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## A Study of the Influencing Factors Causing Experienced Special Education Teachers to Change to Regular Programs

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A STUDY OF THE INFLUENCING FACTORS CAUSING  
EXPERIENCED SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS  
TO CHANGE TO REGULAR PROGRAMS

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A Thesis

Presented to

the Graduate Faculty

Central Washington State College

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

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by

Jon R. Goblet

August, 1969

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## Chapter 1

### THE PROBLEM AND ITS SCOPE

Only the full acceptance of a special school or class for mentally deficient children as an integral part of the total educational scheme will make it a project to challenge the best of our teaching talent. Nothing less will suffice (31:454).

It is a fact that many qualified and experienced individuals leave special education to move into regular programs. This adds to the concern in establishing special programs and classes for the handicapped because of the difficulty in securing trained and adequate personnel. In order not to add to this shortage, it is paramount to satisfy and retain capable staff. Unfortunately, too many competent, experienced persons are transferring from special education.

### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study was done to determine basic reasons why qualified special education personnel in three similar school districts in Washington State have changed to the regular programs.

### IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

In Washington State, provision for education of the handicapped became mandatory in 1943, although it was not until the early 1960's that

programs increased both through expansion of the total school population and through intensified efforts to identify handicapped individuals. Table 1 presents annual enrollment figures recorded by the Superintendent of Public Instruction's Office for the period 1963-64 through 1967-68 with estimated enrollment for 1969-70 and 1970-71 for handicapped students showing yearly increases in enrollment. Also shown is the total staff for the handicapped persons for the years 1963-64 through 1967-68 with estimates for personnel needed for 1969-70 and 1970-71 showing that increasingly greater numbers of teachers will be needed to teach classes for the handicapped.

Although the exact figures for teacher turnover are difficult to determine for programs of the handicapped, it is possible to estimate. In Oregon, for example, the Department of Education said that "one out of every four teachers teaching mentally retarded" would need to be replaced if the present size of programs was to be maintained for the fall of 1965. (See Appendix C, page 65, for copy of correspondence.) Specific reasons for leaving were not given. Since approximately 633 classes for the handicapped are operating in the public schools of Washington State at the present time, at least that number of teachers are needed. On October 8, 1968, in an interview, Dr. J. Newton Buker, Associate Supervisor of Special Education for the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, estimated that "eighteen percent of special education personnel in Washington State were presently dropping out" (5).

Table 1

Number of Teachers and Pupils Enrolled in Programs  
for the Handicapped, 1963-64 to 1970-71

School Year	Pupils	Teachers
1963-64	10,682	732
1964-65	10,738	939
1965-66	12,356	961
1966-67	13,500	1,117
1967-68	17,543	1,219
1968-69	15,900	1,232
1969-70*	20,071*	1,452*
1970-71*	22,454*	1,630*

\* Estimated figures received from Washington State Director of Special Education. (See Correspondence, Appendix C, pages 69-71.)

It is extremely difficult in Washington State to gather data regarding turnover in special education because only since 1966 has the Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction began to print any significant statistics relating to special education in Teacher Supply and Demand. Data is still limited to the number of persons teaching in special education at the elementary and secondary levels, the number of college graduates from the five state colleges and universities, and those persons who transfer to the handicapped programs from out of state. Statistics such as the amount of training in special education are not obtainable and most likely will not be until certification of special education personnel is required as it is now in the majority of states. The demand for qualified teachers still exceeds teacher supply.

One method for aiding this problem of teacher supply is proposed in Programs for the Educable Mentally Retarded in California Public Schools:

Because of the critical shortage of special education teachers, it is generally advisable for a school administrator planning to establish a program for mentally retarded pupils to select from his regular teaching staff a teacher who will be most likely to succeed in teaching them, and then encourage that teacher to work toward the required credential. Great care should be taken to make certain that this teacher is willing to accept the special assignment and genuinely interested in teaching mentally retarded pupils (35:20).

## ASSUMPTIONS

1. It is assumed that special education personnel mobility is caused and not the result of random decision making.
2. It is assumed that personnel interviewed will be honest and reasonably accurate in statements made during the interview.

## LIMITATIONS

This study was limited to the investigation of reasons why capable experienced personnel in special education changed to regular programs in three comparable school districts.

Literature directly related to the study was limited.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS USED

### Experienced Capable Personnel

Experienced capable personnel are teachers who worked in the field of special education at least two years before changing to the regular programs and are rated competent personnel by administration. All are actively teaching.

### Special Education

Special education is an instructional program for those who deviate from the supposed average in physical, mental, emotional, or social characteristics to such an extent that they qualify for special

education services such as defined by the Washington State Department of Education in order to develop to their maximum capacities.

### Regular Programs

For the purpose of this study, regular programs are those programs not administered by personnel in special education.

## Chapter 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter is a review of professional literature and correspondence concerning teacher mobility as a contributing factor to cause a shortage of qualified special education personnel. The literature surveyed included books, magazines, bulletins, articles, monographs, and dissertations selected from appropriate bibliographies: The Educational Index, Psychological Abstracts, Mental Retardation Abstracts, The Review of Educational Research, and The Council for Exceptional Children.

Letters were also written to authorities and agencies for additional information. This included data from the Washington State Department of Institutions and the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. Literature related specifically to mobility of special education personnel is literally nonexistent. The chapter is organized in five sections: (1) A Need for Special Education, (2) Special Problems, (3) Teacher Shortage, (4) Special Education Qualifications, (5) The Morale Factor.

### A NEED FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

It is for special education to make the defective and deprived become contributing rather than receiving members of society (11:482).

The foregoing is a statement for the need of special education and for special educators. Preston Stephens, writing in The Texas Outlook, September, 1964, concurred, pointing out:

These people will either become useful or productive members of our communities or they will become wards of the state or burdens to their families (40:30).

Stephens says state institutions for the majority of the retarded are not the answer and warns although the state institutions serve an admirable cause for the severely retarded, they must not become a dumping ground for all retardates. He continues:

Money spent on special education classes in the public schools represents a sound investment if would be burdens are to be transformed into contributing citizens. Special education classes leading to job training and placement can convert the problem burdens of society into performing, functioning taxpayers. A little money spent on special education classes today will pay off many times in savings to the taxpayers (40:54).

In Washington State in 1967 there were an estimated 95,688 mentally retarded persons, according to statistics from the Washington State Department of Institutions (see Appendix C, page 73.) Only 4,858 of the total 95,688 (5.1 percent) were being cared for in state institutions. Almost 95 percent are still in the community. The total number of persons enrolled in special education classes for the 1967-68 school year was 17,543, representing 18.3 percent of the estimated mentally retarded in Washington State. From these statistics one may assume that those persons not in school or an institution are being cared for by their parents,

guardians, or in private facilities. Usually, the non-productive retardate remains dependent upon his family, receives little if any state services, and is sent to a state institution as a last resort.

A critical analysis and summary of literature relating to the education of educable mentally retarded children was completed by Marshall. Points presented were:

1. Educational Needs of Mentally Retarded Children.
2. Procedures for Identifying and Placing Mentally Retarded Children.
3. Characteristics of Educable Mentally Retarded Children.
4. Teachers of Educable Mentally Retarded Children.
5. Principles and Practices in the Education of Educable Mentally Retarded Children (30:1250).

Conclusions drawn in this study were that a special education program is necessary to meet the needs of the educable retarded child. Adequate selection of special class teachers requires individuals with special qualifications and specific training as well as the need for more research relating to the qualifications of teachers of the mentally retarded.

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION PROBLEMS

Samuel Kirk says a special education program should include:

. . . much of the regular aims and purposes of the curriculum for the normal child, but in addition includes a special class organization, special materials, a special diagnosis, special clinical teaching procedures, emphasis on learning disabilities, more

systematic instruction, more parent education, and more individualization of instruction. These are some of the procedures that make the education of the mentally handicapped SPECIAL (24:152).

According to Conner, providing these procedures has led to rapid, perhaps too rapid, formation of some special education programs. For special education to have true identity, it is necessary to evidence clearly:

1. A body of knowledge derived from depth study and research from a variety of viewpoints.
2. Specific techniques for accomplishing its goals, particularly those relating to the teaching-learning process and its organization for instruction.
3. Standards for admission to the field and for programs of professional preparation.
4. Recognition of the field by other professional groups (8:207).

Leo Conner states special education's response to pressure for quantity of service to children is noteworthy, but now is the time for increased pressure for quality.

The tremendous increase in enrollment of exceptional children in our country has been made at some sacrifice. Compromises with better educational practices and the weak preparation of administrators, supervisors and teachers are too often a reality within our states, cities, and local communities. Problems and issues include the lack of competent supervision, poorly prepared teachers, the need for periodic and objective examination of on-going programs, follow-up studies, and the utilization of research findings (9:113).

G. Orville Johnson discussed the failure of administrators to provide adequate assistance to special education, commenting:

The teacher of the mentally handicapped usually has at best a supervisor who sees her only occasionally and certainly is not readily available at time of crisis. In addition, the attitudes of building principal and other teachers are too often: (a) I don't understand how you work with these children and (b) That a good job is being done if the children are quiet whether they are learning or not (19:70).

Johnson concludes by stating corrective steps include formating a philosophy of special education for the retarded and provigint teacher guidance.

In a study conducted by Milton V. Wisland and Tony D. Vaughan in thirteen Western states, most significant problems in special education were identified. The most important problem was the lack of adequately prepared personnel which included the lack of administrative and supervisory personnel in special education (44:87-89).

Herbert Goldstein, in a survey of literature comparing special classes with regular classes, concluded special education must be sure that the students selected for the program are appropriate, that curriculum must be upgraded, and that teachers selected must be competent. Thus it becomes apparent that the special class is no panacea for the handicapped child. What is needed is the special class with the qualified special teacher.

#### TEACHER SHORTAGE

The critical problem of teacher shortage facing the nation as a whole is even more acute within the area of special education. According

to the U. S. Office of Education, at least four times the available number would be required for the services needed (28:1).

Masling stated the shortage will continue:

A high rate of attrition will continue as long as potential teachers are allowed to see only the tinsel and glitter of teaching without knowing something of the inevitable realities (32:104).

Tenny reiterated the need for teachers of the handicapped:

Education in the United States has but [partially] met the needs of the mentally handicapped children. To fully meet these needs is a responsibility in part of all teachers, but more particularly teachers who are specially prepared to provide for the mentally handicapped child in the maximum of educational experiences he can expect to attain. To attain this for all such children will require the recruitment of thousands of teachers and the provision of adequate preparation for this specialized teaching field (43:572).

Martens stated:

One of the avenues through which teachers can be recruited is a crusade for favorable working conditions in the program of special schools and classes. A satisfied customer is the best advertisement in any business. Capable teachers who find satisfying relationships with administrative staff and fellow teachers and who are appreciated by both school and community for what they are trying to do for mentally deficient children are a living testimonial to the worthwhileness of the service (31:453).

According to Fleeman (12), there will continue to be a shortage of special education teachers for the handicapped during the years 1960-61 through 1970-71 in the State of Missouri. This will result because the enrollment figures in the public schools are increasing as new programs become available for the handicapped.

Halbert and Nancy Robinson discuss one consequence of the recent enthusiastic promotion of special classes. The tendency, according

to the Robinsons, is often to assign to the special classroom any available teacher who will assume the position.

Often this has been the teacher with the least seniority and the least experience in teaching. Retarded children are thus taught by teachers who know little about their problems. Many such untrained teachers unfortunately, have unrealistic expectations and quite negative attitudes toward slow learning children, especially those who also have some physical handicap (37:461).

Similarly, Conner commented:

The tremendous increase in enrollment of exceptional children in our country has been made at some sacrifice. Compromises with better educational practices and the weak preparation of administrators, supervisors, and teachers are too often a reality within our states, cities, and local communities (9:113).

Barbe points out states are willing to support programs for almost all areas of exceptionality.

But only if personnel can be recruited and trained to work with these children will the programs ever be developed. It is not good enough to take into the areas of exceptionality people who have been unsuccessful with other groups of children (2:104).

Unfortunately, many local administrators have not been completely aware of the need for programs for the exceptional child and consequently have not provided adequate programs.

A shortage of special education teachers is only partially caused by the great increase in the school population. Other reasons discussed by Andree (1:326-328) are teacher turnover and dropouts.

Brunner and Lindquist (4:20-22) suggest elementary and secondary teacher shortage will become even more severe as college enrollment increases and the competition for teachers is intensified.

To attract students to special education and to retain experienced teachers, a more satisfactory approach is needed to continually evaluate working conditions and work constructively towards reducing dissatisfactions. An investigation by Jones and Gottfried (20:371-377) into the attitudes of college students regarding teaching exceptional children indicated much remains to be accomplished in attracting students in the area of working with mentally retarded. Asked to select an area of exceptionality that the student would like to instruct, only 34 of the 330 students at Miami University selected mild retardation as the preferred area.

Rudloff suggested a way of possibly interesting prospective teachers to the area of special education:

Since all teachers in regular classrooms must deal from time to time with children with mental and physical problems, it is probably that colleges and universities, and perhaps state certification bodies, should require all prospective teachers to participate in courses on various fields of exceptionality. They are frequently effective in interesting teachers (38:29).

Wolinsky believes society has failed to recognize the difficulties and limitations involved in educating retarded children and until realistic understanding is attained, the attraction of sensitive teachers and retention of capable ones will be no small task (45:415).

## SPECIAL EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

There is general concurrence in the literature that the teacher of handicapped students should be endowed with all the qualities desired in the regular class teacher plus the addition of some special attributes. Wolinsky pointed out teacher training must prepare selected individuals for quality performance in special education:

If society excluded certain children from the larger social framework, how does it expect its normatively trained teacher to perform adequately in a situation that was specifically created because of the nature of the "differentness" of the students (45:417)?

Along with others, Kirk and Johnson think the teacher of handicapped must obtain specialized training in order to understand the student, their needs, and the special class curriculum. Their comment: "Regular elementary school teachers without special training tend to pattern the special class after the curriculum of the elementary grade" (24:127).

The qualified special teacher, wrote Arch O. Heck, should be prepared to prevent the development of prejudice against the special class and to alleviate many existing prejudices against the handicapped. Heck comments that "The children may not have high academic ability, but they have intelligence enough to sense keenly these disparaging remarks" (13:356). Continuing, Heck discusses the part the teacher and others take regarding the acceptance of the handicapped. One such consideration isn't to choose whether the special school or special class placement has the most negative stigmatization.

It is possible that stigmatization cannot be avoided in either case. Whether or not such an effect is felt depends, I believe, almost wholly upon the attitudes held and the attitudes developed by those who have been responsible for organizing the classes. If people understand that all children differ widely and that these differences extend to innumerable qualities, abilities, and interests, if they realize that children lacking in one attribute may have a good share of another, and if they are shown what children of low I. Q. have accomplished, much of the prejudice against such class groups and schools will materially lessen (15:357).

No problem in the organization of these special classes is more important than that of developing the right kind of attitude toward the class on the part of the teacher, parents, regular grade pupils, and special class pupils. The past has too frequently seen those responsible for these classes foiled at this point; as a result, the work has failed (15:361).

Cruickshank and Johnson expressed the view that in order to be the most qualified teacher for the handicapped, the special teacher should be acquainted both theoretically and in terms of experience with the physically and intellectually normal child. They think it is difficult, if not impossible, to understand the exceptional without first having a good perspective of the normal child.

Thus the program of teacher education in special education should probably become a program that is essentially an extension of basic preparation for certification in either elementary or secondary education (10:133).

Another point emphasized is that special education should be an extension of the regular class teaching requirements. Heck believes the well qualified special teacher needs two years regular class teaching experience in addition to specialized education, a belief not universally shared.

On the other hand, Wolinsky pointed out that the teacher from the typical teacher education program expects a normal growth and process, and therefore, may bring unrealistic expectations to the special class.

Meisgeier, in a study of special class teachers, reported that "no prior regular class teaching experience" was found to be significantly related to effective special class teaching (33:234). Because of the lack of empirical information concerning the characteristics of effective special education teachers, Meisgeier conducted a study to identify qualities found in competent special education teachers. The capable special teacher had the following characteristics: emotionally stable, possessed vigor, had dominant personalities, were enthusiastic, adventurous, realistic, intelligent, practical, and stable.

According to Robinson and Robinson, ". . . not only methodological skills but extraordinary personal qualifications are demanded for the task of educating children in whom changes are slow" (37:460).

Martens commented: "Merely taking courses will never make a teacher. Other qualifications must be present if the teacher of mentally deficient children is to be successful"(31:452). Those qualifications needed were personal and professional aptitudes.

Tenny (43) viewed the ideal special teacher as a person who likes children, is intelligent, conscious of uniqueness, creative in methodology, emotionally well-adjusted, free from fear and anxiety, and secure in

ability to deal with those whose personality adjustments are less stable. A genuine interest in deviant pupils, patience, hopefulness, kindness, and a sense of humor are advantageous. Understanding of the individual handicapped child and his potentials is needed as well as an appreciation of research and an ability to engage in clinical teaching procedures. According to Cruickshank and Johnson (10), particular qualities that the special educator should possess are the knowledge, foresight, and interest in continued professional development.

Meisgeier (33) found in his study that college students who plan to teach mentally or physically handicapped students are a relatively unique group of individuals differing markedly from other college students on selected measures of personality, interest, and attitudes. Personality characteristics thought to be especially important in the prospective special education teacher were sociability, composure, adventurous, and emotional stability.

Results of a national study concerning the qualifications and preparation of teachers of exceptional children were reported by Mackie and Dunn (28:17). Qualifications considered as requisite include a basic understanding of mental retardation, learning problems, and special methods of correction. The abilities to understand, interpret the results, and develop suitable curriculum are important.

Kirk (23) in the January, 1953, issue of Exceptional Children, emphasized the advisable rare quality of the special teacher--that ability

to determine a child's greatest areas of need and to adapt instruction to diagnosed disabilities. Although the idea of clinical teaching procedures has been present since the days of Itard, the philosophy of mass education has impeded its acceptance in the United States.

Furthermore, the best prepared teachers of the retarded, according to Goldstein (14:98), are those who have majored in this area.

The special needs of the special class teacher are in the area of greater sophistication in the areas of his responsibilities. These include theoretical and practical knowledge basic to the amelioration of learning disabilities typical of the mentally retarded and the teaching skills that will make amelioration and remediation possible (14:98).

Thus, evidence that is available demonstrates not only there is a shortage of teachers in the field of special education but also a shortage of "special" teachers. Tenny (43:568) referred to the search for qualified personnel as "selective recruitment." It is paramount that once a qualified teacher is employed, administrators provide the supervisory assistance and guidance as well as support needed. This includes being willing to deal with sources of dissatisfaction that will arise within the working situation.

As Charter has stated:

It is clear that the whole teacher must be brought into focus in conceiving our explanations. The kind of information about teachers which this point of view encourages us to collect, moreover, promises to provide greater understanding of the personnel who constitute the teaching profession in America. The movement of teachers out of school systems is but one problem upon which the information may be brought to bear. Eventually the point of view may lead to an understanding of the forces underlying the attraction and holding power of the

profession itself. It may also help educators understand otherwise inexplicable differences between school systems in morale, administrative efficiency, and staff effectiveness in developing educational programs (7:299).

### THE MORALE FACTOR

Burton and Brueckner defined group morale as follows:

Morale is the esprit-de-corps or Elan of a group. It is the inner confidence on the part of the individuals and a mutual faith among individuals which makes possible concerted group action. It is a unity of understanding, sympathy and purpose within the group (6:555).

Frederick Rederfer (36), writing in the American School Board Journal in July, 1962, suggested morale is multidimensional and common factors exist among teachers. Furthermore, Rederfer goes on to say that the quality and excellence of a school's educational program may be judged through faculty morale. The relationship between teacher efficiency and morale status needs to be investigated. The armed services and business management have discovered that morale change affects productivity. A comparable concern has not been expressed by educators, although interest in group morale seems to be increasing.

In his study of existing relationships of teacher morale, Hill noted it affected personality traits. His primary concern was that those who are selected for teaching are the most qualified. Hill stated:

There exists a vital responsibility on the part of personnel administrators to scrutinize closely the personality characteristics of prospective teachers and those in school systems to eliminate those mentally and emotionally unsuitable to work

with pupils. There exists a joint responsibility of faculty and administration continually to study and attempt to improve faculty morale. To this end it is recommended that outside personnel be brought in at appropriate intervals to study the morale situation and make recommendations. Teachers who have persistent difficulties should be counseled and assisted or dismissed (18:790).

Rederfer endorsed the concept of the alternability of morale:

Schools can be improved by changes in personnel policies and administration. Principals are "cornerstones" in faculty morale status. Principals should be selected first for their skill in teacher relations and teacher knowledge, and second for their efficiency and good housekeeping (36:7).

A major concern discussed by Lingel was that unsatisfied personnel are more disturbed by organizational factors than salary or status as an influence on teacher resigning or remaining with a school district.

Lingel states:

It may be said that, fitting the person to the position is as much of a problem in public school education as it is in industrial management. In industry, every effort is made to see that persons are assigned to positions for which they are best fitted (27:25).

Unfortunately, in the field of education this isn't always true.

Hedlund and Brown proposed an approach to the solution of the teacher shortage problem through the identification and correction of unsatisfactory living and working conditions. They said:

To discover and correct the living and working conditions that are most irritating to teachers would have several values. It would remove obstacles that prevent teachers from giving their best service to pupils. It would increase the proportion of teachers who are happy in teaching and thus most effective in their service. It would reduce teacher turnover and help stem the exodus from the profession. As the schools face the rapidly increasing enrollments of the years ahead, these would not be inconsiderable gains (16:14).

In a letter from Dr. Kenneth R. Blessing (3), coordinator of educational services for the Bureau for Handicapped Children in Wisconsin, the following reasons were given as to why special education teachers left the field: (1) maternity leaves, (2) retirements, (3) serious illnesses, (4) desire to return to regular grades. Reasons for returning to regular grades were not given.

According to Lindenfeld (25:14), there was little relationship between the proportion of teachers who left their jobs and the average salary paid or the pupil-teacher ratio prevailing in the school system.

Lingel (27:25) contacted resigning elementary teachers in an effort to determine reasons related to their resignation. The dissatisfactions expressed by the teachers leaving special education were categorized as those concerned with the structuring system's objectives. The degree to which a resigner was dissatisfied with the school district seemed to be closely related to the individual's personality traits and attitudes.

Financial considerations are often linked with teacher exodus. Rederfer (36:5), Charter (7:294), and Wolinsky (45:415) agree salary is an important element in creating high morale, although it is not the prime cause of teacher turnover. Charter commented that "Salary level is not a cause of turnover but a symptom of the different orientations" (7:297). He dichotomized teachers as either young, ambitious, better-trained persons desiring a professional career in education, or older married women and a

few men who were interested primarily in supplementing family income along with maintaining local ties in the community.

Keiter (22:4507) compared the morale of teachers of the educable mentally retarded with teachers of regular classes in the state of Iowa. A morale inventory was administered to 124 paired experimental and control teachers. Teachers of the mentally handicapped were significantly lower in morale than teachers in the regular classes. Items causing more dissatisfactions for teachers of the educable retarded than the regular teachers were:

1. home training and attitudes
2. disruptive classroom behavior
3. personal appearance and health habits of the students
4. size of class
5. age range and grade span of class
6. method of assigning students to class
7. inadequately furnished and equipped classrooms
8. inefficient procedures for obtaining teaching materials
9. inadequate supervision and curriculum guides
10. insufficient speech correction and psychological services
11. lack of opportunity to share materials and ideas with teachers with the same type of class
12. attitudes of other teachers toward children with physical and mental limitations (22:4508)

The study also found that age and the amount of preparation did not appear to have any effect on teacher morale. It did find teachers of the educable mentally retarded at the junior high school level were significantly lower in morale than teachers of regular classes at the same level. Furthermore, special education teachers with four to six years of experience had a significantly lower morale tendency than the regular classroom teachers with the same amount of experience.

Similar dissatisfactions were discovered by Heller, who noted:

Leaving and nonleaving teachers were in agreement on their rankings of the first four factors influencing their decision to leave special education teaching or needing improvement in special education. These factors were: (a) Lack of adequate administration and supervision. (b) Undesirable working conditions. (c) Lack of adequate preparation of teaching. (d) Unaccepted by fellow colleagues in education (17:2349).

Another factor noted for change was the attraction of positions in regular educational programs. Another finding was:

There were no significant differences between leaving and nonleaving special education teachers on their mean ratings of the factors influencing their decision to leave or needing improvement (17:2349).

Adequacy of teacher training was also identified as an important morale factor by Martens (31:449), Robinson and Robinson (37:81), and Tenny (43:566).

Teachers of handicapped students who have unrealistic expectations and negative attitudes toward slower learning pupils are sometimes hired by administrators regardless of qualifications. Such action is detrimental to morale of both teachers and pupils.

Success in raising morale, as in industry, should assist schools to attract and retain qualified teachers and administrators. Charters (7:294) discussed how a knowledge of human behavior is necessary to understand occupational choice. He suggested teacher turnover is a type of human behavior and it must be explained in terms of its meaning to the individual involved. Most studies, according to Charters, have a common

fault in that they take a "short run" view of teacher behavior. "Without regard for the long-run psychological context which gives momentary reasons their meaning, they appear random and superficial" (7:298). On the other hand, complete understanding must be sought in terms of the individual's aspirations and life goals.

A study conducted by Seagoe (39:685) found standardized tests were significant in predicting teacher success. Certain tests on personality stability and teacher prognosis were the most valid indicators of teaching success. Personality tests also served to identify potential dropouts.

Nymen (34:3770) used the Minnesota Teacher Aptitude Inventory and Hilton's Ego-Involvement Index to compare attitudes of persons remaining in teaching and those who withdrew after their first year. These measurements reported attitude and ego-involvement and have value in the identification of education students who would become active teachers and remain in the field.

Jones and Gottfried (20:371) conducted a study investigating the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule and the Teacher Preference Schedule. These investigated 726 prospective and practicing teachers of special and regular education and their relationship between psychological needs and preferences for teaching exceptional children. The results suggested that preferences for teaching various types of exceptional children are related to certain psychological needs and gratifications.

Discussing occupational choice, Forer commented: "The specific occupation chosen or the fact of lack of preference, is an expression of basic personality organization and can and should satisfy basic needs" (13:361-366).

Aptitude and interests are expressions of basic personality forces, and the amount of discrepancy between vocational aspiration and aptitude and interests coincide must be discovered if genuine occupational satisfaction is to result.

Masling and Stern (32:95), and Stern, et al (41:9-29), discussed and evaluated motives that operate in the choice of selecting a career in teaching. Seventy-eight newly hired teachers were tested using the Syracuse Teacher Preference Schedule. Two years later a comparison was made of the data reviewed from forty-one of the original group who had remained in teaching and thirty-seven who had resigned. The study reported:

1. Motives change as a result of experience
2. Motives differ between male and female teachers
3. The subspecialties within education had a differential appeal for different teachers (41:104)

The authors of this study suggest that recruitment of teachers need not be based exclusively on the appeal of working with children, but other motives such as personal gratification may prove equally as meaningful.

In summary, this chapter has appraised the need for special education, its problems, the teacher shortage, the qualifications a

special education teacher should possess, as well as the influence morale has on making for a successful education program.

## Chapter 3

### METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to determine factors why capable experienced special education teachers leave special education in the Edmonds, Northshore, and Shoreline School Districts to go into regular programs. These three school districts were selected because of their matched programs, salary schedules, and geographic location.

#### SELECTION OF SAMPLE

All three administrators of special education programs willingly cooperated in the study by providing names and phone numbers of teachers who would qualify for the study. All of the eligible persons contacted agreed to be interviewed. The total number of persons in the three school districts that were interviewed was twenty-four.

#### METHOD OF SECURING DATA

The review of literature did not produce any well-defined list of characteristics why experienced special education teachers return to

regular programs. Consequently, to determine the most appropriate design to gather the needed information, authorities were written asking for suggestions for devising an interview schedule. After reviewing the correspondence (See Appendix C) and evaluating other designs, the interviewer prepared the design showed in Appendix A. The data collected from the interview schedule included biographical information as well as teacher opinions concerning special education programs and its administration. Topics selected were considered to be of prime importance to educators in the hope to influence their thinking in regard to improving the total educational program.

### ANALYSIS

Responses to the interview schedule questions were analyzed separately. The technique of interviewing persons directly was used because the interviewer assumed the responses would be more accurate than sending a questionnaire.

### LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study was limited to the three school districts involved. The validity is significant in these three districts; whether it is true in other comparable districts is unknown. Other limitations imposed to insure the most valid results were that teachers had to have taught at least two years in special education. Furthermore, teachers had requested placement

out of special education rather than an administrative decision.

In summary, the chapter describes the research instruments evaluated and used to gain information, the population sample, the procedures followed in the study, and the methods utilized in analyzing the data.

## Chapter 4

### RESULTS

An analysis of the study results is presented with consideration given to twenty-one items in the interview survey. Data has been grouped according to information received from twenty-four special education teachers.

The majority of teachers of exceptional children interviewed said the opportunity to work with regular students as a means to keep in contact with normal perspective was the primary cause for their transfer to the regular program. The lack of administrative services and/or support for the teacher was also a significant cause for change. (See Table 2.)

Many of the interviewees reported they might have remained in special education had more direct administrative contact and support been provided. (See Table 3, page 33.)

Most of the persons interviewed thought special education teachers should work with normal students on a part time basis during the school day. (See Table 4, page 34.)

Teachers of the handicapped entered the program because of the interest and challenge, a request by administration, or because it was the only position available at the time. A thought for further consideration

Table 2

## Reasons for Movement Into Regular Program

Items	Participant Responses	
	Number*	Percent
Opportunity to work with regular students	14	58%
More administrative support and/or services needed	12	50
Preferred to work with specific learning disabilities rather than multiple (dislike group assigned)	9	38
Opportunity to specialize	4	17
Lack of preparation	3	13
Too many building changes	3	13
Needed new perspective	7	29
Wanted rotation system	3	13
Lack of acceptance of special education	5	20

\* More than one response accepted.

Table 3

Conditions that Would Have Kept Special Education  
Teachers in the Program

Items	<u>Participant Responses</u>	
	Number*	Percent
Improvement in Administrative Contact and support	13	54%
Able to work with specific learning disability-- specialization	9	38
Able to work with regular students on a part time basis	7	29
Able to stay in same building	5	20
Opportunity to rotate with regular teachers for one year	4	17
Availability of administration opportunity	3	13

\* More than one response accepted.

Table 4

Teachers Opinions of Special Education Teachers  
Working with Regular Students On A  
Part Time Basis

Participant Response	Number	Percent
Favored	20	83%
Disapproved	1	4
Undecided	3	13

Table 5

Reasons Why Individuals Entered Special Education Teaching

Participant Response	Number	Percent
Interest and challenge	9	37.5%
Requested by administration	6	25.0
Only position available	9	37.5

Table 6

Reaction and Expectation to Special Education

Participant Response	Number	Percent
As expected	20	83%
Unexpected	4	17

is that 62.5 percent stated they had started teaching in special education as a result of administrative requests or that it was the only position available rather than interests and challenge. (See Table 5, page 34.)

Most teachers found special education as they expected with many saying it was easier than anticipated. (See Table 6, page 34.)

Most of the teachers interviewed did not have any previous experience with the handicapped before entering special education. (See Table 7, page 36.)

The principal's attitude towards special education, according to the interviewees, seemed to be that of accepting special education because it is the sociable thing to do rather than dedication to upgrading the services for the handicapped. However, with emphasis by the teacher of exceptional children, the program is being more favored as part of the total educational plan. Nevertheless, 67 percent of the teachers interviewed thought their principal could learn more about special education by more active participation. (See Table 8, page 36.)

There was much disagreement among the persons surveyed whether special education was understood by higher administration. Some thought if the programs were presented effectively to the school board and to those in charge of initiating such programs, success was assured. (See Table 9, page 36.) Others stated little support and interest was provided. It is the writer's opinion that the three school districts surveyed are primarily academically oriented and until vocational education gains more acceptance,

Table 7

## Previous Experience With Handicapped Outside School Environment

Participant Response	Number	Percent
Yes	8	33%
No	16	67

Table 8

## Attitudes of Principals Toward Special Education

Participant Response	Number	Percent
Accepts because of higher administrative edict; Ignores, not really concerned, academically oriented	9	38%
Accepting because of respect for special education teacher	7	29
Supportive with interest and dedication to assisting handicapped	8	33

Table 9

Support Given Administrator of Special Education  
By Other Regular Administrative Personnel

Participant Responses	Number	Percent
School board is not understanding special education program	4	17%
Favorable if request presented effectively	10	41.5
Little support provided	10	41.5

special education will continue to be secondary in receiving complete approval and support. Nevertheless, with the parents of handicapped children along with some dedicated professional educators providing the leadership, the services in these school districts are far superior to other districts in the state.

All teachers stated administrators can improve performances by working more directly in providing services. However, most realized other administrative responsibilities prevented this from occurring. Selection of competent personnel as well as the need to consider the possibility of having a director of special education along with a supervisor to work directly with the staff was often mentioned. (See Table 10, page 38.)

The regular faculty's attitude towards special education was viewed by the special education teacher as not always having a complete understanding of the program but with the positive influence of the teacher the acceptance was growing. (See Table 11, page 38.)

Promotional opportunities into special education administration were viewed as non-existent to the majority of persons. Women thought it extremely difficult for them to receive a position because of the factor of discrimination in favor of men. (See Table 12, page 39.)

Having adequate materials and a curriculum guide was satisfactory to half the group interviewed. The other half thought this was an area the administration needs to devote more time to for the purpose of upgrading the instructional level. (See Table 13, page 39.)

Table 10

Support Special Education Administrators Provide  
Special Education Teachers

Participant Responses	Number	Percent
Administrators are supportive but too busy with administrative responsibilities to adequately assist teachers	10	41.5%
Lack understanding of teacher's role	3	12.5
Lack knowledge of programs and provide little coordination	4	17
Have to request assistance; supervision not available	7	29

Table 11

Faculty Attitude Toward Special Education Teachers

Participant Responses	Number	Percent
Accept teacher only as well as personality of individual special education teacher	7	29
Reflect principal's attitude	4	17
Respect and communication improving	5	21
Isolated with exclusion from regular program	8	33

Table 12

## Promotional Opportunities

Participant Responses	Number	Percent
Available	5	28%
Not available	16	67
Not interested	3	5

Table 13

## Adequate Curriculum and Instructional Materials

Participant Responses	Number	Percent
Available	12	50%
Not Available	12	50

Table 14

## Attitude Toward Working With Handicapped

Participant Responses	Number	Percent
Favorable	22	92%
Unfavorable	2	8

Virtually all enjoyed working with handicapped students. (See Table 14, page 39.)

It was extremely difficult to assess attitudes regarding teachers' opinions on grouping students. To gain a valid response, a specific definition of grouping would be needed, as teachers at the different levels --elementary, junior high, and senior high--defined grouping differently. (See Table 15, page 41.)

Most of the teachers were members of the Council for Exceptional Children. (See Table 16, page 41.)

Salary was not given as a reason for leaving special education. (See Table 17, page 41.)

Table 18, page 42, lists teaching experience in the regular program and/or special education program of teachers interviewed.

Many special education teachers who were teaching in a regular public school thought the assignment of two teachers for the handicapped in a building was ideal. This would keep the building from becoming identified as a "special education school," as well as provide more services for the students enrolled. A man and a woman team was considered most appropriate. (See Table 19, page 42.)

The majority of those interviewed had or were completing a Master's degree. (See Table 20, page 43.)

Most of the persons surveyed said they would probably return to special education at a future date. (See Table 21, page 43.)

Table 15

## Attitude Toward Grouping Handicapped Children

Participant Responses	Number	Percent
For	9	38%
Against	8	33
Undecided	7	29

Table 16

## Membership in Council for Exceptional Children

Participant Responses	Number	Percent
Yes	20	83%
No	4	17

Table 17

## Salary As A Factor In Causing Change to Regular Program

Participant Responses	Number	Percent
Yes	0	0%
No	24	100

Table 18  
Teaching Experience

Participant Responses	Number	Percent
Regular Program		
Primary	8	33%
Intermediate	10	42
Junior High	8	33
Senior High	4	6
Special Education		
Primary	11	46
Intermediate	12	50
Junior High	11	46
Senior High	7	29

Table 19  
Suggested Desirable Number of Special Education Classrooms  
In A Public School

Participant Responses	Number	Percent
One	0	0%
Two	11	46
Three	4	17
Four	2	8
Over Four	2	8
Undecided	5	28

Table 20  
 Credentials Held

Participant Responses	Number	Percent
Bachelor's Degree	3	13%
Fifth Year	8	33
Completed or Completing Master's Degree	13	54

Table 21  
 Likelihood of Returning to Special Education Instruction

Participant Responses	Number	Percent
Yes	15	62%
No	6	25
Undecided	3	13

Table 22  
 Number of Years Teaching Experience

Participant Responses	Number	Experience
Special Education	24	5 years
Regular Program	19	8 years

The average number of years taught by persons interviewed was five years in special education and eight in the regular program. (See Table 22, page 43.)

Views of the assistance provided, materials, facilities, and attitudes of special education teachers concerning the special education programs were generally consistent within each of the three districts surveyed.

## Chapter 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### SUMMARY

Inferences drawn from the interview schedule suggest teachers of exceptional students change to regular programs for three specific reasons:

1. To work with regular students in order to keep in contact with the normal perspective;
2. The lack of administrative assistance and support;
3. The dislike of the group assigned to teach; i.e., mentally retarded rather than emotionally disturbed, etc.

It is the writer's opinion many of the special education teachers would have remained in special education had more consideration and action been given by administrators to the above.

#### CONCLUSIONS

Results of the study exposed reasons why qualified and experienced special education teachers leave special education. With understanding and knowledge of some of these factors, hopefully more interest and a better working relationship may be developed among special education

teachers and their colleagues. In the school districts surveyed this is important to administrators of special education because the teachers who left were the most educated and experienced. The majority of those interviewed indicated they may return to working with exceptional children in the future. Only time will answer this question. Until then, some of the most experienced and capable persons have transferred.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

In the three districts surveyed, programs need to provide adequate and qualified administrative and supervisory personnel with the knowledge and skills for working with exceptional children. To do this, more administrative time must be given to special education. Administrators should assign teachers to the type of students they prefer and not intermingle other types of learning disabilities to a group unless the teacher agrees to the assignment.

Administrators need to attend workshops to better understand the policies, goals, and philosophies of special education. Consideration of allowing interested special education teachers to work with normal students on a part time basis is needed.

A study should be made on a larger sample to test the conclusions and recommendations presented.

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## APPENDIX A

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

## INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

MAKE SURE INDIVIDUALS KNOW THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY--ASSURE  
NO NAMES WILL BE USED

What caused your placement in the regular programs?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What would have kept you in the special education program?

- 1.
- 2.

What are your thoughts about a special education teacher working with  
regular students on a part-time basis during the school day?

\*\*\*\*\*Questions to be asked during the interview\*\*\*\*\*

Why entered special education\_\_\_\_\_

Was special education what you expected\_\_\_\_\_

First choice: Yes No

Previous experience with handicapped \_\_\_\_\_

Attitudes: Principal\_\_\_\_\_

Sp. ed. adm. \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty\_\_\_\_\_

Promotional opportunities\_\_\_\_\_

Instructional materials\_\_\_\_\_

Attitude toward working with MR\_\_\_\_\_

Grouping\_\_\_\_\_

C.E.C. Member: Yes No

Salary\_\_\_\_\_

Teaching experience: Regular--Yes--No Level: Pri--Int.--JH--SH

Special--Yes--No Level: Pri--Int.--JH--SH

No. of sp. ed. teachers in building: \_\_\_\_\_

Experience: BA 5th year Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Will you return to special education: Yes No Undecided

## APPENDIX B

### LETTER OF INQUIRY

April 30, 1968

Pr. 8-8895

Dr. May V. Seagoe  
Professor of Education  
325 Moore Hall  
University of California  
Los Angeles, California 90024

Dear Dr. Seagoe:

In planning a research project to discover why experienced personnel in special education return to the regular program in our local school districts, I wrote Dr. Reginald Jones seeking assistance on the following points:

- (1) What guidelines should be followed in this study?
- (2) Have similar studies been done that could be used as references?
- (3) Additional advice that would be helpful?

Along with his assistance, Dr. Jones suggested I write you because of your direction of a similar study a few years ago.

Realizing you are very busy, any information and counsel you provide will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Jon Gobiet  
Special Education  
Prevocational Advisor  
Edmonds School District

JG:rs

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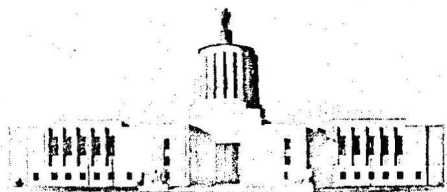
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\*Replies received

## APPENDIX C

### CORRESPONDENCE



STATE OF OREGON  
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
PUBLIC SERVICE BUILDING  
SALEM, OREGON 97310

July 1, 1968

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet, Prevocational Advisor  
Special Education  
Woodway Senior High School  
23200 - 100th Avenue West  
Edmonds, Washington 98020

Dear Mr. Gobiet:

In your letter of May 17, you ask about information that the Department of Education may have on why experienced teachers in special education return to the regular classroom.

Enclosed is a copy of some survey material collected in May of 1965. In our experience, we have the most turnover in teachers of the mentally retarded and speech; however, only the teachers of the retarded are returning to teaching in the regular classroom.

We would like to update our findings and expend our information on why teachers leave special class teaching in the MR program. While we have tried to interest one of the state colleges in pursuing this study with some of their graduate students, we, as yet, have been unsuccessful in getting them to work on the problem.

If you publish a report on your findings, we would be very interested in receiving a copy.

Sincerely yours,

MASON D. McQUISTON  
Director, Special Programs

MDMc:bw

Enc.

Please note:

Signature has been redacted due to security concern

A REPORT ON ANTICIPATED TEACHER SUPPLY AND DEMAND  
IN THE STATE REIMBURSED M.R. PROGRAM FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 1965-66

The following results are based upon the responses of the 74 school districts in the state reimbursed program for mentally retarded pupils. All 74 school districts responded to the May, 1965, inquiry (100% returns). Until the 1964-65 claims for state reimbursement are filed, the number of reimbursed special classes in the 74 school districts cannot be determined exactly. To date we expect the number of reimbursed special classes for the 1964-65 school year to be 233.

- (1) A. How many of the teachers in the 1964-65 reimbursed special class programs will need to be replaced with new teachers for 1965-66?

Returns indicate that 57 teachers of M.R. classes will need to be replaced in the fall of 1965 if the present size of the program (233 classes) is to be maintained. This amounts to approximately 24% of the teachers teaching in the M.R. program in 1964-65. In general, it can be said that one out of every four teachers teaching an M.R. class in 1964-65 will need to be replaced this fall if the present size of the program is to be maintained.

- B. How many of these 57 teachers of the M.R. can be recruited by the districts?

Returns indicate that school districts will be able to supply 40 of the needed 57 teacher replacements. This amounts to about 70% of the replacements needed in the fall of 1965 to fully staff the 233 existing classes in the program.

- (2) How many teachers of the M.R. will be needed to staff additional (new) special classes in the fall of 1965?

Returns indicate that 25 new classes for the M.R. will be started by the 74 school districts currently in the program. These 25 new M.R. classes represent 25 additional teachers beyond the 57 needed to maintain the 233 M.R. classes. The 74 districts indicated that 18 of these 25 teachers needed for new M.R. classes will be recruited by the district. This amounts to 72% of the teachers needed to staff the new classes.

Six new school districts will be entering the program in the fall of 1965. This will make a total of 80 school districts participating in the reimbursed M.R. program. Since a certified teacher of the M.R. is required of new districts entering the program, these additional classes will not represent M.R. teacher assignment shortages.

- (3) How many districts pay an additional amount over the regular salary schedule for M.R. teaching assignments? 67

Returns indicate that 27 of the 74 school districts pay an additional amount over the regular salary schedule. In general, about one-third (36%) of the school districts pay an additional amount over the regular salary schedule. The range of the "bonus" is from \$120 to \$800.

Distribution

\$100	0		
120	1		
200	12		
250	2		
275	1	Outright "Bonus"	21 Districts
300	5	Extended Contracts	5 Districts
400	2	1.05 X Salary Schedule	<u>1 District</u>
600	0		
700	1	TOTAL -	27 Districts
800	1		
	25		
1.05 X Salary Schedule-	1		
Extended Contract ( $\frac{1}{2}$ month salary)-	1		
TOTAL	27		

NOTE: Extended contracts account for 5 districts of the 27 paying bonus amounts for M. R. teaching assignments; however, only one of these 5 districts did not specify the amount. This one district is recorded separately, while the other four districts which specified the amount of money involved in the extended contract payment are tallied in the distribution. One district indicated that it paid an additional amount by the formula 1.05 X salary schedule - this district has been tallied separately.

- (4) How much is the average salary for teachers in the M.R. program?

Level	Average*	Median	Range
Elementary	\$6,544.60	\$6,553.50	\$5,000.00 to \$8,150.00
Junior High	\$6,462.45	\$6,439.00	\$4,864.00 to \$8,080.00
Senior High	\$6,999.18	\$7,050.00	\$5,750.00 to \$8,050.00

\*All figures are based on salaries reported for the 1963-64 school year.

COMMENTS: Some important questions about the interpretation of these results are unanswered. For example, does the "bonus" method of payment "hold" a teacher in the M.R. assignment? Does the "bonus" method of payment "attract" teachers to M.R. assignments? How many of the 57 teachers leaving the M.R. program are changing school districts, but not leaving the M.R. program?

Since 1953, approximately 330 teachers have been certificated to teach the mentally retarded in Oregon. A survey made in 1962 found that most teachers who were leaving the M.R. program were doing so at the end of their third year of teaching the special classes. Of those teachers leaving the M.R. program, the majority were asking for regular classroom teaching assignments. The number of teachers certificated to teach M.R. children has more than doubled since the 1961-62 school year (125 vs. 330). It would be of considerable interest and importance to know

whether this 1961-62 figure of three years in M.R. teaching still represents the "teaching life" in special classes of most of the certificated teachers.

It is true that many teachers leave the M.R. special classes each year; however, when one examines the assignment of these teachers after they leave the M.R. classrooms, the resulting loss of teachers is not what the figures indicate. First, there are some teachers who leave the M.R. program because they were not strong classroom teachers to begin with and their strengths did not increase in M.R. class assignments. Because the M.R. program has less original structure than the regular school program, it is not a place for weak teachers. Some loss of teachers in the M.R. program has occurred because teachers were unable to structure the program within which the special class could function. Second, many teachers of the mentally retarded have left the M.R. classrooms for administrative assignments in the program. A few have been made supervisors of district M.R. programs; some have accepted Federal Fellowship grants for advanced study; others have gone into teacher education programs in colleges or universities; and a few have become directors of special education programs. A third factor in the loss of teachers from the M.R. program has been lowered teacher morale. There is no "writing off" the fact that placing the M.R. classes in undesirable or isolated locations without strong administrative support has been a factor in lowered teacher morale with resultant withdrawal from the program.

- (5) How many teachers are enrolled in the summer education program to prepare teachers of the mentally retarded?

Programs for teachers of the mentally retarded have been offered at Oregon College of Education, Monmouth; University of Oregon, Eugene; and the Portland Continuation Center, Portland.

1965 SUMMER SESSION ENROLLMENT FOR BASIC NORM  
PROGRAM FOR TEACHERS OF THE MENTALLY RETARDED

College or University	Teachers enrolled in M.R. core program	Teachers on state scholarships	Teachers not on scholarships
Oregon College of Education	18	5	13
University of Oregon	14	13	1
Portland Continuation Center	30	15	15
TOTALS	62*	33**	29

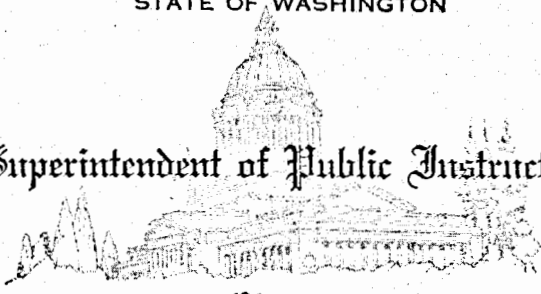
\*Estimated for 1965 Summer Session, 75 teachers.

\*\*Estimated for 1965 Summer Session, 50 state scholarships.

Eighty teachers were enrolled in the same three programs for teachers of the mentally retarded in the 1964 Summer Session. Fifty-seven of these eighty teachers were on state scholarships.

COMMENTS: Seventy percent of the teachers in the 1964 Summer Session program for teachers of the mentally retarded were on state scholarships. Fifty percent of the teachers enrolled in the 1965 summer program are on state scholarships. Overall enrollment in the 1965 summer teacher preparation program for teachers of the M.R. is about twenty-five percent less than the 1964 enrollment.

The interpretation of these figures in terms of supply and demand for teachers of the mentally retarded is not wholly clear. What is clear is that recruitment of teachers for M.R. assignments in districts yields no over-supply and several school districts will be without qualified teachers for some of their M.R. classes in the fall of 1965.



# Superintendent of Public Instruction

## Olympia

December 17, 1968

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet  
 Special Education  
 Prevocational Advisor  
 Woodway Senior High School  
 23200 - 100th Avenue West  
 Edmonds, Washington 98020

Dear Mr. Gobiet:

I am sending you the information regarding the material requested in your letter to Dr. Wendell Allen dated August 15, 1968. These data have not been collected as a matter of course and it has been a difficult and time consuming effort to retrieve reliable figures for your study. I sincerely hope that these figures will suffice as they are the best we have at the present time.

Specifically, the total number of teachers of the handicapped is as follows:

1963-64	732	Estimated Projections:	
1964-65	939	1969-70	1,452
1965-66	961	1970-71	1,630
1966-67	1,117		
1967-68	1,219		
1968-69	1,232		

These figures reflect only certified teachers and do not include speech therapists, school psychologists, physical and occupational therapists or any other personnel who might be involved in the special education program.

Page Two  
 Mr. Jon R. Gobiet  
 December 17, 1968

The total number of pupils financed through special education excess costs are as follows:

1963-64	10,682	Estimated Projections:	
1964-65	10,738	1969-70	20,071
1965-66	12,356	1970-71	22,454
1966-67	13,500		
1967-68	17,543		
1968-69	15,900		

The above figures represent those children who were served in special programs. Those children served through itinerant services such as school psychologists and speech correction programs are not included. I would estimate that an additional 80,000 children were served during the 1967-68 school year by itinerant personnel.

We have no way of determining the number of classes for handicapped children which have been or are currently funded by excess cost moneys. The best estimate of the total number of classes for handicapped children might well be made through the use of the total number of teachers of the handicapped.

Although some indication of the average dropout rate of teachers of the handicapped would be of value to us in regard to manpower projections and recruitment efforts, these data are not available to us under our current reporting system. Possibly you could contact the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education regarding regional trends in teacher turnover.

I hope these figures will be of use to you and that you complete the study in ample time for graduation. We, at the office, would be very interested in receiving a summary of your findings as they might relate to this office.

If there is any further information which you might find necessary, please

Page Three  
Mr. Jon R. Gobiet  
December 17, 1968

do not hesitate to contact this office.

Cordially,

DIVISION OF CURRICULUM  
AND INSTRUCTION

John P. Mattson  
Director of  
Special Education

JPM:vw

Please note:

Signature has been redacted due to security concern

DEPARTMENT OF INSTITUTIONS

WILLIAM R. CONTE, M.D.  
DIRECTOR

P.O. BOX 768  
OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON 98501

September 6, 1968

Jon R. Gobiet  
Special Education Teacher  
Woodway Senior High School  
23200 100th Avenue West  
Edmonds, Washington 98020

Dear Mr. Gobiet:

Your letter to Dr. Ornstein, dated August 15th, has been referred to this office for reply.

We are able to supply only a part of the information you desire. On the attached table, we have given you figures on the number of handicapped persons served by the Department of Institutions.

In addition, we have attached a table prepared by the Department of Public Instruction on the number enrolled in special classes. You may also wish to contact the State Department of Health concerning the number served by the Health Clinics, Crippled Children's Services, etc.

You realize, of course, that there is a great deal of overlapping of the numbers reported to the various agencies. Many of the persons in the Day Care Centers are on the waiting list for the mentally retarded. The same children may be receiving active service in a Crippled Children's Service Center. So far we are unable to separate the numbers being served by a number of agencies.

We are unable to answer your questions regarding the average lifetime cost or the savings to taxpayers resulting from rehabilitation programs.

Good luck with your thesis!

Sincerely,

Audrey R. Holliday, Ph.D.  
Research Administrator

Please note:

Signature has been redacted due to security concern

Mary Reed  
Research Analyst

Estimated  
Number  
Handicapped  
(1967)

Average  
Cost  
Per Day

I. General Population

a. Mentally Retarded	95,688 <sup>A</sup>	-
b. Blind	?	-
c. Deaf	?	-
d. Emotionally/Socially Maladjusted	?	-

Average Population

II. In Washington State Institutions (Average Daily Population 1967)	4,858	
a. Schools for Mentally Retarded	4,126	\$9.03
b. School for the Blind	138	\$16.51
c. School for the Deaf	299	\$13.96
d. Mental Hospital Patients under 21 yrs	92 <sup>B</sup>	\$14.80 <sup>D</sup>
e. Mental Retarded in Mental Hospitals	195 <sup>C</sup>	

III. Known to be Served Outside Institution

a. Waiting List (Average Daily Population 1967)	1,210
b. Day Care Centers for Retardates	510 <sup>E</sup>

<sup>A</sup> Estimate based on 1.9 scores which estimated that approximately 3% of the general population is mentally retarded to some degree.

<sup>B</sup> Includes 19 patients who are also counted in Item e. Mentally Retarded.

<sup>C</sup> Mentally retarded patients of all ages. 19 are under 20 years of age.

<sup>D</sup> Average daily cost of all Mental Hospital patients.

<sup>E</sup> Approximately one-third of students enrolled are also on the waiting list.

# The State of Wisconsin

74

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Wisconsin Hall  
126 Langdon Street  
Madison, Wisconsin 53702

### Bureau for Handicapped Children

May 1, 1968

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet  
Woodway Senior High School  
23200 - 100th Avenue, West  
Edmonds, Washington 98020

Dear Mr. Gobiet:

This letter is in response to yours of April 23, 1968 in which you discussed a proposed project to determine the underlying factors in the attrition of special education personnel in your school districts. Back in 1965 one of our staff members did a similar study in Wisconsin and his questionnaire basically sought to determine the basic causes for special educators leaving special education. We found that Wisconsin was having an attrition rate of some 30-35 teachers yearly over the period from 1960 to 1965. However, not all of these teachers were returning to regular education nor did our staff basically investigate their reasons for returning to regular education or their disenchantment with special education.

Major factors for our attrition rate were:

- (1) maternity leaves
- (2) retirements
- (3) serious illnesses
- (4) desire to return to regular grades

I would hope that your investigation would be more sophisticated, involving an in depth exploration of the major obstacles and problems teachers encounter which persuade them to return to regular education. We would be appreciative of receiving any summary statement of your study at a subsequent date.

Sincerely yours,

BUREAU FOR HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

By \_\_\_\_\_  
Kenneth R. Blessing, Ph.D.  
Coordinator of Educational Services

KRB:ds

Please note: Signature has been redacted due to security concern



STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

721 CAPITOL MALL, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814

June 14, 1968

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet  
Special Education Prevocational Advisor  
Edmonds School District No. 15  
Snohomish County  
Edmonds, Washington 98020

Dear Mr. Gobiet:

After reflecting over the implications of your letter dated April 25, 1968, I do not know whether I should thank you for the correspondence or not. Nevertheless, I apologize that I have not forwarded to you some form of response prior to this date. I have been involved in conducting orientation and inservice training institutes for secondary school administrators throughout the State of California and am just working through the stacks of correspondence which accumulated on my desk while I was out of the office.

Certainly you have a most intriguing project, packed with difficulties, frustrations, and certain to arouse more questions than it will provide answers. This is an age-old problem in special education particularly the special programs for the mentally retarded. Many attempts have been made to determine the cause for special class teachers leaving the field of special education. To my knowledge I know of none of these studies that have been satisfactory in approach to the problem. There are so many involved unmeasurable variables that serve to block any conclusive summaries that could be made of these particular studies. Inevitably there are four separate aspects that are involved in your particular project. It is these four particular aspects that serve to provide the questionable results of any study made in this problem and also provide almost insurmountable barriers to ascertaining realistic answers to these four aspects.

Most of the formal and informal approaches to why teachers leave special education reveal that for the first reason they have been disillusioned by experiences in special education. In other words, it was not what they expected. This means that in order to realistically ascertain why teachers leave you would need to realistically ascertain why teachers entered the field to start off with if one of the primary reasons was their disillusionment. Of course I think you immediately see the difficulties in finding out why persons enter the field of special education--in fact, why

people enter the profession of teaching. Any study that would provide meaningful information regarding why teachers leave would need to determine why the persons enter the field to start off with. This would mean that those individuals studied, both those that have left and those that have remained, would have to be provided with carefully selected criteria to ascertain the reasons that they entered the field. All of us know that this would be tremendously subjective and most questionable in a formal research approach.

The second implication involved is that many leave because they feel they are being treated as a second-class professional person by the administrators. This means that we would need to carefully evaluate the attitudes of the administrators to special education. As you know, this, too, leads to a very difficult situation. Many of the more successful special education teachers--particularly successful in the classroom--will not tolerate administrative prejudices or the treatment as a second-class citizen by a school administrator. Studies do indicate that the individuals who are willing to tolerate "almost anything" are generally those that are least successful as far as the individual child is concerned within the classroom. Some persons have ascertained the mere fact that special education programs were being provided as prima facie evidence that the administrative structure had "accepted" the programs. This is contrary to the actual facts of the program when you begin to look at the administrators' support in additional supplies, facilities, identification, teacher released time, etc. A good point at hand was just recently when it was reflected throughout the community that a certain school district in California was most acceptable and supportive of a special education program. However, a more detailed look at the program revealed the administration simply had said we shall underwrite the cost of "two classes" for mentally retarded minors and that is all. It is true that those two classes were well supported, well financed, well housed and the teachers were receiving adequate administrative support. However, it was interesting to find out that that particular school had at least eight classes of children that were identified as eligible to be placed in special education and were not receiving good educational services within the regular class structure. Therefore, this reflects only a token acceptance of the overall special education philosophy by the school administrators based on administrative procedures, operational budgets, etc. How you would actually tap administrative acceptance and support of special education is another critical question in your particular project.

The third aspect that would have to be significantly evaluated is the acceptance of the special class teacher and the special education children by the regular school faculty. Persons with a strong self-concept that are aggressive, energetic, creative and dedicated will not for long tolerate rejection and resistance from regular school staff to their special education efforts. Particularly is this more apparent at the high school level where most of the high schools are all departmentalized and form very fine cliques

around the departmentalizations. Many special education teachers that have been very effective at the high school level have found it impossible to penetrate those various cliques in English, mathematics, social studies, history, commercial, etc. The teaching staff refers to them in many instances as that other department or the dummy department or that other staff member. Of course we all know that the administration does have a tremendous impact upon the acceptance of the special class teacher by the other faculty members.

The fourth larger aspect is in the area of community acceptance for the program. This carries over in acceptance of the special class children by regular class children and the support of the total community to the special education efforts. Social economics does play a significant role in this aspect of the acceptance of special class teachers and special class programs. In many cases by merely changing the title of the class itself community support has been generated. All of us know that the term mental retardation does carry with it certain kinds of emotional feelings. However, with the recent national advancement in the area of mental retardation, we are finding tremendous community support for these programs. Nevertheless, one of the factors that would have to be ascertained is a realistic appraisal of the community acceptance for these children. Basically, the community does accept its clues for acceptance from the State Legislature and the boards of education.

Another critical issue involved with many of these studies is the fact that the project director will identify certain districts (as you have in your proposed project) to study. Then attempts are made to generalize to other districts and/or statewide level regarding the causative factors. The project should definitely be geared to why special class teachers leave special class assignments within the unique conditions within those particular districts identified and being studied. It is most difficult to generalize data beyond that and make it applicable to other districts. Therefore, you need to be careful in structuring your program that this is defined as entered.

We have found in California that the majority of special class teachers enter special education on assignment only. That is to say, they agree to take a special class for a certain amount of time provided the principal will permit them to return to the regular class. It is also evident that, again at the secondary level, teachers have been trained in a specific area of competence such as English, math, etc.; then through a special retreading training process efforts have been made to make them generalists. This retreading process is inadequate and insignificant to their specialization training. We have been made acutely aware of this particular aspect of the training of the teachers in our recent efforts to improve our work study program at the secondary level. We simply do not have teachers at the secondary level who have had sufficient teacher training in the area of prevocational, vocational, and work study, work training aspects of the

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet

4

June 14, 1968

educational program. Therefore, we are forced to conduct special training institutes for these secondary teachers to provide them the new skills, knowledges, and techniques necessary to operate these programs. Our secondary teachers have felt completely uncomfortable in moving towards this area since they have had no experience which will enable them to design, develop, and implement this type of a program for special education pupils.

You did not mention in your letter the real purpose of making the study. I am assuming that you are probably attempting to find out why teachers leave the field so that you may be able to do something to retain those teachers within the field. This being the case, I would suggest that a more profitable return for the dollar and energy might be why teachers remain in special education. All of us need to know that special education has to provide real challenge. All of us who have been in special education for several years know that we have more than our share of misfits in special education and should not be overly concerned with the losing of these misfits as we become more knowledgeable and demanding that the educational experience be made meaningful for special education children. The more professional we become, the more the misfits will feel that they need to leave our program. Many of our programs are much better off when some of the "old timers" deeply entrenched in the traditional education approaches have actually left the field. A positive approach would identify the ingredients of the most successful programs and the most successful teachers and then design a positive program for recruitment and training that will make the special class teacher a real specialist rather than a watered-down or retreaded generalist. As critical as our need for special class teachers is in California, we recognize that not just every person can teach in special education. Those persons who feel that they must return to the regular classroom some portion of the week, day, or month in order to maintain their "sanity" probably would be much better off for themselves and for the special class student to return to regular class teaching rather than attempting to stay in special education. Some of our most outstanding work is being achieved by younger teachers who are entering the field unprejudiced and unbiased in traditional educational approaches.

Well, I'm sorry that I have unloaded on you many of my feelings. However, all I can say is you requested my reactions, and I did not know whether I was pleased with your request or not. This is an impossible approach probably due to the maturational level of special education itself. I hope that some of this will be helpful to you in thinking through your project and if I can be of additional assistance, please feel free to let me know.

Please note:

Signature has been redacted due to security concern

Sincerely,

L. Wayne Campbell  
Curriculum Specialist in Education  
of Mentally Retarded Children

LWC:jc

DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

210 EDUCATION BUILDING  
URBANA, ILLINOIS 61801  
AREA CODE 217 333-0260

May 26, 1968

Jon R. Gobiet  
Special Education  
Prevocational Advisor  
Edmonds School District #15  
23200 - 100th Avenue, West  
Edmonds, Washington 98020

Dear Mr. Gobiet:

Thank you very much for your letter concerning your research project on the return of special education teachers to regular programs. This is a serious problem and one which has long deserved the interest which you are now taking in it.

To my knowledge, only one study has been done which might be of value to you, other than a pilot which I did here in Illinois. The major study was done in California by Dr. Richard Outland who is a Consultant in the Bureau for the Handicapped, California State Department of Education, 721 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, California. I am sure Dick would be glad to share the results with you, although they are rather old now.

The pilot study to which I referred, did not go into the question of why, but rather how many. In checking every sixth teacher of the educable mentally retarded in downstate Illinois, we discovered that within three years half were no longer teaching special classes. Just where they went, and why they left is still to be answered in a larger study which I have yet to get around to (you aren't interested in doctoral work which would enable you to convert this into a thesis are you?). I used this study to illustrate some points in a talk to administrators of special education in California in October. Dr. Robert McIntyre was to have this published, and you may be able to secure a copy from him: Instructional Materials Center, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California.

I think your biggest problem in a study of this kind is the degree to which the answers you receive to the question why are real or good answers. Thus, a questionnaire will bring you certain kind of information, with very questionable validity. Interviews, on the other hand, might enable you to probe and thus be able to obtain entirely different data utilizing the exact same population of teachers. I think most of us are reluctant to put down on paper that the reason they left a job is that they just couldn't get along with the principal or some other colleague or administrator. Most of us, however, I suspect, would, after learning more about the project and being assured that no names would be used, be willing to disclose the personality conflicts in an oral interview. Thus, I would check with a nearby University Survey Laboratory or Department of Sociology so that they could advise you on the most

effective ways of getting answers.

I would be very interested in learning the results of your study and would be particularly interested in discovering whether there is a significant difference in holding power between those teachers who are essentially elementary teachers who took a summer course or two before coming into the field as compared with those teachers who spent one year or more full time study, either at the undergraduate or graduate level before entering the field of special education. As you can guess, I already have a hypothesis formed but need to have it tested empirically.

With my best wishes for a successful project, I remain

Cordially,

Robert A. Henderson  
Chairman

RAH/mb

Please note:

Signature has been redacted due to security concern

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON



81  
School of Education  
DIVISION OF  
PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL STUDIES

EUGENE, OREGON 97403  
telephone (code 503) 342-1411

May 8, 1968

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet  
Special Education  
Woodway Senior High School  
23200 100th Avenue West  
Edmonds, Washington 98020

Dear Mr. Gobiet:

This is in reply to your letter of April 23, relative to a planned research project regarding the mobility of Special Education personnel. As an understatement, you have attacked a multi-faceted problem. In view of this, one of the main problems in establishing guidelines would be to specify which type of data you are specifically interested in. Unless this is initially established on a type basis, the probability is that the study will get buried under a deluge of ambiguous, unsortable responses. As a suggestion, I would pay particular attention to the design of the survey instrument or the interview schedule. There are such matters as response style as they relate to the particular questions or statements which can do a lot to determine the type of information which you receive. This is, at least as I understand it, rather complicated in the State of Washington since there is no central body of information available, relative to persons holding certification in the state and since certification is not formally required, I would suggest that you might well look at the quantitative and qualitative aspects of the preparation programs.

As to questions, you might consider inquiring into such things as:

1. Ration of undergraduate trained teachers to experienced retained teachers and the relationship to number of years in Special Education.
2. The availability of specialized ancillary people in the particular district to support the educational function. For example, some districts may have a high turnover because of limited teacher support services.
3. The level of commitment and administrative support for Special Education programs. This is a particular touchy thing to look into and a difficult one to get any kind of quantifiable data.

4. You might also look at the placement of the special classes. The question of whether or not the physical placement of the class in regard to regular or related programs may be of real concern.
5. The question might be asked as to whether or not the going back to regular education for at least a limited period is a "bad thing." Basically, I am suggesting that you might look at how many of them return to Special Education after leaving it for a year or more.
6. I'm not to sure how relevant this is to Washington, but if there is any significant variation in class site, this may be a factor.

The preceding illustrates some possible areas of inquiry. A decision you would have to make additionally is to whether you want to do a straight forward descriptive study in terms of finding out how many teachers leave, for how long and look into the quantitative training aspect. The other way of doing it would be to do a study in terms of the attitudes or perception of the people leaving Special Education. If you wanted to do a retrospective study, it would be difficult to trace back and locate the teachers in regular programs. You might want to consider initiating your project beginning in the fall and gather current data as you go. But again, I would stress the definite basis differences between an attitude study as opposed to a straight descriptive study.

Since I am leaving town for several weeks, I am sorry I don't have time to locate previous literature, I'll try to get to it when I get back. Please let me know the progress of your study and whether or not I can be of any help to you. I am very much interested in the type of thing you suggest.

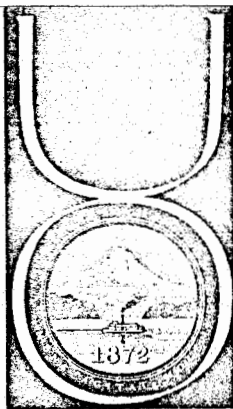
Sincerely,

Melton C. Martinson  
Director, Administrative  
Training Program

MCH:dd

· Please note:  
Signature has been redacted due to security concern

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON



83

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

EUGENE, OREGON 97403

telephone (code 503) 342-1411

August 1, 1968

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet  
Route 2, Box 192F  
Everett, Washington

Dear Jon:

My apologies for the delayed reply to your letter relative to the development of your masters thesis. As I indicated previously the question you pose is a legitimate one which concerns many of us in Special Education. I further regret that I was not available the day you stopped at the office to talk with me. This summer has been unusually hectic, as a matter of fact, from February on my life has been rather harried due to unbelievable array of responsibilities on and off campus.

In regard to your question as to approaching the staff at Central Washington, it is impossible for me to reply specifically since I don't have a copy of the interview questionnaire which you have developed. I do not, however, understand your comment regarding a thesis writing requirement for 30 persons to be involved in the interview procedures. I recall that the analysis of data obtained in some procedures requires larger numbers but I am not familiar with the thesis requirement of this type.

In reaction to paragraph four of your letter, I feel that the problem you indicate, that of using Special Education as the entry to particular districts is a matter of real concern. My reaction at this point is that this would be a worthwhile bit of data to collect. If you eliminate this group from your study I would suggest that you would have severely truncated your population of sample. You might handle the problem, if you consider it, as such, by analyzing your data on the basis of both returning to regular education after one year, two years and three years. I would think that the analysis of the data on this basis would provide more specificity for interpretation and discussion.

The material that I had hoped to locate for you dealt with the problem of Special Education personnel returning to regular programs.

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet - Page 2

As a matter of fact, it had been developed as a doctoral proposal here at the University. The person doing the initial development switched to a different topic and has left campus. I had hoped to get his bibliography and initial planning. I have not been successful.

I will be on the Ellensburg campus for the two-week period from August 5 - August 16, perhaps we can get together at that time.

Sincerely,

Melton C. Martinson  
Director, Administrative  
Training Program

MCM:dd

Please note:

Signature has been redacted due to security concern



June 27, 1968

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet  
Special Education  
Prevocational Advisor  
Edmonds School District  
23200 100th Avenue West  
Edmonds, Washington 98020

Dear Mr. Gobiet:

I have read your letter regarding your research projects on special education personnel. I am not sure that I understand completely about what you desire from me but I will provide what information I do have.

With regard to your second wish about similar studies I did include a questionnaire on this topic in a study which I completed with regard to teacher turnover among teachers of the mentally retarded. I am enclosing a xeroxed copy of the findings in that particular section of this study. In attempting to review the literature at that time I was unable to find anything with regard to this problem specifically.

If you will notice from the enclosed table the population which I used was relatively small. At the time of the study this consisted of all of the teachers who had left a position of teaching of the mentally retarded over a five-year period. It would seem to me that one of the major problems will be obtaining a large enough population.

One of the other problems which confronted me in this type of a study was the lack of specificity on the part of the respondents even though the questionnaire listed the various possibilities and also allowed for an open end response. Some of them came back with inadequate responses. It would seem to me that the questionnaire would have to be structured very carefully and the instructions be made explicit in order to avoid this. If it is at all possible a personal review would probably be most appropriate.

I am sure this has not been particularly helpful to you but if I can be of any further assistance I would be glad to try. Best of luck on your project.

Yours truly,

Stanley C. Knox  
Chairman

SCK:al  
Encl.

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Table 61  
Reasons for Teachers of the Mentally Retarded Leaving

	<u>Males</u>		<u>Females</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
1. To accept higher salary	1	8.33	1	1.97	2	3.17
2. Did not like working with these children	2	16.67	6	11.76	8	12.70
3. Did not like teaching	1	8.33	1	1.97	2	3.17
4. To fulfill other obligations	0	0	21	41.17	21	33.33
5. Could not be certified	0	0	4	7.84	4	6.34
6. Took on administrative position	5	41.67	1	1.96	6	9.53
7. Retired	0	0	5	9.80	5	7.95
8. Miscellaneous or no explanation	3	25.00	12	23.52	15	23.80
Total	12	100.00	51	99.99	63	99.99

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98105

87

May 10, 1968

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet  
Special Education  
Woodway Senior High School  
23200 100th Avenue West  
Edmonds, Washington 98020

Dear Mr. Gobiet:

I am pleased to respond to your letter of April 25. I have no hard data, but I do have eighteen years of experience working with teachers in special education. My answers to your questions are as follows:

1. Gain information from a survey of the performance of a sufficiently large (30 people) random sample of teachers who have returned to the regular program. Get their reasons for leaving special education. Ask:
  - a. How much training they had in special education,
  - b. Their opinion of the kind of supervision they received.
  - c. Information about the system for evaluating their own teaching performance.
2. The only studies that have been done are on attitudes of teachers toward exceptional children. There is not much done on why they left special education.
3. I believe that there are many reasons why these teachers leave. A few of these reasons are:
  - a. Inadequate preparation
  - b. Poor supervision
  - c. Lack of acceptance by other teachers
  - d. Very lean reinforcement from administration.

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet  
May 10, 1968  
Page 2

I hope that these rather brief statements will be helpful to you in conducting your study. I would be most interested in the results that you obtain.

Cordially yours,

Norris G. Haring  
Director

NGH:csb

Please note:

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

721 CAPITOL MALL, SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814

June 21, 1968

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet  
Special Education  
Pre-Vocational Advisor  
Woodway Senior High School  
23200 - 100th Avenue West  
Edmonds, Washington 98202

Dear Mr. Gobiet:

The research project you are planning to discover why experienced personnel in special education return to the regular program in local school districts sounds most interesting. The following are a list of the questions posed in your recent correspondence and my answers to them:

1. What guidelines should be followed in this study?

It would seem to me that the instrument you use for gaining the data should cover some of the following areas: (1) Amount and kind of supervision given to special education teachers; (2) attitude of administrators and professional colleagues concerning the program; (3) type of housing and location in relation to the school program for non-handicapped children; (4) number of years taught in special education before returning to regular classes; (5) adequacy of the special education teacher training program; (6) availability of appropriate instructional materials and supplies; (7) general community attitude toward special education.

2. Have similar studies been done that could be used as references?

To my knowledge, there have been no similar studies done. The kind of information your study proposes to obtain is urgently needed.

3. Additional advice that would be helpful?

If you use a questionnaire, make it short and easy to mark. Also, if you plan to use data processing methods, I would strongly urge that you obtain advice from an expert in that area before distributing your proposed research instrument.

It is my hope that the above information will be of some small help. My very best wishes for success with your project.

Sincerely,

Richard W. Outland, Consultant  
in Education of Physically  
Handicapped Children

RO:cc

Please note:

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE  
OFFICE OF EDUCATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202

April 30, 1968

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet  
Special Education  
Prevocational Advisor  
Edmonds School District No. 15  
23200 - 100th Avenue, West  
Edmonds, Washington 98020

Dear Mr. Gobiet:

Dr. J. W. Moss has asked that I respond for him to your letter of April 24. Unfortunately we have very little information which might be helpful in your proposed study. However, perhaps the few points mentioned below will be of some assistance.

In relation to guidelines to be followed in a study such as you are proposing, I can think of 2 principles guidelines. First, one of the greatest dangers is that the sample of subjects selected may not be representative of the total population of teachers leaving special education. You should do everything in your power to assure that a representative sample of this population is obtained. Second, the type of information which you're seeking is not likely to be obtained by a questionnaire survey. Though you give no indication of exactly what your plans are for the collection of data, I would strongly suggest that the study be based on objective data about the teachers and school situations in which they worked. If subjective data collected from teachers returning to regular education is desirable, and in the type of study you are proposing it may well be necessary, this should be collected in personal interviews rather than from questionnaires.

Though a great many people have talked about the problems of teacher attrition in special education, I am unable to provide you any specific references regarding studies of this problem. With regard to this question you may wish to also contact the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education or the Southern Regional Education Board. If any such studies have been conducted I feel reasonably certain that these organizations would be the most likely sources of such information.

One additional piece of advice which you may wish to consider is the scope of the research you are proposing. You may wish to consider the inclusion of one additional dimension in such a study.

I doubt that very good information is available on the incidents of experience special education personnel returning to regular school programs. Thus, it might be well to include not only the "why" of special education attrition, but also the "how many".

I hope that these very brief notes will be of some value to you.

Sincerely yours,

Max W. Mueller, Acting Chief  
Projects and Program Research Branch  
Division of Research  
Bureau of Education for the Handicapped

Please note:

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE  
OFFICE OF EDUCATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202

June 27, 1968

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet  
Special Education  
Edmonds School District #15  
23200-100th Avenue West  
Edmonds, Washington 98020

Dear Mr. Gobiet:

Your letter of June 4 to "Research in Education" has been referred to this office for a response. (The records of the Division of Research indicate that we have not supported any projects dealing specifically with the area of your interest.) One report may contain data which would have some bearing on your proposed project. This is, Project Number 7-1301, "An Evaluation of the Impact of the Graduate Fellowship Program in the Education of the Mentally Retarded", authorized under Public Law 85-926 by Dr. Jean R. Hebel at the University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland. This project report was submitted too recently to yet be available through the ERIC Documentation Service but should be within the near future. If your need is more urgent it might also be possible to obtain a copy by contacting the principal investigator directly. Though the report is not directed specifically at attrition among special education personnel some of the data are related.

We appreciate your interest in this program. I am sorry I cannot provide more relevant information. I hope this one reference may be of some value to you.

Sincerely yours,

Max W. Mueller, Acting Chief  
Projects and Program Research Branch  
Division of Research  
Bureau of Education for the Handicapped

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WESTERN INTERSTATE COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY EAST CAMPUS

30TH STREET

BOULDER, COLORADO 80302

AREA CODE 303

443-2211

EXT. 6342

May 14, 1968

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet  
Special Education, Prevocational Advisor  
Edmonds School District  
Woodway Senior High School  
23200 - 100th Avenue, West  
Edmonds, Washington 98020

Dear Mr. Gobiet:

I was pleased to learn that you are planning a research project concerning the retention of teachers in the fields of special education. As you probably know, little research has been done in this particular area. For that matter, only a few persons have even attempted to study the holding power of special education as compared to other areas of educational service. I would suggest, however, that you contact the following persons for information which might be of direct assistance to you:

✓ Dr. William C. Geer  
Executive Director  
Council for Exceptional Children  
1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

✓ Mr. Wayne Campbell  
Curriculum Specialist in Mental  
Retardation  
State of California  
Department of Education  
721 Capitol Mall  
Sacramento, California 95814

✓ Dr. Dorothy B. Carr  
Assistant Director, Special Education  
Los Angeles City School Districts  
Box 3307  
Los Angeles, California 90054

In addition, you might contact the directors of special education in the following states:

✓ Mr. Floyd Baribeau  
State Director of Special Education  
State Department of Public  
Instruction  
Capitol Building  
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

✓ Mr. F. W. Doyle  
Deputy Superintendent  
State of California  
Department of Education  
721 Capitol Mall  
Sacramento, California 95814

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet  
May 14, 1968  
Page 2

Dr. John Ogden  
Director  
Division of Special Education  
Services  
State Office Building  
Denver, Colorado 80203

Dr. Joy Hills Gubser  
Assistant Superintendent  
State of Oregon  
State Department of Education  
Public Services Building  
Salem, Oregon 97310

Mrs. Helena Adamson  
Supervisor of Special Education  
State Capitol Building  
Olympia, Washington 98501

Several western states are concerned with the factors which influence the holding power of special education.

I would be very interested in learning more about your plans and would appreciate being kept informed of your proposed project.

I have enclosed a couple of brochures in order that you may learn more about WICHE and the Special Education-Rehabilitation Program.

Sincerely,

Gene Hensley, Ph.D., Director  
Special Education and Rehabilitation Programs

GH:jkm

Enclosures

Please note:

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# Los Angeles City School Districts

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES: 450 N. Grand Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. Tel. 625-8921

MAILING ADDRESS: Box 3307, Los Angeles, California 90054

JACK P. CROWTHER  
Superintendent of Schools

LOUISE WOOD SEYLER  
Deputy Superintendent  
Instruction

96  
ERNEST P. WILLENBERG  
Director  
Special Education Branch

May 31, 1968

Jon R. Gobiet, Special Education  
Prevocational Advisor  
Edmonds School District  
23200 100th Ave. West  
Edmonds, Washington 98020

Dear Mr. Gobiet:

I am sorry to be so late in responding to your letter of April 17, 1968.

Your survey of why experienced special education personnel return to regular school programs should provide some important information both to the teacher preparation institutions as well as school systems. I have reviewed the literature pretty well on preparation of special education personnel and would suggest that you refer to the studies of Reginald Jones and others listed by him in an article appearing in one of the CEC Journals about a year or so ago.

Although some work has been done relative to the reasons for teachers going into special education work, there is very little information on why they transfer to regular classes. Therefore, your survey should provide some original information on this problem. I suspect the following factors would be worthy of your inquiry.

1. Professional isolation. The teacher feels alone or alienated due to her special assignment in a school situation devoted primarily to the instruction of non-handicapped pupils.
2. Lack of administrative interest and support. In most instances regular school administrators are not properly oriented to their supervisory responsibilities relative to special education in their buildings.
3. Lack of external support and recognition. Consultative assistance is often skimpy and external professional recognition frequently lacking.
4. Promotional opportunities are limited. Some teachers feel they have reached the end of the professional line almost as soon as they begin their special education assignments.
5. Working conditions are frequently inferior to that of regular classroom teachers. This factor has reference to classroom environment as well as problems of pupil control.

Jon R. Gobiet

-2-

May 31, 1968

6. The teachers professional responsibility frequently exceeds fiscal recognition. The additional workload necessitated by maintaining good family and community relationships often imposes a burden which is not given financial recognition in the salary schedule of teachers of exceptional pupils.

The foregoing points are the ones that seem to bear directly upon the problem of special education teacher attrition and transfer to regular teaching assignments.

Sincerely yours,

Ernest P. Willenberg

ps

Please note:

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SOUTHERN REGIONAL EDUCATION BOARD <sup>98</sup>

130 SIXTH STREET, N.W. • ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30313 • 875-9211

May 14, 1968

Mr. Jon R. Gobiet, Advisor  
Edmonds School District No. 15  
Woodway Senior High School  
23200 - 100th Avenue, West  
Edmonds, Washington 98020

Dear Mr. Gobiet:

Your letter to the Southern Regional Education Board has been referred to me for answer. At the present time, the SREB does not have either a program or any collected information concerning the reasons for teachers returning to regular classroom programs from those in the area of special education.

Dr. J. W. Rollow, who is Associate Director for Regional Programs at the SREB, and I have discussed your questions and would have the following suggestions to make to you. The Educational Resources Information Centers sponsored by the U. S. Office of Education has a tremendous information feedback potential and may have items in your area of concern. I note that the Council for Exceptional Children is responsible for the ERIC center in special education.

In your own geographic area the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, located in Boulder, Colorado, has a staff member with a specific interest in special education programs.

The usual route in looking at manpower movement has been to generally survey teachers leaving the field. Your approach is essentially a different one. The variables involved will give you problems in that teachers move back to a regular program because of funding limitations, consolidation of programs, personal inabilities, and a host of other reasons.

I wonder if you might receive assistance in your projections in looking at similar concerns in other areas. As example, the National Institute of Mental Health may have data concerning movement of mental health personnel which could give you ideas on approaching your research project. Other areas, such as vocational rehabilitation and social work, might be germane.

I am sorry that we are not able to provide you with more specific information. However, I trust through other contacts you will be able to obtain specific information needed for your project.

Sincerely yours,

Please note:

Signature has been redacted due to security concern

John D. Webster, Ed.D.  
Assistant Director for Mental  
Health Training and Research

JDW:pd

TWENTY YEARS OF PROGRESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION