, 3:698, 14:373).

## I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study (1) to determine the criteria used for the employment of special education teachers in Eastern Washington; (2) to compare current qualifications with professional standards suggested by nationally recognized studies; and (3) evaluate these findings for teacher selection.

Importance of the study. Approximately 6,000,000 children in the United States are in need of some type of special education. There are only about 1,670,000 receiving this help (10:38, 18:8).

Between 1948 and 1958 there were striking gains in the enrollment of mentally retarded children and substantial gains in the enrollment of emotionally disturbed children in the public schools (24:15). From 1958 to 1963 the increase of emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded children in institutions amounted to forty per cent. This is not nearly as high as the increase in special education programs in the public schools (13:10).

In the past the public has been satisfied to let the institutions take care of the problem children. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, and particularly following World War II, there has been a growing awareness of the importance of the education of exceptional children. It is

pointed out in the Encyclopedia of Educational Research that:

Institutions for exceptional children have played a significant role in the development of special education, but during the last two decades there has been a marked shift of educational programs for exceptional children to the local community (8:1324).

The major cause of the lag in special education programs is the shortage of qualified teachers. Some school districts have dropped existing programs or hesitated to implement new ones because of the scarcity of trained teachers. It was felt that an inadequately prepared teacher can do more harm to these children than the absence of a special education program (29:518).

Exceptional children have special needs. The requirements of these children differ markedly from the needs of normal children. The teacher, therefore, must have special training in order to work with the exceptional child (1:21, 9:19, 14:373). Stullken summarizes the problem when he states:

The teacher must have personal qualifications suitable for the task at hand and should have training which is particularly adapted to the requirements of working with problem children (9:301).

## II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

For the purpose of this study, these terms are defined as follows:

Special education. That part of the instructional program which is in addition to, or instead of, the regular classroom program for normal children.

Mentally retarded child. The child that is intellectually subnormal but will be able to function satisfactorily in an adult society.

Emotionally disturbed child. The child who, because of emotional, environmental, organic, or personal difficulties, cannot learn and adjust successfully in the normal school environment.

Exceptional child. For this study, Cruickshank and Johnson's definition will be used, and is as follows:

Essentially an exceptional child is one who deviates intellectually, physically, socially, or emotionally so markedly from what is considered to be normal growth and development that he cannot receive maximum benefit from a regular school program and requires a special class or supplementary instruction and services (6:3).

Special education teacher. The teacher primarily concerned with emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded children in the elementary school.

### III. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was confined to teachers of emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded children. Although it is recognized that there are other areas of exceptionality, no attempt was made to discern the qualifications of teachers in the areas of visual, audio, physical, and speech handicaps. Hunter has pointed out that the majority of special

education pupils fall into the two categories of mental retardation and emotionally disturbed (13:10).

Eastern Washington was chosen for two reasons:

(1) There is a paucity of published research concerning the problem in the eastern part of the state.

(2) The proximity of the college is conducive to more efficient contact with the school districts in the eastern part of the state.

#### IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE STUDY

The remainder of the study will enlarge on the following material:

Chapter II will present a brief history and a review of literature related to the qualifications and training of special education teachers.

Chapter III will describe the research setting and data gathering methods. The selection of the sample and follow-up methods will also be discussed.

Chapter IV will report the findings of the study, using tables and charts. An analysis of each table or chart will be included.

Chapter V will be the summary and recommendations as concluded from the evaluation of the data.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of related literature was intended to justify the need for the study of the qualifications and characteristics of teachers of special education. It was also intended to point out the shortage of trained special education teachers and the important role these teachers play in special education programs.

The history of special education in the United States is relatively short. Prior to 1800 there were no provisions for the education of exceptional children. During the early part of the nineteenth century, residential schools were introduced. These schools offered a protective environment as well as special training. It was not until the early 1900's that special education began to appear in the public schools (14:6-7). The movement slowly gained impetus until the early 1940's when, according to Kirk and Weiner:

. . . the field of special education has undergone an "explosion" both in services and in knowledge. The development of programs for exceptional children since World War II has been so rapid that few professional workers have been able to keep up with the expanding scene (16:iv).

The shortage of qualified teachers of exceptional children was brought to light by Lord and Kirk in 1950 when they stated:

One hundred thousand teachers of exceptional children will be needed to man the schools and classes of the nation. At present approximately 16,000 such teachers are available (9:116).

The National Society for the Study of Education devoted the whole of Part II of its forty-ninth yearbook to the need for trained teachers of special education and the problems and programs involved in the education of special children. The importance of special training for teachers of exceptional children recurs throughout (9). Graham and Ingall state, "Special education involves children with special needs, teachers with special training . . ." (9:19). Stullken says, "Special training . . . is of extraordinary value to the special class teacher" (9:299).

The introduction of special education into the public schools requires more than the creation of designs and institution of systems. Special services and special equipment are not enough (6:601). The success of the program depends primarily on the teacher (14:373). This raises the question of teacher selection and teacher training (6:601).

#### I. RESEARCH RELATED TO TEACHERS OF EMOTIONALLY DISTURBED CHILDREN

The need for teachers of emotionally disturbed children will probably triple by 1973. Because college programs for training these teachers are virtually nonexistent, most

of them will probably be selected on the basis of previous successful experiences in a regular classroom (12:108).

The selection of teachers of the emotionally disturbed child must be weighed very carefully. Not only does the success of the program depend on the teacher, but as Pate points out, "Teaching disturbed and maladjusted children is 'singularly attractive to crackpots'" (7:275).

The studies relating to teacher qualifications appear to fall into two general categories: professional and personal (14:375).

Professional. Mackie, Kvaraceus, and Williams conclude that four areas of professional competency are necessary for teachers of the emotionally disturbed. These areas are: (1) understanding growth, development, and emotional disturbance; (2) understanding learning problems and disabilities; (3) understanding of social and cultural factors; and (4) knowledge of agencies and legal framework (23:10-11).

Lavietes' list differs in that she adds orientation of teachers and techniques for teaching disturbed children. Included in orientation is the important point that the teacher should see herself as an educator and a member of a therapeutic team (17:861).

The list is further expanded by Kirk when he contends that, "Although the value of teaching experience with normal children is disputed, it is recommended by some" (14:384).

The exact amount of teaching experience in a normal classroom necessary for teaching emotionally disturbed children is questionable. Bisgyer says, ". . . regular classroom teachers of long experience would probably find it difficult to adapt themselves to this kind of teaching (3:698). Haring and Phillips go even further by stating:

A very good case could be built for replacing perhaps half of the formal course work with supervised actual teaching experience during the last two years of teacher preparation (12:114-115).

They continue, "A minimum of one year experience in the regular elementary classroom is recommended for teachers of emotionally disturbed children (12:115). A consensus is that a limited amount of experience in the regular classroom would be sufficient for these teachers (3,12,14).

Personal. In the study by Mackie, et al (23), the personal qualifications are listed only as those skills and abilities necessary for working with colleagues, parents, and children. In a later study Mackie, Dunn, and Cain state that, "According to over three-fourths of the teachers queried, special education teachers need personal characteristics different in kind or degree from those of regular teachers" (20:375).

The significance of strong personal traits is brought to light more forcefully in the following statement by Lavietes: "The importance of the personality of the teacher

of emotionally disturbed children cannot be over-emphasized." She lists the characteristics to be considered as (1) level of anxiety; (2) tolerance to frustration; (3) sensitivity to emotional motivation; (4) identification; (5) types of defenses; and (6) ability to understand one's self (17:682).

Although Haring and Phillips contend that relating personality factors to successful teaching of emotionally disturbed children is risky, they do say, ". . . there are certain definable traits that . . . have tentatively been shown to yield relatively good immediate results in special class teaching" (12:109).

They list the definable traits as: calmness in dealing with children, unshakable stability, fairness and sincerity, belief in the potential of all children, firmness in holding limits, and ability to apply and direct teaching materials in an orderly manner (12:109-110).

The impact of the teacher's personality is clearly set forth by Bisgyer when he avers, "The principle motivation for learning for these emotionally disturbed children is the relationship with the teacher" (3:699).

## II. RESEARCH RELATED TO TEACHERS OF MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN

The number of mentally retarded children of school age is generally agreed to be from three to five per cent

of the school population. Because more and more of these children are entering the public schools, the problem of providing adequate programs arises. One of the important factors for insuring the success of such programs is the selection of trained teachers (6:224;7:97;10:74).

When selecting teachers of mentally retarded children, the assumption is that they have had special training. However, due to the newness of the program and the shortage of teachers, the special classes are often taught by teachers with no training or experience in the area of mental retardation (10:323).

Barbe says, "Because of the special needs of retarded children, it is desirable that specially trained teachers work with them" (1:21).

The literature abounds with suggested qualifications for teachers of mentally retarded children (6,14,16,29). These suggested qualifications, like those for teachers of emotionally disturbed children, fall into the two categories of professional and personal.

Professional. A nation-wide study by Mackie, Williams, and Dunn indicates that distinctive competencies for teachers of mentally retarded children fall under four broad headings: (1) Understanding the characteristics of the mentally retarded, (2) developing a functional curriculum through relating the

broad personal and social needs of the mentally retarded, (3) understanding and applying pedagogical procedures based on an understanding of the known learning characteristics of the mentally retarded child, and (4) selecting, developing, and using appropriate instructional materials and equipment in teaching mentally retarded children (25:7).

The professional qualifications listed as necessary for teachers of mentally retarded children are much the same as those listed for teachers of emotionally disturbed children. Professional training should amount to from eighteen to twenty-four semester hours, with some of those hours in the broad area of special education and some in the specialized field, such as mental retardation, emotional disturbance, etc. (26:106-107). Kirk and Johnson have noted,

A teacher of the mentally handicapped must obtain supplementary specialized training to understand the children, their needs, and the curriculum of the special class (15:127).

The necessity for regular teaching experience before teaching mental retardates has long been debated. The majority of people queried by Mackie and associates indicated one year as minimal, two years as desirable, and three years as ideal (25:57-58). One to three years teaching experience in normal classrooms is also suggested by Wallin (26:106-107). Kirk advocates at least student teaching with both normal and retarded children at two or three levels, as in a primary and intermediate class (14:379).

Personal. Personal qualifications necessary for successful teachers of mentally retarded children closely parallel those for teachers of emotionally disturbed children. The same characteristics that are needed by any teacher of normal children are also needed by teachers of the mental retardate. Especially important are emotional maturity, warmth, interest, objectivity, inventiveness, and originality (28:24). Mackie, et al, add personal magnetism, ingenuity, resourcefulness, and willingness to exert more than ordinary effort (25:41). Other suggested traits include flexibility, good judgment, stable personality, desire, tolerance, and considerateness (26:99-101).

Mackie summarizes:

Every teacher needs certain personality characteristics, . . . which enable her to do her job well. To be successful with crippled children (and, by extension, with other deviants) . . . she needs them to an even greater degree because of the individual deviations and problems of the children and because of the complicated nature of administering special classes (26:96).

Many authorities agree that the degree of professional and personal qualifications for special education teachers is important to the development and continued success of special education programs in the public schools. A review of literature regarding this subject indicates the need for two things. One is to determine the qualifications of special education teachers in the field, and the other is

to develop effective guidelines for use in the selection of these teachers.

## CHAPTER III

### THE RESEARCH SETTING

The sample. The 121 school districts included in this study were located in the twenty counties of Eastern Washington State. Student enrollment ranged from 105 to 33,882. Each district had an elementary school population exceeding fifty children and a minimum of one high school. The number of special education teachers varied from none to twenty-seven. A list of the districts, by county, can be found in Appendix A.

The research method. The work consisted of polling the superintendent of each district to determine the qualifications of special education teachers presently employed in the district. The three areas under consideration were personal and professional qualifications and years of experience.

The superintendents were also asked to indicate if they feel the need for certain characteristics is greater for successful teachers of emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded children than for successful regular classroom teachers.

Finally, a list of characteristics was provided and opinions solicited as to the relative importance of each. The results were then compared with nationally recognized studies and evaluated for use in selecting special education teachers.

The questionnaire. The twenty-five personality traits suggested by Charters and Waples (2) and reduced by Barr and associates (2) was the basis for the questionnaire used in this study. Because the current literature placed more emphasis on traits not mentioned by Charters and Waples, the list was further modified to include these traits. Table I is a compilation of traits that most authorities see as being the ones special education teachers should have in higher degree than teachers in regular classrooms.

The basis for the questions pertaining to professional training was compiled from the related research. The proposed amount of academic preparation varied with each author. Table II is an example of how this part of the questionnaire was developed.

TABLE II

NECESSARY PROFESSIONAL TRAINING FOR SUCCESSFUL  
SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

Authority	Quarter Hours Suggested		
	1-14	15-19	20+
Hunter College			X
Cruickshank and Johnson	X		
Wallin			X
National Society for Crippled Children	X		
Magnifico		X	

TABLE I

PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS NECESSARY FOR SUCCESSFUL  
SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS AS SEEN BY  
NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED AUTHORITIES

Trait	Number of Authors Suggesting Trait*
Emotional Stability	9
Considerateness	8
Flexibility	7
Patience	6
Forcefulness	3
Objectivity	3
Scholarliness	3
Buoyancy	2
Dependability	2
Judgment	2
Personal Magnetism	2
Physical Energy and Drive	2
Originality	2
Cooperativeness	1
Expressiveness	1
Mental Alertness	1
Ethicalness	0

## \*Authors reviewed:

- |                           |                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Mackie, Dunn, and Cain | 6. Newman                   |
| 2. Lord and Kirk          | 7. Haring and Phillips      |
| 3. Magnifico              | 8. Perry                    |
| 4. Robinson               | 9. Mackie, Williams, & Dunn |
| 5. Wallin                 | 10. Bisgyer                 |

Table III indicated a sampling of the authorities on the experience they deem necessary for effective teaching in the special education classroom.

TABLE III  
PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IN A NORMAL CLASSROOM NECESSARY  
FOR SUCCESSFUL SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

Authority	Years of Experience in Normal Classroom			
	Student Teaching	1	2	3
Perry	X			
Hunter College	X			X
Haring and Phillips	X		X	
Wallin			X	
National Society for Crippled Children	X			
Barbe	X			
Mackie				X

According to the literature reviewed, a successful special education teacher should have a high degree of emotional stability, considerateness, flexibility, etc. (See Table 1.) He must be well trained professionally and acquire some experience in the regular classroom. There are differences of opinion as to the exact amount of classroom teaching necessary.

The questionnaire was devised to determine the opinion of administrators as to the relative importance of certain personality traits to being a successful special education teacher.

The form used. A copy of the questionnaire, the cover letter, and the follow-up letter used in the study can be found in Appendix B.

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

This survey was conducted to ascertain the qualifications of special education teachers as indicated in Chapters II and III. The data, as shown in Tables I and II, clearly indicates that the areas of concern were: (1) the amount of professional training and (2) the amount of experience each special education teacher should have. Also of importance was the rank order of listed personal characteristics as seen by superintendents.

Of the 121 questionnaires mailed 108, or 89.42 per cent were returned. Sixty-four per cent or 69 of the superintendents filled out the questionnaire. (See Table IV.)

TABLE IV  
RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

	Number	Per Cent
Questionnaires Returned	108	89.42
Questionnaires Answered	69	63.89

It is interesting to note that although 39.25 per cent of the sample reports no provision for the education of emotionally disturbed or mentally retarded children, this

39.25 per cent comprises only 13.01 per cent of the total school age population in the geographic area of this study. (See Table V.) Three of the forty-two districts stated that they did receive some help in the form of a speech therapist, school psychologist, or remedial reading teacher.

TABLE V  
THE EXTENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND  
TEACHERS IN EASTERN WASHINGTON

	Number	Per Cent
Districts sending pupils to other districts for schooling	22	25.67
Districts having no special education programs	42	39.25
Districts having no special education teachers	59	55.42

Professional training. This study was concerned with teachers serving children that were, in general, mentally retarded and emotionally disturbed. Because these children do have learning disabilities and require more than the normal amount of individual attention, some authorities agreed that preparation in elementary education was essential for successful teachers of emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded children (11:107).

The response to the questionnaire revealed that there were 129 special education teachers in the 38 school districts

having special education facilities. Ninety-five of these teachers, or 73.82 per cent, had their preparation in elementary education. The remaining 34 teachers, or 26.18 per cent, were prepared in secondary education.

As stated in Chapter II and shown in Table II, most authorities agreed that a college minor or 18 to 24 quarter hours in the area of special education should be obtained before a teacher enters the special education classroom.

The data shown in Table VI suggests that a majority of the special education teachers in Eastern Washington did not meet the college training requirements as seen by nationally recognized authorities. Only 23.81 per cent of the teachers had 20 or more quarter hours in special education.

TABLE VI

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE OF CURRENTLY  
EMPLOYED SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS IN  
EASTERN WASHINGTON STATE

Quarter Hours	Years of Experience									
	1-3		4-6		7-9		10+		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
20+	12	9.34	6	4.62	2	1.54	11	8.47	31	23.97
15-19	12	9.34	11	8.47	4	3.09	8	6.16	35	27.06
1-14	24	18.68	15	11.65	8	6.16	7	5.49	54	41.98
0	5	3.85	3	2.37	0	0	1	.77	9	6.99
Total	53	41.21	35	27.11	14	10.79	27	20.89	129	100.00

Table VI also shows the number of years experience each teacher had. It was found that 41.21 per cent had three years or less classroom experience. This seemed to suggest that 58.79 per cent of the teachers have had more experience than deemed necessary for successful teaching of exceptional children.

The total amount of professional training and experience of each special education teacher in Eastern Washington was combined and shown in Table VI. Twenty-four teachers had one to fourteen quarter hours of professional training and one to three years classroom experience.

Personal qualifications. There are personal qualifications necessary for all successful teachers. The degree of the characteristic varies with the type of child in the class. In order to be effective, the special education teacher should have a higher intensity of certain qualifications than the regular classroom teacher.

Table VII records seventeen characteristics and their relevant importance to special education teachers as seen by the superintendents in Eastern Washington. It was readily apparent that none of the characteristics were seen as being less important to special education teachers than regular teachers. It was also immediately obvious that there were six qualifications listed in the study as being significantly

TABLE VII

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF SPECIAL  
EDUCATION TEACHERS IN EASTERN WASHINGTON STATE

Characteristics	No. of Respon- ses	0		1		2		3		4		5	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Buoyancy	69	1	1.45	3	4.35	3	4.35	24	34.80	34	49.30	4	5.80
Considerateness	69	1	1.45	2	2.90	3	4.35	18	26.10	25	36.25	20	29.00
Cooperativeness	69	3	4.35	1	1.45	4	5.80	37	53.65	21	40.56	4	5.46
Dependability	69	1	1.45	1	1.45	3	4.35	51	73.97	9	13.05	4	5.80
Emotional Stability	69			1	1.45	3	4.35	15	21.75	25	36.25	24	34.80
Ethicalness	69	3	4.35	1	1.45	8	11.60	50	72.50	6	8.70	1	1.45
Expressiveness	69	1	1.45	3	4.35	9	13.05	35	50.75	17	24.65	4	5.80
Flexibility	69			1	1.45	5	7.25	13	18.85	36	52.20	14	20.30
Forcefulness	69	1	1.45	5	7.25	11	15.95	37	53.65	13	18.85	2	2.90
Judgment	69			1	1.45	3	4.35	35	50.75	21	30.45	9	13.05
Mental Alertness	69	1	1.45	3	4.35	6	8.70	46	66.70	11	15.95	2	2.90
Objectivity	69	1	1.45	1	1.45	3	4.35	37	53.65	21	30.45	6	8.70
Personal Magnetism	69	2	2.90	1	1.45	9	13.05	42	60.90	13	18.85	2	2.90
Physical Energy & Drive	69			1	1.45	10	14.50	34	49.30	17	24.65	7	10.15
Scholarliness	69	2	2.90	8	11.70	17	24.65	35	50.75	5	7.25	2	2.90
Originality	69	1	1.45	1	1.45	9	13.05	16	23.20	32	46.40	10	14.50
Patience	69			1	1.45	2	2.90	6	8.70	19	27.55	41	59.45
Other	6							1	16.67	2	33.33	3	50.00

important to special education teachers. These qualifications are: Buoyancy, considerateness, emotional stability, flexibility, originality, and patience.

Other qualifications listed by the superintendents as being important were: ability to meet defeat and still continue, guidance skills, classroom control management, missionary spirit, teaching skills mastery, reading background, common sense, and dedication to student and career. Four of these qualifications--guidance skills, classroom control management, teaching skills mastery, and reading background--would come under the heading of professional training rather than personal characteristics.

Table VII was based on the rank order of the personal qualifications listed in the study. Many of the superintendents felt that each characteristic was of equal importance. These respondents admitted difficulty in placing a greater significance on any certain qualification. This was particularly noticeable from the weighted scores in Table VIII. There were only six points difference in the first two characteristics. The characteristics rated eight through thirteen show a difference of thirty-five points. There was a nine point difference between characteristics six and seven.

When taken as a whole, the point difference between the first and last characteristic could be considered significant. However, the main differences were between specific sub-groups rather than between individual characteristics.

TABLE VIII

RANK ORDER OF PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF SPECIAL  
EDUCATION TEACHERS IN EASTERN WASHINGTON STATE

Characteristics	Weighted Score	Rank Order
Emotional Stability	964	1
Patience	958	2
Considerateness	848	3
Judgment	804	4
Flexibility	784	5
Originality	615	6
Buoyancy	606	7
Dependability	579	8
Objectivity	571	9
Personal Magnetism	565	10
Expressiveness	563	11
Cooperativeness	562	12
Physical Energy & Drive	535	13
Mental Alertness	434	14
Ethicalness	360	15
Forcefulness	330	16
Scholarliness	285	17
Other	35	18

A comparison between the characteristic ratings of the superintendents and the characteristic ratings of authorities in the field of special education was compiled in Table IX. The grouping of the qualifications again became apparent when it was noted that the authorities listed three large groups comprising twelve of the seventeen characteristics.

It was noted that scholarliness and forcefulness were the only characteristics crossing more than one group. This indicated a difference of opinion as to the rating of these two characteristics. The remainder of the list signifies general agreement between the superintendents polled and the authorities in the field of special education.

Secondary results. There were several findings that did not relate directly to the study but do have a bearing on the general area concerning special education teachers.

Dunn states that about ten per cent of the school age children have a degree of emotional disturbance serious enough to require special help (7). Dunn also implies, as do others, that approximately three per cent of the school population could be considered educably mentally retarded (7). This would mean that thirteen per cent of the school children need the services of teachers of emotionally disturbed or mentally retarded children.

TABLE IX

A COMPARISON OF PERSONAL QUALIFICATION RATINGS  
BY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS AND NATIONALLY  
RECOGNIZED AUTHORITIES

Rank Order	This Study Characteristics	Freq. Dist.	Authorities Characteristics
1	Emotional stability	1	Emotional stability
2	Patience	2	Considerateness
3	Considerateness	3	Flexibility
4	Judgment	4	Patience
5	Flexibility	5	Forcefulness
6	Originality	5	Scholarliness
7	Buoyancy	5	Objectivity
8	Dependability	8	Buoyancy
9	Objectivity	8	Judgment
10	Personal magnetism	8	Dependability
11	Expressiveness	8	Personal Magnetism
12	Cooperativeness	8	Originality
13	Physical energy & drive	8	Physical energy & drive
14	Mental alertness	14	Mental alertness
15	Ethicalness	14	Cooperativeness
16	Forcefulness	14	Expressiveness
17	Scholarliness	17	Ethicalness

The school population in the 121 school districts included in this study was 185,398. In districts that do not have any special education programs there was an enrollment of 24,231. This indicates that there were 2,150 emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded children in Eastern Washington that were not provided with the special services they need.

Assuming the thirteen per cent figure to be correct, the study indicated that Eastern Washington had 20,952 students that should be receiving special services. The districts in the survey report a total of 129 special education teachers. These data point to the great shortage of special education teachers and the need for guides in selecting and placing special education personnel.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### I. SUMMARY

This survey was conducted among 121 school superintendents in Eastern Washington State. The purpose of the study was to ascertain the personal and professional qualifications necessary for successful special education teachers as suggested by nationally recognized authorities and to determine whether currently employed special education teachers possessed these qualifications.

An attempt was made to confine the study to teachers of emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded children. Other areas of exceptionality, such as partially seeing, blind, crippled children, gifted, etc., were not considered. School psychologists, speech therapists, remedial teachers, and other personnel that operate on the periphery of special education were also beyond the scope of this study.

The data were gathered by means of a questionnaire based on the instrument used by Charters and Waples (2). The questionnaire was then sent to the school superintendents in the area surveyed. The information was compiled and compared with the qualifications suggested by authorities in the special education field. Sufficient basic evidence was

presented to draw some conclusions concerning the qualifications of teachers of emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded children in Eastern Washington State. Certain conclusions can also be drawn regarding the special education programs in the area surveyed.

## II. CONCLUSIONS

Until the general teacher shortage is alleviated, the problem of finding and training qualified teachers for emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded children will remain a major one. This study indicated that in the area of professional college training less than one-fourth of the currently employed special education teachers met the standards suggested by national studies.

There could be many causal factors contributing to present conditions regarding professional training for special education teachers. The writer contends that two of the major factors are lack of college programs and hesitation on the part of prospective teachers to enter the special education field. The fact that a significant number of teachers had sufficient experience to meet suggested standards seemed to imply that unavailability of college facilities could be the larger factor.

It was recognized at the outset that any attempt to evaluate personal qualifications of successful teachers

would have to rely on the personal opinions of the superintendents polled. Until more instruments are designed that will more effectively measure personality traits, subjective evidence will have to be accepted.

It was concluded that rather than rank the personal characteristics into numerical order, the superintendents tended to place them in sub-groups. There was general agreement in the grouping between the sample and the nationally recognized authorities. The two areas of difference, scholarliness and forcefulness, would need some clarification as to the age level and academic standing of the pupils being served.

Another obvious finding was that while all teachers should possess certain basic characteristics, special education teachers need a higher degree of a number of these characteristics. The data revealed that none of the characteristics were seen as being less important to teachers of emotionally disturbed or mentally retarded children than for regular classroom teachers.

The teacher-pupil ratio in the special education programs in Eastern Washington was indicative of the shortage of special education teachers. However, the results of the study are evidence that the present teachers did meet national standards in every area except the area of professional college training.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS

In analyzing the data and evaluating the qualifications of currently employed special education teachers, several circumstances became apparent that might profit from further research.

It would be worthwhile to conduct a study of colleges in the state of Washington to determine the special education training programs available. In conjunction with such a study, a survey of teachers in the state would indicate the number of personnel wanting these programs.

Research into effective methods of attracting personnel into the special education field might prove valuable in alleviating the teacher shortage. This would necessitate polling current special education teachers to ascertain their reasons for entering the field.

An effort to devise methods of measuring personal qualifications would prove invaluable in the construction of guides for the selection and placement of special education teachers. Instead of lists of characteristics, it might be advisable to develop a set of screens, using clusters or groups of characteristics as criteria for selection.

Further study in the hiring procedures and time of hiring might indicate the amount of interest each special education teacher actually has.

It is recommended that a similar study be done in the western section of the state. In essence this would help to more fully identify the personal and professional requirements for special education teachers in the State of Washington.

Finally, a comprehensive study to determine the "bandwagon effect" on special education may reveal some insights into teacher and administrator attitudes toward the education of exceptional children.

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## APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

DISTRICTS INCLUDED IN THE SAMPLE

<u>Adams County:</u>	<u>Douglas County:</u>	Soap Lake
Othello	Bridgeport	Warden
Lind	Eastmont	Wilson Creek
Ritzville	Mansfield	<u>Kittitas County:</u>
Washtucna	<u>Ferry County:</u>	Cle Elum
<u>Asotin County:</u>	Waterview	Easton
Asotin	Curlew	Ellensburg
Clarkston	Inchelium	Kittitas
<u>Benton County:</u>	Republic	Thorp
Finley	<u>Franklin County:</u>	<u>Klickitat County:</u>
Kennewick	Kahlotus	Bickelton
Kiona-Benton City	North Franklin	Glenwood
Prosser	Pasco	Goldendale
Richland	<u>Garfield County:</u>	Klickitat
<u>Chelan County:</u>	Pomeroy	Lyle
Cashmere	<u>Grant County:</u>	Trout Lake
Entiat	Coulee City	White Salmon Valley
Lake Chelan	Ephrata	Wishram
Leavenworth	Grand Coulee	<u>Lincoln County:</u>
Peshastin-Dryden	Hartline	Almira
Wenatchee	Lower Crab Creek	Creston
<u>Columbia County:</u>	Moses Lake	Davenport
Dayton	Quincy	Harrington

Odessa	Liberty	Garfield
Reardon	Mead	Lacrosse
Sprague	Medical Lake	Lamont
Wilbur	Riverside	Oakesdale
<u>Okanogan County:</u>	Spokane	Palouse
Brewster	West Valley	Pullman
Coulee Dam	<u>Stevens County:</u>	Rosalia
Okanogan	Chewelah	St. John
Omak	Columbia	Tekoa
Oroville	Colville	<u>Yakima County:</u>
Pateros	Kettle Falls	Grandview
Tonasket	Northport	Granger
Twisp	Mary Walker	Highland
Winthrop	Wellpoint	Mabton
<u>Pend Oreille Co.:</u>	<u>Walla Walla Co.:</u>	Adams
Cusick	College Place	Moxee
Newport	Columbia	Naches
Selkirk	Touchet	Selah
<u>Spokane County:</u>	Prescott	Sunnyside
Central Valley	Waitsburg	Toppenish
Cheney	Walla Walla	Wapato
Deer Park	<u>Whitman County:</u>	West Valley
East Valley	Colfax	Yakima
Freeman	Endicott	Zillah

APPENDIX B

302 East 6th Street  
Ellensburg, Washington

Dear Sir:

You are undoubtedly aware of the increase of children requiring special services in our schools. Currently there is a state-wide demand for special education teachers. The enclosed questionnaire is the means by which I am attempting to determine the characteristics and training necessary for successful teachers of emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded children in Eastern Washington as seen by superintendents and special education directors.

The purposes of the study are: (1) to determine the criteria used for the employment of teachers of emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded children, (2) to compare qualifications of presently employed teachers of emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded children with standards suggested in nationally recognized studies, and (3) to evaluate these findings for future teacher selection.

This is to be a Master's thesis study. It has been approved by the graduate committee at Central Washington State College, consisting of Dr. Dohn Miller, Mr. Jack Schwenker, and Mr. Darwin Goodey.

Your thoughtful consideration in filling out the questionnaire will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Sam Rust, Jr.



- 5. Emotional Stability-----       
 realism in facing life's problems. freedom from emotional tensions, not easily upset, self-controlled, relaxed, steady, consistant.
- 6. Ethicalness-----       
 morality, conventionality.
- 7. Expressiveness-----       
 skill in communication, verbal fluency, agreeableness of voice.
- 8. Flexibility-----       
 capacity for approaching things in a novel manner, imaginativeness, adaptability, resourcefulness.
- 9. Forcefulness-----       
 confidence, independence, persistance, purposefulness, persuasiveness, commanding respect, aggressiveness.
- 0. Judgement-----       
 ability to select courses of action, discretion in dealing with others, foresight, common sense, clear-headedness.
- 1. Mental Alertness-----       
 capacity for thinking, power to comprehend.
- 2. Objectivity-----       
 fairness, impartiality, open-mindedness, freedom from prejudice, use of factual evidence in making criticisms and decisions.
- 3. Personal Magnetism-----       
 attractively dressed, absence of distracting physical defects, absence of distracting mannerisms, cleanliness, posture.
- 4. Physical Energy and Drive-----       
 readiness for action, physical vigor and energy, endurance, determination, desire to get things done.
- 5. Scholarliness-----       
 being well informed on many subjects, high verbal aptitude, widely read, literateness.
- 6. Originality-----       
 inventiveness, creativity.
- 7. Patience-----       
 low degree of frustration, high degree of tolerance.
- 8. Other-----       
 -----

In the large box on the right hand side of the page rank these characteristics 1 to 18 in order of their importance, as you feel they apply to special education teachers only.

- 1. Buoyancy-----
- 2. Considerateness-----
- 3. Cooperativeness-----
- 4. Dependability-----
- 5. Emotional Stability-----
- 6. Ethicalness-----
- 7. Expressiveness-----
- 8. Flexibility-----
- 9. Forcefulness-----
- 0. Judgement-----
- 1. Mental Alertness-----
- 2. Objectivity-----
- 3. Personal Magnetism-----
- 4. Physical Energy and Drive-----
- 5. Scholarliness-----
- 6. Originality-----
- 7. Patience-----
- 8. Other-----
- 
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302 East 6th Street  
Ellensburg, Washington  
April 5, 1966

Dear Sir:

Within the past three weeks, every superintendent or special education director in Eastern Washington was sent a copy of the questionnaire enclosed in this letter. If for some reason you did not receive the original questionnaire, or if it has been misplaced, this copy is being sent to insure your opportunity to participate in the study.

You are undoubtedly aware of the increase of children requiring special services in our schools. Currently there is a state-wide demand for special education teachers. The enclosed questionnaire is the means by which I am attempting to determine the characteristics and training necessary for successful teachers of emotionally disturbed and mentally retarded children in Eastern Washington as seen by superintendents and special education directors.

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Sincerely,

Sam Rust, Jr.

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