



A naturalistic inquiry into a special education delivery system for learning disabled students
by William Michael Feusahrens

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education
Montana State University

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Abstract:

This naturalistic inquiry provided an insightful and in-depth look into an in-class service delivery model for students with learning disabilities. The general purpose of this study was to determine if selected elementary students with an identified learning disability would improve their self-image and reading achievement if special education services were delivered via an in-class model.

Using a qualitative case study design (Merriam, 1988), a total of 84 interviews with 34 respondents were conducted during the 1990-91 school year. Six sixth grade students with an identified learning disability were the primary respondents. They were participants in a pilot program to receive special education reading services in the general education classroom instead of the conventional pull-out program. Co-teaching and cooperative learning were integral components in the in-class service delivery model.

The in-class service delivery model received widespread support from those who participated or had some connection with it, i.e., parents of the selected students with learning disabilities, the students themselves, and the staff at the pilot school. The students felt better about themselves now that they were able to attain success in the regular reading curriculum. Also, the students' feelings of differentness were much less pronounced since they no longer were pulled out of their classrooms to receive special education services. Furthermore, it was observed by the respondents that there was a demonstrable improvement in the selected students' reading skills.

The study found that the selected students obtained a social and educational benefit and that this placement was preferable to the traditional pull-out program. Further research should be conducted for other subject areas besides reading and at the secondary level to determine if students with learning disabilities would accrue similar benefits.

**A NATURALISTIC INQUIRY INTO A SPECIAL EDUCATION
DELIVERY SYSTEM FOR LEARNING DISABLED STUDENTS**

by

William Michael Feusahrens

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of the requirements for the degree**

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APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

William Michael Feusahrens

This thesis has been read by each member of the graduate committee and has been found to be satisfactory regarding content, English usage, format, citations, bibliographic style, and consistency, and is ready for submission to the College of Graduate Studies.

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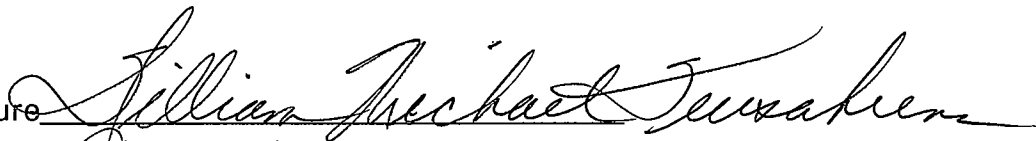
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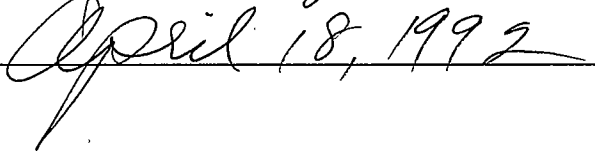
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
APPROVAL	ii
STATEMENT OF PERMISSION TO USE	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	ix
ABSTRACT	x
 CHAPTER:	
1. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY	1
Introduction	1
Statement of the Problem	7
Need for the Study	9
Questions to Be Answered	13
2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	15
Criticisms of Pull-Out Programs	15
Support of Pull-Out Programs	20
Discrepancies in Identification of LD Students	23
Closely Related Research	26
Human Subjects Approval	27
3. METHODOLOGY	29
Population Description	32
Gaining Entree	35
In-Class Model	42
Sampling	45

TABLE OF CONTENTS--Continued

	Page
Data Collection	48
Interviews	50
Participant Observations	53
Field Notes	55
Analytical Techniques	55
Role of the Researcher	58
Biases Toward the Problem	59
 4. FINDINGS	 61
Introduction	61
Vignettes of the Students and Their Families	61
Introduction	61
Adam Schluter	63
Charlotte Casey	66
Randy Creighton	68
Mike Johnston	70
Shawnee Malinoski	72
Jason Rosenblum	74
The Reading Class	76
Co-Teaching	77
Impact of the In-Class Model	81
Self-Image	82
Feelings of Being Different	88
Opposition to Pull-Out Program	94
Segregation	106
Siblings	107
Least Restrictive Environment	108
Teacher Attitudes	112
Reading Skills Improvement	120
Self-Confidence	120
Grades and Awards	123
Reading Gains	126
New-Found Interest in Reading	130
Former Grading Practices	133
Co-Teaching	136
Enhancement of Instruction	136
Compatibility of Co-Teachers	140
Cooperative Learning	143
Students Enjoyed Working in Teams	143
More Peer Interaction	144
Academically Effective	148

TABLE OF CONTENTS--Continued

	Page
Curricular Adaptations	154
Auditory Learners	160
Missing Out on Classroom Work	165
Parents' Frustrations	166
Students' Frustrations	169
Teachers' Frustrations	171
Homework Reduction as a Result of the In-Class Model	180
Parental Empathy with Their Child's Disability and School Experience	183
Resource Room	186
Students' Comments	186
Parents' Comments	187
Teachers' Comments	188
Drawbacks	192
Planning Time	193
Not Academically Effective for Everyone	193
What Will Happen Next Year in Junior High School?	195
Parents' Concerns	195
Teachers' Concerns	197
 5. SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	 201
A Comment on Generalization	201
Summary of the Study	202
Major Findings	204
Self-Image	204
Reading Achievement	205
Homework Reduction	206
Parents' and Teachers' Perceptions	206
Differences in Reading Instruction	206
Missing Out on Classroom Work	207
Curricular Adaptations	208
Additional Findings	208
In-Class Model	208
Co-Teaching	209
Cooperative Learning	209
Grading Practices	210
Matriculation to Junior High School	210
Drawbacks	211

TABLE OF CONTENTS--Continued

	Page
Conclusions and Recommendations	211
In-Class Model	211
Co-Teaching, Curricular Adaptation, and Cooperative Learning	213
Change Philosophy	215
Development of the In-Class Model	217
Public Relations	219
The Role of Research	220
A Possible Barrier	221
Teacher Preference	222
Possible Loss of Federal Funds	222
What Comes Next in the Research?	223
REFERENCES CITED	225
APPENDICES	236
A. INTERVIEW GUIDES	237
B. CONSENT FORM	244

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Number of Interviews and Semester Conducted During the 1990-91 School Year	51
2. Number of In-Class Model Reading Lessons Observed During the 1990-91 School Year	54

ABSTRACT

This naturalistic inquiry provided an insightful and in-depth look into an in-class service delivery model for students with learning disabilities. The general purpose of this study was to determine if selected elementary students with an identified learning disability would improve their self-image and reading achievement if special education services were delivered via an in-class model.

Using a qualitative case study design (Merriam, 1988), a total of 84 interviews with 34 respondents were conducted during the 1990-91 school year. Six sixth grade students with an identified learning disability were the primary respondents. They were participants in a pilot program to receive special education reading services in the general education classroom instead of the conventional pull-out program. Co-teaching and cooperative learning were integral components in the in-class service delivery model.

The in-class service delivery model received widespread support from those who participated or had some connection with it, i.e., parents of the selected students with learning disabilities, the students themselves, and the staff at the pilot school. The students felt better about themselves now that they were able to attain success in the regular reading curriculum. Also, the students' feelings of differentness were much less pronounced since they no longer were pulled out of their classrooms to receive special education services. Furthermore, it was observed by the respondents that there was a demonstrable improvement in the selected students' reading skills.

The study found that the selected students obtained a social and educational benefit and that this placement was preferable to the traditional pull-out program. Further research should be conducted for other subject areas besides reading and at the secondary level to determine if students with learning disabilities would accrue similar benefits.

CHAPTER 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Introduction

The history of specific learning disabilities goes back to as early as 1868 and is usually presented as resulting from medical research, especially in the fields of neurology and ophthalmology (Hallahan & Kauffman, 1976; Kirk, 1972; Sleeter, 1986). Continuing pressure over the years from parents, teachers, psychologists, and physicians has brought the field of learning disabilities into the prominent position it holds in education today. Numerous terms have been employed in defining specific learning disabilities, e.g., "minimal brain dysfunction," "central processing dysfunction," "perceptually handicapped," and "dyslexia." The term "learning disability" officially was coined with the formation of the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (ACLD) in 1963 (Sleeter, 1986). Learning disabled (LD) students are characterized by underachievement, despite average intelligence, demonstrating a severe discrepancy between their expected achievement and their actual performance in school (Lewis, 1988).

The instruction of students with learning disabilities became a vital component in public school education with the passage of The Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975, now known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Public Law 94-142. Within the provisions of Public Law 94-142, the category of specific learning disability is defined as follows:

'Specific learning disability' means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia, but does not include learning problems which are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor handicaps; of mental retardation; of emotional disturbance; or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage. (34 C.F.R. § 300.5)

The Learning Disabilities Association of America's definition of specific learning disability which follows also is included as it adds a richer description to the terminology found in federal regulations:

[Specific learning disability is] a chronic condition of presumed neurological origin which selectively interferes with the development, integration, and/or demonstration of verbal and/or non-verbal activities. Specific learning disabilities exist as a distinct handicapping condition in the presence of average to superior intelligence, adequate sensory and motor systems, and adequate learning opportunities. The condition varies in its manifestations and in degree of severity. Throughout life, the condition can affect self-esteem, education, vocation, socialization, and daily living activities. (Cordoni, 1990, pp. 1-2)

Billier (1985) listed five behavior characteristics exhibited by students in the classroom that are the major sources of referrals of students by parents and teachers for evaluation of a possible learning disability:

- (1) Impulsivity, often speaking out of turn, and attention-getting behavior.
- (2) Lack of organization, not only with school work, but also with appearance.
- (3) Extremely short attention span, assignments which are frequently incomplete, and oral directions that often are not followed.
- (4) Poor retention of what has been heard or seen.
- (5) A negative sense of self-worth.

Siegal and Gold (1982) provided further insight as to why many students are referred for evaluation of a potential learning disability. "Although the emotional factors are secondary to the neurological, they are frequently considered to be of graver consequence [by parents and teachers]" (p. 42).

The number of students served under the category of specific learning disability has increased dramatically since its passage. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (1991, Table 46, p. 63) reported that the total number of learning disabled students in the United States was 796,000 in 1976-77, and in 1988-89, rose to 1,987,000, or almost a 150% increase.

Of the 11 handicapping conditions (LD, speech impaired, mentally retarded, seriously emotionally disturbed, hard of hearing and deaf, orthopedically handicapped, other health impaired, visually handicapped,

multi-handicapped, deaf-blind, and preschool handicapped), the percentage of students in the United States with LD increased from 21.6% in 1976-77 to 43.6% in 1988-89 (National Center for Education Statistics, Table 46, p. 63). The percentage of total students enrolled in the school population served under the category of learning disability rose from 1.80% in 1976-77 to 4.94% in 1988-89 (Table 46, p. 63). In the last reported school year, 1987-88, the largest percentage (59.0%) of students were served in a resource room, followed by a separate class (21.8%), and then regular class (17.6%) (Table 47, p. 64). In this context, "separate class" refers to LD students who are taught in a self-contained special education classroom for the entire school day, not mainstreamed into a general education classroom.

One reason given for the tremendous increase of LD students may be that some parents believe it is a way to provide for additional academic assistance for their child which cannot or will not be provided by general educators. "Parents don't equate LD with neurological dysfunction. They equate it with 'he needs help'" (Lieberman, 1985, p. 515). Sleeter (1986) noted that the term "'learning disabilities' has been used increasingly as a more palatable substitute for other (handicapping) categories to 'explain' the failure of lower class children and children of color" (p. 52). Other authorities have noted that the LD label was infinitely more acceptable to parents than the alternatives (Foster, Schmidt, & Sabatino, 1976) and parents "leapt to support it" (Carrier, 1986, p. 98). Not too surprisingly, Tollison, Palmer, and

Stowe (1987) found that once students were identified as having a learning disability, their mothers had lower expectations for them than did mothers of nondisabled children.

The following article was written by the parent of a learning disabled student. The author paints a vivid and emotionally powerful portrait of the struggles an LD child and his parents encounter in attempting to compensate for this inscrutable disorder. The narrative is a touching, moving portrait of the dilemma confronted by many parents of learning disabled children. It is reprinted in its entirety so the reader may obtain a better understanding and empathy for this disability.

My son came home from school in tears today. It wasn't because a classmate tried to pick a fight or because he had been forgotten in a holiday gift exchange. He cried because his grades weren't good enough for the honor roll. Most 7th graders are delighted with 3 B's, 1 B+, and 2 A's, but not Josh — he wanted to make the honor roll.

Two years after having a home-made son, we were delighted with the adoption of our perfect 2-month-old son, Josh. He was bright and verbal, always curious about words. Books were a favorite diversion; when he was cranky he would say, 'Mom, let's just read a book.' Though he occasionally said words inside out, such as melon for lemon, we considered such mistakes simply a rather cute quirk and assumed he would do well in school.

Instead, the verbal problem translated into a true learning problem when he began school. Josh would read the middle of a word first — reading patting for tapping. In spite of advanced degrees in reading, I was baffled by his apparent disability. Like most middle-class parents, we did everything possible, including extensive testing, special glasses, and private schools. Tests only confirmed what we knew: He had an above-average intelligence and below-average achievement in reading and spelling. There was no prescription.

At the end of 3rd grade we requested that Josh be retained. He had a late-summer birthday so although our timing was unusual, he had many peers of the same age after the retention. The trauma was minimized because he was in a very small private school where everyone had individual programs and grade levels were rarely mentioned. He learned to compensate for his reading and spelling problems by using a variety of coping mechanisms, such as careful listening, rehearsing text at home, and charming teachers with his smile, good humor, and perseverance. He spent grades 5 and 6 in public school, and when standardized-test scores came in we rejoiced at the average bands. Josh was closing the gap, moving into the top reading group by 6th grade.

We knew that 7th grade would be challenging. For the first time he would earn letter grades, and he would have to cope with six different teachers who would not necessarily be sensitive to the struggles faced by a disabled reader and speller. We faced the new school year with dread.

The first nine weeks were arduous for all of us. We coached him through two to three hours of homework Monday through Thursday nights and occasionally on weekends. Science, with its unfamiliar vocabulary and tedious assignments, was particularly difficult. At the first conferences we used our five minutes per teacher to explain how far he had come and how hard he had to work on routine lessons. The response was always one of surprise — after all, he seemed bright, articulate, and likable. Furthermore, he had 2 A's and 4 B's on his mid-semester report—a quite acceptable achievement.

But, although not one teacher mentioned it, Josh also had the not atypical second-child challenge: following a brother three years older who had received all A's.

The second half of the semester Josh redoubled his efforts. In addition to practicing the piano each night (winning an honorable mention in a piano competition), doing his laundry, and walking the dog, Josh struggled with his schoolwork.

Three nights before the semester's end, Josh quietly wept through dinner because his older brother was going on an outing and Josh had to study for a 50-word spelling test — a grueling task. He didn't complain, but silent tears tracked down his face. It was that night that he told us how desperately he wanted to make the honor roll.

We had been slowly withdrawing our nightly assistance so that he would assume more responsibility for his work, but his father spent many hours coaching him during that last week, hoping that one of those B's would become an A. But it wasn't enough, even though his grades were certainly beyond our expectations.

As a parent of Josh and as a former teacher of 15 years, I wonder how many kids in my classrooms had spent many unrecognized and under appreciated hours on their school work. I wonder how in my busy teaching days with too many students and too little time I could have modified expectations or assignments without patronizing the children who struggled. Certainly teachers must maintain appropriate expectations, but could I somehow have found a way to discover and reward those kids whose efforts went beyond reasonable expectations?

We try to help Josh realize that the honor roll isn't that important, but all around him there is evidence to the contrary. His brother continues to make A's; his parents have advanced degrees; and his friends are honor students who earn their A's with little effort. We tell him that in the adult world, there are few tests such as those he takes now, but that the real tests require all the traits he demonstrates daily: dedication, a great personality, determination, and perseverance. As we walk the dog together, we talk about how I cried over math when I studied for the Graduate Record Exams — and he says he appreciates our support.

One teacher wrote 'great person' in the comments section of his report card. We agree. He is a great person.

But it doesn't matter to him. He didn't make the honor roll. (Barchers, 1991, p. 26)

Statement of the Problem

The problem of the study was to determine if the self-image and reading achievement of selected sixth-grade students with identified learning disabilities improved when special education services were received via an

in-class service delivery model as compared to the pull-out model where the students previously had received support services.

As someone who has been affiliated with special education either in the role of a teacher or administrator for the past 14 years, it has been my experience that a number of students in special education pull-out programs did not and do not like leaving their classrooms for instruction in a resource class. Typical comments heard from these students, in referring to the resource class, were: "retard room," "a room for zeros," or "only dummies go to resource."

A number of parents also have questioned or refused placement of their children in a resource class because of the fear that their offspring might suffer some form of social ostracism. Regular classroom teachers, too, often are reluctant to refer legitimate candidates for evaluation because of their belief that these students will somehow be tainted socially, or endure permanent psychological scarring from bearing the label "handicapped."

As chair of innumerable Child Study Team (CST) meetings, I can attest to the great reluctance and anguish many parents feel about placing their child in a resource class. Parents continually must be assured that placement in a resource room will not damage their child's self-image. Generally parents do not quarrel about the need of special services, only about pulling their child from the classroom in order to receive them.

A question routinely raised by parents at CST meetings is whether their child will miss something in the classroom when pulled out for resource room services. This is yet another discomfiting aspect for parents regarding their child's placement in a resource room. Often we are able to reassure parents that if the student is to receive instruction in reading while in the resource room, he/she will be pulled out when his/her regular reading class meets. Frequently, however, the resource teacher's schedule does not match the classroom teacher's schedule, so the student will miss a curricular area other than the one for which he/she was pulled out. The upshot is an increase in homework if the LD student is not to miss out on the subject altogether.

The dual problems of self-image and supplanting of curriculum have always troubled me professionally. These, coupled with the increasing concerns from the field as expressed in the literature, were the motivating factors that led me to this inquiry. The piloting of an in-class model in my district presented an opportunity to ascertain if some of the distressing facets of the pull-out program could be ameliorated by an in-class service delivery system.

Need for the Study

Public Law 94-142 directs that to the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children are educated with children who are not handicapped

(34 C.F.R. § 300.550). This provision is commonly known as Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

This stipulation of the Act has been controversial and difficult to implement in local schools. Problems and issues include: (a) the shared responsibilities by general and special educators, (b) the relationship with the regular classroom teacher, (c) the question of a merger into a single system. . . . (Jordan & Erickson, 1986, p. 7)

The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) has recently formulated a new policy which urges the abolition of the parallel systems of special and general education. This position would in effect eliminate LRE as an issue since all students would be placed in the regular classroom. NASBE contends that:

- (1) The education needs of students are not defined by an assigned category of disability.
- (2) The education needs of students are not defined by the severity of their disability.
- (3) Many student needs can be met by regular teachers with support, who have broad training in instructional strategies that meet diverse student needs. (Lawton, 1991, p. 4)

In 1986, an article was written by the then Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, Madeline Will, which brought the issue of LRE, or mainstreaming, into new focus by postulating what has since become known as the regular education initiative (REI). The regular education initiative has been defined by Davis (1989, p. 440) as follows:

The movement advocating that the general education system assume unequivocal, primary responsibility for all students in our

public schools — including identified handicapped students, as well as those students who have special needs of some type.

It was the contention of Will that regular classroom teachers in collaboration with special education teachers should take much more of the responsibility for educating students with disabilities. Will's article, although not the first regarding full-time mainstreaming, helped catapult the issue into national prominence because of Will's status in the field. The widespread debate between REI and the advocates of continuing at least some aspects of a separate special education system became increasingly intense (Byrnes, 1990; Davis, 1989; Davis, 1990; Edgar, 1987; Fuchs & Fuchs, 1988; Wang & Walberg, 1988).

Numerous authorities in the field of special education also are concerned with various problems inherent in a dual educational system. As noted earlier, Jordan and Erickson (1986) remarked upon the dilemma in trying to interface special education and general education services, in what to date basically have been parallel systems. The validity of a separate special education system has been questioned by a number of professionals in the field (Algozzine & Korinek, 1985; Allington, Boxer, & Broikou, 1987; Gerber & Hall, 1987; Graden, Casey, & Christenson, 1985; Stainback & Stainback, 1984). Others have called for the abolishment of special programs for mildly or "judgementally" handicapped children (Reynolds, Wang, & Walberg, 1987; Dunn, 1968).

The evaluation procedures used to classify students as LD may well be suspect. Indeed, many of the students who are identified as learning disabled may, in fact, be only learning different (Carbo, 1987). The unreliable, inconsistent methods used to classify and place students in special programs, as well as the racial and cultural bias intrinsic in many tests, are a major concern of numerous experts (Messick, 1984; Reschly, 1984; Ysseldyke, 1983; Ysseldyke, Algozzine, & Epps, 1983).

The self-esteem ["the individual's concept of his or her own identity, worth, capabilities, and limitations" (Blackham & Silberman, 1975, p. 315)] of students is a leading factor in the continuing debate over REI. The decrease in students' self-concepts as a result of possible stigmatizing effects of having a handicapped label has been documented by many authors (Dunn, 1968; Hobbs, 1975; Blatt, 1972).

If, indeed, mildly handicapped students are to be placed full-time in the regular classroom, then teacher attitudes will play a significant role in this mainstreaming process. Evidence exists that low-achieving students can experience success when teachers adapt instruction to meet their needs (Algozzine & Maheady, 1986; Bickel & Bickel, 1986). Teachers' responses and expectations can have a significant impact on a child's development and acceptance in a group (Quintal, 1986). Discontinuity and interruption of instruction have been common complaints of teachers regarding pull-out programs (Zvolensky & Speake, 1987).

All of these concerns have led to the increasingly strident demand for alternative service delivery models for mildly handicapped students (Stainback & Stainback, 1984; Yau, 1988; Zvolensky & Speake, 1987; and numerous others).

This study was begun as a result of the many questions regarding the efficacy of pull-out programs. Key concerns include the identification process, self-esteem issues, instructional techniques, role of classroom teachers, and students missing out on parts of the curriculum. This study attempts to analyze the preceding issues in relation to an in-class service delivery model in which LD students, with the support of the resource teacher, remained in their classroom for reading instruction.

Questions to Be Answered

This study is designed to answer the following questions:

- (1) Do the students feel that their status and person is diminished in any way, either by going to the resource room (the placement of students with mild disabilities in a non-classroom setting for part of the school day), or by having the resource teacher in their regular classroom?
- (2) Do the self-images of the student subjects in the study improve as a result of receiving reading instruction through an in-class service delivery system? [The term "in-class service delivery system" defines an integrated program model where the special education teacher, or

resource teacher, provides services to students with mild disabilities (i.e., specific learning disabilities, emotionally disturbed, mild mental retardation, and language difficulties) in the child's regular classroom (McDonald, 1987).]

- (3) Does the in-class model of reading instruction increase reading achievement scores compared to previous years when students were in the pull-out program?
- (4) Does the amount of homework decrease as a result of students not having to make up work missed when in the resource room?
- (5) What are the parents' and teachers' perceptions about the in-class model and its effects on students' performances and attitudes toward school?
- (6) What are the differences between reading instruction in the in-class model compared to the resource room model?

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Criticisms of Pull-Out Programs

. . . regular educators have given away their responsibility for educating these children [mildly handicapped]. In essence, the more special educators try to solve regular educators' problems, the less likely and less capable are regular educators to assume these responsibilities. . . . There is no disagreement that all children who are experiencing difficulty in school should receive prompt and appropriate services. The critical question is who should be classified as handicapped and served by special education, and who should be served by regular education. (Edgar & Hayden, 1985, p. 535)

It is the argument of many that the above question posed by Edgar and Hayden (1985) is moot: All mildly handicapped students should be served by their regular education teacher with the active support of the special education teacher. Many reasons are posited for eliminating special education programs. Special education pull-out programs increasingly have come under criticism for the practice of segregating special education students from their peers (Biklen & Zollers, 1986; Reynolds, Wang, & Walberg, 1987; Roddy, 1984; Stainback & Stainback, 1984; Will, 1986). Studies suggest that children with disabilities are socially stigmatized, which lowers those students' perceptions of

self-worth (Avazian, 1987; Burbach, 1981; Dunn, 1968). Self-concepts of students with mild disabilities tend to be higher when they are mainstreamed into regular classrooms (Madden & Slavin, 1982; Strang, Smith, & Rogers, 1978).

Regular class placement with some form of support (either within the regular class or in a resource program) is superior to special class placement for improving the self-concepts and adaptive behaviors of mildly academic handicapped students. (Madden & Slavin, 1982, p. 26)

Missing out on special projects and content material from the classroom is a major concern of teachers for their students who are pulled out (Conroy, 1988). Greenburg (1986) stressed that missed assignments and the responsibility of making them up falls to the handicapped child. Zvolensky & Speake (1987) noted the "discontinuity and interruption of instruction" for teachers when their resource students are pulled out, as well as the fostering of "categorical attitudes and instruction" among staff members (p. 2). They asserted that to surmount the "disjointedness" of instruction common to classroom teachers and special educators and the stereotypical attitudes many teachers have towards special education, general and special education programs should be combined. Taylor (1985) argued that if pull-out programs were drastically reduced, the money saved could be used to hire additional classroom teachers to reduce class size, and thus create a more effective instructional climate. It is the contention of many experts (Pugach, 1987; Reynolds et al.,

1987; Sapon-Shevin, 1987; Stainback & Stainback, 1984; Will, 1986) that the dual system of education (general and special) is a continuing roadblock in providing for the best interests of children with diverse and challenging needs. These authorities assert that the present system discriminates, excludes, reduces opportunities, categorizes, and labels students with mild disabilities. To remedy these affronts to students, it is their recommendation that mildly handicapped students should be served by regular education teachers with the active support of the special education teacher. Many parents also feel that integration of their handicapped child into a regular classroom is in their child's best social interests (Ayres, 1988; Robison & Robison, 1991).

Bickel and Bickel (1986) suggested that rather than having a pull-out program for students deemed to require special education services, there should be a "reconceptualization" of special education. Instead of having a program separate from regular education, the focus should be on providing instructional support to students in their classrooms. Effective school practices should be promoted, which, according to the authors, would benefit special education students as well as their "normal" classmates. A number of other professionals would agree, confirming that pull-out programs for the mildly handicapped do not work and are woefully lacking in effective instructional strategies (Allington, Boxer, & Broikou, 1987; Gerber & Hall, 1987). In their review of efficacy studies from the

1930s to the mid-1980s, Biklen and Zollers (1986) suggested that special programs are either ineffective or do not have any advantages over regular classes.

Affleck, Madge, Adams, and Lowenbraun (1988) argued for the full integration of mildly handicapped children into the regular classroom to eliminate the stigma of a child having to be pulled out, to preclude the use of different curricula, and to avert the invariable scheduling conflicts that arise. They found that students with mild disabilities in their study performed at least as effectively academically as those in a resource room. Other authors concur, insisting that there are proven instructional strategies which will benefit all students who fail to profit from traditional programs; that these instructional techniques are not unique to special education teachers; that children who are identified with the same handicapping condition are not necessarily a homogeneous group with the same strengths and weaknesses, and cannot be educationally successful if treated as such; and that if regular classroom teachers accepted the responsibility for the successful performance of all students, learner outcomes would not face an artificial restriction because of a handicapping label (Algozzine & Maheady, 1986; Finn & Resnick, 1984; Snow, 1984).

Diebold (1986) found that special education teachers underestimate the willingness of regular classroom teachers to teach students with

disabilities. This misperception most likely results in students being served in special education settings rather than in the least restrictive environment.

A study of an in-class model was conducted in an elementary school in Minneapolis that used Chapter I teachers, special education teachers, and speech/language clinicians. (Chapter I is a federally funded program of compensatory education used to supplement regular education in the areas of reading and math. Unlike special education, which can supplant a subject area, Chapter I can only supplement for one.) These support personnel were engaged in helping pupils identified as at greatest risk for school failure. Some results of the study were that students at risk showed significant academic gains after placement in the "in-class" program, and that the number of children referred for special education was drastically reduced (Self, Benning, Marston, & Magnusson, 1991). Tindal and his colleagues discovered that when resource room teachers at the secondary level supported mildly handicapped students in regular classrooms, the students performed at the same level as they did in a pull-out program (Tindal, Shinn, Walz, & Germann, 1987). The results of these studies would appear to document the principles found in REI by confirming that mildly handicapped students can be successful in a general education classroom with the support of ancillary personnel.

Support of Pull-Out Programs

Fuchs and Fuchs (1988) countered many of the claims of Wang and Walberg (1988) and others who advocate the elimination of special education programs for the mildly handicapped. Fuchs and Fuchs argued that their opponents have extremely slim data on which to back their claims that pull-out programs are ineffective. "Wang and Walberg's absolutist statement reflects their belief in the moral, if not scientific, superiority of their view; and it is value, not empirically driven" (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1988, p. 141). Other authors have supported the Fuchs' statement, contending that students in the higher prevalence categories of special education require a diverse system of service delivery models (self-contained, resource rooms, and mainstreaming) in order to meet their multitude of needs (Hallahan, Keller, McKinney, Lloyd, & Bryan, 1988). Many professionals, although sympathetic to the goals embodied in REI (partnerships with general educators and more effective programming to serve disabled students in regular classrooms) are emphatic that the eradication of pull-out programs for the mildly handicapped would deal a severe injustice to those students (Braaten, Kauffman, Braaten, Polsgrove, & Nelson, 1988; Lieberman, 1985; Mesinger, 1985; Schumaker & Deshler, 1988). In a 1988 study, Marston found that mildly handicapped students served in a pull-out resource program for reading had higher

achievement scores than those mildly handicapped students served in regular education classrooms. ". . . the more frequent use of drill and instruction in special education instruction approached significance compared to regular reading instruction" (Marston, 1988, pp. 22-23).

There is the contention that the REI initiative is misnamed. No rallying cry is heard from general educators to eliminate pull-out programs for mildly handicapped students; it is solely a special education initiative (Braaten, et al., 1988; Fuchs & Fuchs, 1988; Gabriel & Rasp, 1986; Hayes, 1983). In a research study to determine teachers' attitudes toward a pull-out program versus an in-class compensatory reading program, a large percentage of teachers surveyed displayed a negative attitude toward the in-class program. A significant number requested that the pull-out program be reinstated (Hayes, 1983). Gabriel and Rasp (1986) also found that almost three-fourths of the regular classroom teachers who responded to a survey (N = 542) perceived pull-out services to be satisfactory or highly satisfactory. In an even more recent study of 311 general educators and 70 special educators representing 22 public schools in California and Illinois, it was found that these teachers clearly preferred a pull-out model for special education services rather than an in-class or consultant model (Sammel, Abernathy, Butera, & Lesar, 1991).

Ribner's (1978) research of minimally brain damaged (LD) students in regular classes found the students had significantly lower self-concepts

when no special supports were provided. It has been suggested that the lower self-concept in elementary age students is more likely to occur when children perceive their abilities as inferior to their primary reference group rather than in reaction to an abstract handicapped label (Coleman, 1983). Another scientific inquiry discovered that sudden, full-time mainstreaming with no reference to others with similar disabilities proved to be detrimental to disabled students' self-regard (Strang et al., 1978). In a review of the literature, Quintal (1986) noted that successful integration benefits both exceptional and non-exceptional students. However, the reality of integration is that non-disabled students do not always accept their disabled peers in social situations.

Baker and Zigmond (1990) stressed that if the regular education initiative is to work, teachers in the regular classrooms must make "fundamental changes" in their teaching methods. Horn and Fuchs (1987) asserted that if REI is to be successful, it must overcome the barrier of academic skills taught in special education settings which frequently fail to transfer to the regular classroom. The majority of parents of LD students would be willing to support full-time mainstreaming for their children only if certain conditions were met, including reduced class size, paraprofessional availability, consultation between the regular teacher and other professionals, and the availability of support personnel (Myles & Simpson, 1990).

In a study of 10 Washington school districts during the 1984-85 school year representing a total of 277 LD and BD (behavior disabled) students, Edgar (1987) found a tremendously high dropout rate for this population of 42% from high school, and the incredibly high "unengaged" rate (not employed, or enrolled in some type of educational program) of 61% for this same group. Edgar emphasized that these students certainly are not profiting from the high levels of academic mainstreaming at the secondary levels — even the ones who do graduate and are employed earn anemic salaries at entry-level positions. Edgar argued for a radical shift away from these nonproductive, mainstream, secondary programs for special education students to a curriculum with a focus on "functional, independent living tasks."

Discrepancies in Identification of LD Students

No area in special education has generated more concern than the procedures for the referral and assessment of students. Together, they raise issues about the professional judgment used in identifying students labeled as Learning Disabled. (Gartner & Lipsky, 1989, p. 8)

The following authorities make a strong case in opposing the current methods for identifying students as learning disabled. If what they say is true, then the in-class model — the focus of this study — would seem to be a more appropriate vehicle for the delivery of additional services to academically at-risk students. Indeed, if many so-called LD students have

the same attributes as other low-achieving students, as some experts purport, then would it not be reasonable for a special education teacher to collaborate with the general classroom teacher in helping all students become more successful? A full and equal partnership could be formed with the general education teacher which would eliminate the dichotomy and bias allegedly present in attempting to identify LD students.

A body of research asserts that the identification of students for the category of specific learning disabilities has been fraught with abuse, misuse, and total misunderstanding (Algozzine & Ysseldyke, 1981; Edgar & Hayden, 1985; Warner, Schumaker, Alley, & Deshler, 1980; Ysseldyke & Algozzine, 1983; Ysseldyke, Algozzine, Shinn, & McGue, 1982). It is the contention of these authors that only a very small percentage of students have quantifiable handicapping conditions; that many students with mild disabilities are indistinguishable from low-achieving students; and that students who perform poorly in school are referred for special education evaluation and then, in the majority of cases, identified as LD using arbitrary and subjective rationale. Shepard (1987) declared that at least half of the students diagnosed as LD could be described more accurately as disciplinary problems, slow learners, transients, children with higher rates of absenteeism, students from second-language families, and average learners in above-average schools. In the now classic study by Ysseldyke, Algozzine, and Epps (1983), in an investigation of the eligibility

criteria used in classifying students as learning disabled, it was found that over 85% of 248 third, fifth, and twelfth grade students who were identified as normal could have been classified as LD under current definitions. When the same eligibility criteria were applied to students identified as LD, 22% did not meet any of the criteria for classification in the LD category. Reschly (1984) reported on the National Academy Panel's analysis of minority overrepresentation in the mildly retarded category. The report called for changes in the special education classification system, asserting that classification systems varied so widely from state to state that a child considered handicapped in one state was low-average in another.

In a study cited in an article by Carbo (1987), LaShell's 1986 research of 40 LD students over a school year, discovered that 37 students achieved reading scores at the end of the year that enabled them to be totally mainstreamed when their reading program was restructured to meet their particular reading style. These data led LaShell to the conclusion that the children in the study categorized as LD were misidentified in the first place. Carbo (1987), from her own studies of learning styles, noted, "Many students are incorrectly taught and unfairly tested. When they fail, they undergo countless years of remediation—often being mistaught again and again" (p. 60). Ysseldyke (1983) stated that there was no defensible system for declaring students eligible as LD. He maintained

that the general education system was failing to meet these students' needs and that regular classroom teachers should be inserviced to broaden their instructional skills and techniques in order to teach *all* students.

Closely Related Research

Carlson's (1984) research of an alternative service delivery model incorporating teams of regular and special educators found that students attained significantly higher achievement scores in the experimental group of 21 LD and 24 low-achieving elementary and secondary students, compared to the control group of students taught in the traditional model (pull-out). Students with learning disabilities also expressed satisfaction about being a part of the group interaction within the class. In a study by Jenkins and Heinen (1989), researchers interviewed 686 special, remedial, and regular education students in grades two, four, and five, from classrooms that used either a pull-out, an in-class, or an integrated model for specialized instruction. Of the 686 students, 101 were special education recipients, 236 remedial students, and 349 regular education students. Interviewers asked the students two questions relating to preference for service model along with the reason for their choice. Results of the study definitely were mixed, with children's preferences affected by the service delivery model used in their classroom and their grade level.

The present study differed from that of Jenkins and Heinen (1989) in these ways:

- (1) It concentrated on six students receiving services via an in-class delivery system.
- (2) The students were followed over the course of an entire semester, not just a one-time interview.
- (3) Interviews, field notes, artifacts, and participant observations were used to help understand the students' thoughts and perceptions of the in-class model, to discern how the self-images of the students were affected, and to determine if there was evidence of greater academic progress demonstrated by these six students within the in-class model.
- (4) Viewpoints of parents and teachers also were solicited to help obtain their understanding of how these children functioned in the two service delivery models.

Human Subjects Approval

An overview of this proposed study was sent to the Montana State University Human Subjects Committee for its approval. Because of the young age of many of the respondents, and the fact that they had been identified as having a learning disability, the approval of the Human

Subjects Committee was obtained before any interviews were conducted with the minor subjects in the study.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The term for the research design utilized in this study is "qualitative case study," taken from Merriam (1988), who defined qualitative case study as "an intensive holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit" (p. 21).

Bogdan and Biklen (1982, pp. 27-29) presented five key components to qualitative research:

- (1) Qualitative research has the natural setting as the direct source of data, and the researcher is the key instrument.
- (2) Qualitative research is descriptive—rather than data collected in the form of numbers, it is in words. (Note: Qualitative researchers sometimes count, tally, calculate frequencies, etc.)
- (3) Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products.
- (4) Qualitative researchers do not search out data, or evidence to prove or disprove hypotheses; rather, the abstractions are built as the particulars that have been gathered are grouped together.
- (5) Researchers are concerned with the ways different people make sense out of their lives.

Burgess (1985) would add to Bogdan and Biklen's list, asserting that qualitative research is further characterized by its flexibility and by the

proposition that studies can be designed and redesigned. Fetterman (1987) maintained that qualitative methods enable researchers to gain the "insiders" understanding of exactly what their role is in the educational process. Similarly, Bogdan and Biklen (1982, p. 30) commented, "By learning the perspectives of the participants, qualitative research illuminates the inner dynamics of situations—dynamics that are often invisible to the outsider." Wolf and Tymitz (1977) concluded that the ethnographic paradigm, or naturalistic method of inquiry

. . . provides the framework for examining what the child knows and how the child processes information and responds to cues in the environment, but equally significant, it also provides the framework for examining how teachers process information concerning learner attributes, cognitive barriers, and emotional signals. (p. 9)

A qualitative case study design was selected to study the thoughts, perceptions, and feelings of the people involved. Merriam (1988, p. 10) noted that this design "is chosen precisely because researchers are interested in insight, discovery, and interpretation rather than hypothesis testing." Case studies are basically the intensive examination of a social unit (individual, group, community, institution), an event, or phenomenon that may utilize observation, (tape recorded) interviews, and the examination/collection of artifacts (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Burgess, 1985; Merriam, 1988; Minnis, 1985; Sellitz, Jahoda, Deutsch, & Cook, 1959). Lincoln and Guba (1985) declared that the case study mode is the method of choice for naturalistic inquiry, chiefly because it raises

understanding and maintains clarity. Case studies have been called "‘a snapshot of reality,’ ‘a slice of life,’ ‘a microcosm,’ ‘an episode,’ ‘an action unit,’ ‘a depth examination of an instance,’ and ‘the intensive examination of a unit’" (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, p. 371).

Perhaps the most extensive description of case study is the one composed by Guba and Lincoln (1981, pp. 375-376):

First, the case study provides the ‘thick description’ so important to the naturalistic evaluation. . . .

Second, the case study is grounded; it provides an experiential perspective. . . .

Third, the case study is holistic and lifelike. . . .

Fourth, the case study simplifies the range of data that one is asked to consider — it can be streamlined so as to best serve the purposes that the evaluation has in mind. . . .

Fifth, the case study focuses the reader’s attention and illuminates meanings.

Finally, and most importantly, the case study can communicate more than can be said in propositional language. The case study builds on the tacit knowledge of its readers. It is a reporting vehicle appropriate to the understanding and language of audiences.

This particular case study is identified as a bounded system. "The most straightforward examples of ‘bounded’ systems are those in which the boundaries have a common sense obviousness, e.g., an individual teacher, a single school, or perhaps an innovatory programme" (Adelman, Jenkins, & Kemmis, 1976, p. 141). Goetz and LeCompte (1984) discussed the distinctions between naturally bounded and artificially

bounded populations. This study falls under the category of naturally bounded, which Goetz and LeCompte (p. 85) defined as existing "independently of researcher interest, and are formed . . . and confirmed by their constituent participants." Devons and Gluckman (1982) referred to their bounded system as "circumscribing" research, wherein an analyst will cut off a manageable field of reality by placing boundaries around it. Guba and Lincoln (1981) suggested that the investigator can limit the study without compromising its integrity and still keep it within the naturalistic context.

Population Description

The investigation was conducted in the Four Rivers School District which is located in the town of Four Rivers, Idaho. (The town of Four Rivers and the names of the people and schools in this study are pseudonyms to afford the respondents privacy and confidentiality.) It is a community of approximately 27,500 people located in the northwestern region of the United States with a strong service economy connected to an agricultural base. The county of Four Rivers, of which the city is a part, has a total population of approximately 60,000. As would be expected in an agricultural-based economy, the remainder of the population is located in rural settings, with six small towns each under 4,000 population dotting the countryside. The four rivers from which the

town and county derived their names provide the irrigation for the many farms which use their water for a wide variety of crops generally comprised of sugar beets, corn, wheat, beans, and potatoes.

The Four Rivers School District had a student enrollment of 6,932 students, preschool through high school, as of September 1991. Three hundred twenty-four (324) regular classroom teachers, 30 special education teachers, and 42 special education instructional aides were employed in the Four Rivers School District at the time of this study, as well as a number of personnel in support positions including three school psychologists, 3.5 speech/language pathologists, 13 school counselors, one school social worker, two gifted and talented facilitators, one school audiologist, and a consulting teacher. The district is composed of six elementary schools, two junior high schools, and one senior high school. The school district also administers three regional juvenile programs: a juvenile detention center, an adolescent day treatment program, and an alternative high school.

Sunrise Elementary School served as the pilot site for the in-class service delivery model. Sunrise first opened its doors in 1956 and added seven classrooms and a library in 1979. Four portable classrooms were added in the fall of 1990 to accommodate increasing enrollment. In September of 1991, total enrollment at Sunrise stood at 743 students in grades kindergarten through six. The faculty consists of 36 teachers

including three resource teachers who are assisted by 3.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) resource aides, and two Chapter I teachers. There is also a .5 FTE assistant principal, as well as a full-time principal.

Sunrise draws many of its students from housing subdivisions that have been built in the last 15 years, as well as older single-family homes. Some of its population does come, however, from publicly subsidized housing that has been built within the last 10 years. Sunrise students are predominantly white, with a middle-class background.

In a nationally standardized achievement test (Iowa Tests of Basic Skills) administered in April of 1991 to students in grades two through six, Sunrise had percentile scores ranging from a low composite score of 44 in grade six, to a high composite score of 81 in grade two. Mr. Tomzak, the principal of Sunrise, accorded three primary reasons to the large discrepancy between the lowest and the highest composite percentile scores demonstrated by grades two and six: first, the significant influence that a strong home environment plays in exposing children to ideas and concepts, which tends to help students obtain higher scores on national achievement tests in the primary grades; second, the emphasis on an academic curriculum found in the district's kindergarten classes; and third, the sixth grade had a higher prevalence of lower achieving students than the other grades, which likewise may have contributed to the wider percentile spread. A fourth explanation offered

for the disparity in the scores at Sunrise was attributed, in the words of Mr. Tomzak, to "just kids" — not curriculum or differences in pedagogy.

The number of children assigned to Individual Education Programs (IEP's) as of December 1, 1990, stood at 56, or 7.2% of Sunrise's total population. Of these 56 students, 44 were listed under the category of specific learning disability.

All of the 23 resource teachers in the district were engaged in resource "pull-out" programs prior to the start of the 1990-91 school year. However, Sunrise Elementary School was designated to pilot a special education program in the Fall of 1990, with the imperative to serve students with learning disabilities in the regular classroom for the subject of reading. Sunrise, therefore, was the study site because of its status as a pilot school for the "in-class" model, and also for my convenience in collecting the data; since I worked in the district, I was familiar with the teachers and principals, and had easy access to the buildings and classes.

Gaining Entree

Gaining entree into Sunrise Elementary School was the least difficult aspect of my research. As the director of support services, I was an administrator in the district and had well-established personal and professional relationships with the principal and teachers. The superintendent, Dr. Kramer, although new to the district, was enthusiastic

about the study from the moment I described it to him. The fact that he had a Ph.D., and obviously had previous involvement in educational research, may certainly have played a part in his openness to the study. Dr. Kramer's initial comments were that he believed the findings of the research would be an essential factor in determining whether the in-class model eventually would be emulated at the other schools in the district.

Mr. Tomzak, the principal at Sunrise, also displayed excitement when I explained my proposed study, and was immediately supportive of the idea. Mr. Tomzak was the senior elementary principal in the district in terms of his 20 years of experience. He was also, in my estimation, the most progressive and insightful— a principal who was respected and admired by his colleagues. Mr. Tomzak had recently held top offices in the state's school administrators association, including president of the elementary principals association, and also president of the entire umbrella organization which comprised superintendents, elementary and secondary principals, and special education directors.

In the school district itself, Mr. Tomzak served as chairman of numerous curriculum policy and textbook committees. He also developed and chaired the Excellence in Education Fellowship Committee which awards grants of up to \$10,000 for teachers' winning proposals which, in the eyes of the committee, will benefit both their colleagues and Four Rivers students.

Mr. Tomzak's farsightedness enabled him to see that documentation from students, parents, and teachers on their perceptions of the in-class model would be just as crucial to the future of the project, if not more so, as the results of the reading achievement scores on the annual standardized test. Therefore, he very willingly sanctioned the proposed study on the in-class model.

When I approached the sixth grade classroom teachers and support personnel (resource room and Chapter I teachers) concerning the proposal, their reaction was tentative at first. After further explaining that this was to be part of a dissertation study and that the forthcoming data could prove valuable in helping to decide the effectiveness of the in-class model with LD students, the teachers not only became much more receptive but agreed unconditionally to assist in the study. I believe this extraordinary response was not so much because of the faculty's interest in assisting me with my research (although many had known me for years on a first-name basis), but mainly because they sincerely believed the accumulated data would help them in determining the overall effectiveness of the in-class model on their lower-achieving students.

Ms. Erickson and Ms. Schmidt, the two resource room teachers for the upper grades at Sunrise, were influential in choosing the parents and students for the study. The criteria I gave them were simple enough: a list of sixth grade students who they felt exhibited a true learning

disability in the area of reading, and who had been in the resource, pull-out program for at least two years before entering sixth grade. In a very short time they provided me a slate of 11 potential candidates who met the stated criteria.

One very important point worth noting was that Ms. Schmidt and Ms. Erickson took the liberty of excluding two potential student subjects from the study because of their parents. From previous experiences, Schmidt and Erickson felt these parents had displayed some degree of irresponsibility; e.g., they did not follow through with some agreed upon task, or failed to attend more than one scheduled meeting. This exclusion of two children and their parents from the possibility of participating in the study did not, in my opinion, affect the final results: First, if the resource teachers were correct and the parents could not be relied upon, I probably would not have retrieved much information from them anyway; secondly, there was already a diverse group of parents on the list representing a variety of backgrounds.

The six parents who were eventually selected all expressed an interest from the initial telephone call; in fact, the first six parents I called all agreed to participate in the study. Several of them wanted to speak to their spouse before giving an unequivocal yes, but upon discussing it responded favorably.

One of the original six students had to be replaced shortly before the study began as he was removed from special education services. This particular child was so opposed to being pulled out of his classroom to the resource room for written language and math (pull-out programs still existed for these particular subjects) that his teachers and mother eventually reached the conclusion that further special education services would be counterproductive to his success in school. He was, therefore, "staffed-out" (removed from the Individualized Education Program developed for him by agreement of the staff and parents at a child study team meeting) and placed in the regular classroom full-time. Another parent of an LD child was subsequently called who agreed to participate in the study to replace the parent of the student who was "staffed out."

After setting up appointments with the parents, I met with each of them describing the study in greater detail and answering any questions they had. Upon agreeing to participate in the study, each of the parents signed a release form granting me permission to use the information in my thesis. I then met with their children on a separate occasion, explaining the purpose of the study and making certain that each child had a distinct understanding of what was to be expected. It was made clear to each student that participation in the study was strictly voluntary, but, like their parents, all of the children unhesitatingly signed the release form.

During the course of the study, only two of the fathers participated in the interview process. A third father sat in on an interview, but did not contribute. The interviews were all tape recorded and conducted in the place of the parents' choosing. The majority of parents chose their homes for the interviews, but I also interviewed one parent at Sunrise School and two parents in my office.

Why more of the fathers did not participate, although invited, may have these possible explanations:

- (1) Two of the three who did not participate were stepfathers, not the natural fathers; thus, their interest level may not have been as high or they may have felt their strong involvement would have been inappropriate.
- (2) The third father owned a barber shop and did not get off work until 6:00 p.m. or later. His wife, who worked in the same shop, had a more flexible schedule and could leave if she did not have any appointments. She always scheduled the interview time when her husband was working.
- (3) Although I offered to meet with parents anytime, two of the three mothers wanted to meet with me during school hours when their husbands were unavailable.
- (4) Finally, in my own experience, many mothers seem to take more of an active part in their children's education than do the fathers.

The interviews with the students were likewise tape recorded and took place entirely at the school. I discussed with their teachers the best time of day for the interviews and then would come to the school at that prearranged time the week I was to interview. This plan worked well, although occasionally I would arrive at the school to find that the students were at an assembly, were listening to a guest speaker, or were ill. I then would try to come back later in the week or meet with the student early the following week.

The teachers, of course, were interviewed at prearranged times. Frequently it would be after school, but I also interviewed teachers during the school day when they had a break, e.g., during music, lunch, or P.E. Selected past resource and classroom teachers of the students in the study also were interviewed to fill in needed background information to obtain as complete an academic and social history of the students as possible.

The length of the interviews varied considerably. The students' interviews generally lasted 15 minutes. The parents' and teachers' interviews were of much longer duration, lasting from 20 minutes to over an hour, with an average of 40-45 minutes.

In-Class Model

The in-class service delivery model for special education students with mild disabilities had its beginnings in the Fall of 1989 when, as the director of support services, I described the rationale behind the in-class model at one of the school district's regular administrator meetings. In later discussions with individual principals, three of the more interested elementary principals and I (with the superintendent's blessing) decided a site visitation to a nearby school district currently employing the model would be enlightening.

The group making the trip was composed of the three elementary principals, a resource room teacher, and a Chapter I teacher from each school, as well as one primary and one intermediate teacher from each of the schools. The assistant superintendent in charge of curriculum and the Chapter I director also made the trip.

Mr. Tomzak and his representatives from Sunrise Elementary School expressed the most interest and enthusiasm for the in-class model upon returning home. Mr. Tomzak and the four staff members who made the trip spent the remainder of the school year (the site visit was made in October) learning more about the in-class model. They educated the faculty not only about the tenets of the in-class model, but also about cooperative learning and co-teaching, which, along with the in-class

model, were to play an integral role in the instructional methodology that finally was adopted.

In the late spring, Mr. Tomzak called a faculty meeting to discuss the possibility of introducing the in-class service delivery model as a pilot project for the reading curriculum in grades one through six at Sunrise. After a full-blown discussion on issues ranging from the block scheduling of classes to additional training for the staff, the matter was put to a vote. The teachers voted overwhelmingly in favor of implementing the innovation by a 26-3 margin. This tremendous affirmation of support should be credited to the job Mr. Tomzak and his facilitators did in the months preceding the vote. By their well-reasoned responses to the many questions raised by the faculty of Sunrise, they eventually sold the staff on the philosophy underpinning the in-class model.

Two consultants subsequently were brought in from Johns Hopkins University for the week immediately following the end of school, to train the faculty in the tenets of cooperative learning. Because of its reliance on group interaction and students assisting each other in the learning process, the principles behind cooperative learning appeared to mesh quite well with the expectations of the Sunrise staff for the in-class model. As a group, the teachers did not want to see the philosophy of the in-class model undermined by having the resource room and Chapter I students pulled to the back of the classroom, thus continuing the practice of

isolation that was a dominant characteristic of the conventional pull-out program. To combat this separateness, the teachers decided to institute cooperative learning and have the Chapter I or resource teacher come into the classrooms and co-teach reading.

A fortuitous circumstance also occurred in this time period that was to play an important part in the success of the innovation. Idaho's State Department of Education, in an effort to promote more collaboration between general and special educators, determined to sponsor five workshops on collaboration and co-teaching over the course of the coming school year (1990-91). Twelve schools from across the entire state were selected to participate in the workshops on the basis of a written proposal submitted by each. Quite fortunately, Sunrise was one of the 12 schools chosen. These workshops proved immensely valuable in providing practical suggestions for working out the inevitable problems (finding the time to collaborate with their fellow co-teachers was the big one) which arose that first year. One of the recommendations which proved successful was hiring two substitute teachers for one-half day a week. These substitute teachers would rotate from class to class every 30 minutes, giving the co-teachers a chance to collaborate. The money for the substitutes came from a creative source—the faculty's pop machine profits.

Sampling

The six students who were the primary respondents in the case study were selected (as described earlier) from a list of students submitted by one of the resource teachers with whom I had discussed the intent of my study. Carew and Lightfoot (1979) and Wolcott (1973) suggested that the investigator may choose the person, group, or setting if they matched the criteria established by the investigator.

This type of sampling is known as nonprobability sampling as opposed to "probability sampling of which random sampling is the most familiar example" (Merriam, 1988, p. 47). Honigmann (1982, p. 84) paraphrased Margaret Mead's definition of nonprobability sampling, or what she called anthropological methods of sampling, when he stated that these sampling methods

. . . are logical as long as the field worker expects mainly to use his data not to answer questions like 'how much' and 'how often,' but to solve qualitative problems such as discovering what occurs, the implications of what occurs, and the relationships linking occurrences.

Honigmann (1982) stated further that the simple reason nonprobability sampling continues to be used frequently in field work is that through this type of sampling research questions can be satisfactorily answered.

The most common form of non-probabilistic sampling is called "purposive" (Chein, 1981; Manheim, 1977), "purposeful" (Patton, 1980),

"selective" (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973), "judgement and opportunistic" (Honigmann, 1982), or "criterion-based" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984). Chein (1981), Manheim (1977), and Merriam (1988) maintained that purposive sampling is chosen by the researcher to learn the most from a particular population. This sample should not only be of interest to the researcher but also should be one with which the researcher is familiar. Furthermore, the population should be, in the judgement of the investigator, a typical sample of that population.

The following criteria were used to select the student population for the study:

- (1) Students were from the sixth grade.
- (2) Students had an identified learning disability.
- (3) Students had been involved in a pull-out program for at least two years.
- (4) Students currently were receiving reading support from the special education teachers via the in-class model.

The six students who were chosen as primary respondents of the study were involved in the pilot program for the in-class service delivery system. Three students were on IEPs solely for reading, while three had IEPs developed for reading and written language. Two of the students were females and four were males. All six students were living in

two-parent homes, although three of them had stepfathers in the home due to remarriage.

The resource teacher and her aide came into the sixth grade classroom and worked collaboratively with the classroom teacher. Students who normally would be pulled out into a resource program for reading remained in the classroom. Interviews were conducted with current teachers, both resource and regular, as well as former teachers and parents to obtain an overall profile including the attitudes, social skills, learning styles, and other characteristics of these students. Furthermore, two students who were enrolled in a pull-out program were interviewed along with their teachers and parents to gain an understanding of their views concerning the resource program.

The rationale for focusing on sixth grade students was based entirely on the assumption that sixth graders would be better able to articulate their thoughts than younger students. This also was the reasoning used in selecting students with specific learning disabilities rather than ones with mild or moderate retardation.

The requirement that the students be in special education for at least two years stemmed from a desire to obtain from the respondents a perspective based on a longer personal experience with the pull-out program.

Quite obviously, the last criterion, involvement in the in-class model, was a necessity if one was to discover how the respondents view the two instructional practices.

Data Collection

Data collection took place during the first year of the pilot study for the in-class model, encompassing 36 weeks of instructional time, covering the period from the first of September to the first week in June. I attempted to capture the initial reactions of staff, parents, and students to this new integration model of service delivery. Many authorities, when discussing the data collection process, describe it as one which can go on indefinitely, but, as a result of a finite amount of funds, energy, time, and patience, must come to a conclusion (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Merriam, 1988). Andrew (1985, p. 161) described it best:

There is however also a sense in which a kind of law of diminishing returns sets in, a time when the sources while still fascinating, provide supporting evidence rather than turning up new lines of thought and investigation.

The data were derived from a variety of methods: transcription of taped interviews, field notes, artifact collection, and participant observations. Some readers may not have familiarity with the last three terms. Therefore, these terms are defined below:

- (1) Field notes: "The written account of what the researcher hears, sees, experiences, and thinks in the course of collecting and reflecting on the data in a qualitative study" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982, p. 74).
- (2) Artifact collection: In the context of this study, the artifacts to be examined are the students' cumulative files and special education records, including the psycho-educational records.
- (3) Participant observation: Wolcott (1973) preferred Gold's term of "participant as observer" which he defined as
... a role in which the observer is known to all and is present in the system as a scientific observer participating by his presence but at the same time usually allowed to do what observers do rather than expected to perform as others perform. (p. 8)

Merriam (1988, p. 69) pointed out that "multiple methods of data collection is a major strength of case-study research. . . ." The use of multiple methods of data collection is one form of "triangulation" which assists the researcher in correcting biases that may occur and is the preferred methodology unless the information comes from an unimpeachable source (Denzin, 1970; Howe, 1988; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). "Methodological triangulation combines dissimilar methods such as interviews, observations, and physical evidence to study the same unit" (Merriam, 1988, p. 69).

Interviews

"The main purpose of an interview is to obtain a special kind of information" (Merriam, 1988, p. 72). Patton (1980, p. 196) stated, "We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe." Two of the six primary respondents (the sixth grade LD students) were interviewed over the course of the first semester during their participation in the in-class model. The other four students were interviewed over the course of the second semester. The parent and teacher interviews were conducted in either the first or second semester depending upon the time their child or student was involved in the interview process. Table 1 provides a summary of the number of interviews conducted and the semester of occurrence. A point of clarification regarding the number of interviews should be made. In the first semester, two of the LD students interviewed were in a pull-out program at another school. They were interviewed just once, as were their parents. Also, the number of interviews conducted of general classroom teachers and special education resource teachers varied depending on whether or not they were co-teaching reading within the In-Class model. Past teachers (special and general education) of the primary respondents and sixth grade teachers not involved directly with the innovation were interviewed only once. The co-teachers were

Table 1. Number of Interviews and Semester Conducted During the 1990-91 School Year.

Category	Number of Interviews	Semester Conducted
LD Students (N = 8)		
Grade 6	18	1
Grade 6	<u>18</u>	2
Total interviews conducted	36	
General Classroom Teachers (N = 11)		
Grade 6	5	1
Grade 6	4	2
Grade 5	2	1
Grade 5	2	2
Grade 4	<u>1</u>	1
Total interviews conducted	14	
Special Education Resource Teachers (N = 5)	7	1
	<u>7</u>	2
Total interviews conducted	14	
Chapter I Teachers (N = 1)	2	2
Resource Room Aide (N = 1)	1	2
Elementary School Principal (N = 1)	1	2
Parents of LD Children (N = 8)	8	1
	<u>8</u>	2
Total interviews conducted	16	

interviewed more than once. A total of 84 interviews were conducted with 35 respondents.

Denzin (1970), Goetz and LeCompte (1984), and Merriam (1988) described various types of interviews ranging from highly structured to very open-ended. The type of interview utilized in this study is characteristic of interviews known under various names, such as nonscheduled standardized (Denzin, 1970), the semi-structured interview (Merriam, 1988), or the qualitative structured interview (Howe, 1988). These interviews are guided by the same questions asked of all respondents, but depending on the reactions of the respondents, the order and specificity of the questions may be changed. The interviewer also can adjust to the informant's fluency, or lack thereof, by asking more probing questions in an attempt to encourage the informant's discourse. "This format allows the researcher to respond to the situation at hand, to the emerging world view of the respondent, and to new ideas on the topic" (Merriam, 1988, p. 74). Patton (1980), Schatzman and Strauss (1973), and Spradley (1979) presented a typology of questions for qualitative interviewing. These questions are classified under various headings ranging from devil's advocate questions, to descriptive questions, to hypothetical questions, to background and demographic questions. However, Goetz and LeCompte (1984) urged interviewers to exercise caution when examining question formats:

Researchers seeking guidance for interview construction find available an overwhelming array of instructions, suggestions, protocol forms, and prescriptions. Within this massive literature contradictions abound. For each proscription or format or question structure pronounced by one researcher, other investigators suggest alternative uses for the same techniques. (p. 124)

Patton (1980) stressed the importance of wording questions in language clear and meaningful to the respondent and reminded interviewers to use open-ended questions. Patton (1980) and Wolcott (1973) both warned about the excessive use of "why" questions. Lofland (1971) and Patton (1980) advised interviewers to eliminate leading questions from their interviews. Bogdan and Biklen (1982), Lofland (1971), and Stainback and Stainback (1988) emphasized latitude and flexibility on the part of the interviewer in order to offer the informant the opportunity to shape the direction of content of the interview. Patton (1980) also cautioned interviewers to talk less than their informants and to be aware of their (interviewers) stance. The interviewer "presupposes that the respondent has something to contribute, has had an experience worth talking about, and has an opinion of interest to the researcher" (Merriam, 1988, p. 79).

Participant Observations

Participant observations were conducted in the students' respective classrooms during the 1990-91 school year. Table 2 summarizes the number of reading lessons observed and the semester of occurrence.

Table 2. Number of In-Class Model Reading Lessons Observed During the 1990-91 School Year.

Grade Level	Number of In-Class Reading Lessons Observed	Semester
6	8	1
6	<u>4</u>	2
Total number of observations of in-class reading lessons	12	

Becker and Geer (1982) delineated the many forms that participant observations can take, and validated the one of strict observation which was chosen for this study. "Strict observation" in the context of this study means that no planned interaction occurred between the students, teachers, and me during the observation period. Occasionally a student and I would verbally communicate, an action always initiated by the student. Several times, a student approached me to show me his or her work or to ask why I was in the classroom. These were the only interactions that ever occurred.

When I observed in the reading classes, I attempted to be as unobtrusive as possible. Upon entering the classroom during the time when students were changing classes, I would take a seat in the back of the classroom. There, I would make a diagram of the class, noting the seating arrangements and layout of the room including bulletin boards, storage areas, water fountain, and so forth.

I would then make notes of how the students who were participating in the research interacted with other students and their teachers. I would be especially interested to see if these students appeared to be attending to the task at hand and actively participating in the assignment.

All of my observations were written down for later analysis. I basically wanted to confirm what the teachers and students were telling me in the interviews.

Field Notes

Field notes were written after each interview and observation. These were reflective in nature and were my "fresh" impressions of what was said and seen. Typically, I would write down how I felt the interviewee acted during the course of the interview, whether the subject appeared hesitant or open, and anything of relevance that the person might have said when the tape recorder was not running.

Analytical Techniques

The analysis of the data began as the data were collected. Goetz and LeCompte (1984), Merriam (1988), Stainback and Stainback (1988), and Strauss (1987) all stressed the importance of analyzing data as it comes in. The emphasis is that data analysis is ongoing:

As you are involved in data organization, you are also involved in data analysis. In fact, data analysis in qualitative research is an ongoing activity that occurs throughout the investigative process

rather than after the process. . . . (Stainback & Stainback, 1988, p. 64)

"The task of converting field notes and observations about issues and concerns into systematic categories is a difficult one" (Guba, 1978, p. 53). With Guba's caveat duly noted, coding categories were used as a means of sorting the data. Coding categories are simply categories in which specific segments from the units of information that were collected (interviews, field notes, and participant observations) were placed. This was done to organize the data under common headings so that pertinent information could be located more easily. In the instance of this particular research, 46 different coding categories were identified, such as self-image, in-class model, parental regrets, and missing out on classroom work.

As the data were collected and analyzed, it was placed into one of the existing coding categories or a new category was devised to accommodate it. From these categories emerged idea patterns and perceptions from the study's participants which evolved into the development of the study's theory.

This method of data analysis has been validated by a number of researchers (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Guba & Lincoln, 1981). The constant comparative method espoused by Glaser and Strauss (1967) where the information is processed through the development of categories, which gradually evolve

into the emerging theory of the study, was well suited for the proposed purposes of this research. Incoming data were compared to tentatively identified patterns. Patterns were added, deleted, or revised in light of new data.

Once the coding categories were delineated, I reviewed the field notes, transcriptions, and other data, and placed the codes in the margins in which the units of information best fit. The technique eventually used was to subsequently go back and photocopy the data, cutting up the units of information, and placing the coded sections into file folders. Each unit of data also had an identifying number corresponding to the respondent's name (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Merriam, 1988).

The essential components upon which the analysis was built and which composed an integral part of the data analysis have been described by Goetz and LeCompte (1984, p. 165):

- (1) Perceiving
- (2) Comparing, contrasting, aggregating, and ordering
- (3) Establishing linkages and relationships
- (4) Speculating

This research was a problem-centered, situation-specific, in-depth look at how sixth grade students, parents, and teachers viewed the dynamics of the in-class versus pull-out service delivery model. By focusing on six primary respondents and following them closely and intensively over the

course of a school year, I am confident that a very detailed and definitive picture of these students' feelings and perceptions vis-a-vis resource and in-class models were produced. The end product, I believe, provides a "rich and thick" description of the phenomenon under study, which, I hope, will enlighten the reader's full understanding of the phenomenon.

Role of the Researcher

Each person interviewed was given an explanation of the purpose of the research study, including the premise of the proposed thesis.

The interviews with students and teachers took place at their respective schools. A time before or after school was scheduled with the teachers, or during a music or P.E. period when the class was gone, or lastly, whenever the time was convenient for them. The students were interviewed separately at a time determined by the teacher. Parents were interviewed at a time and place of their preference.

Students and parents signed a permission form before the interview, allowing use of the information from the interviews for publication. A pledge to keep all the information confidential and not to reveal respondents' true identities also was included on the permission form.

Biases Toward the Problem

It is standard practice in qualitative research for a researcher to analyze his or her initial thinking about issues pertinent to the study (Carew & Lightfoot, 1979; Wolcott, 1973). Therefore, this subsequent section has been included to express my possible biases.

I have been involved in public education nearly my entire adult life. After graduating from college with a B.S. in education, I taught fourth grade in a Chicago suburb from 1969-1973. Pull-out programs were foreign to me at this early stage of my teaching career, as this particular school did not have Title I or resource rooms.

Upon moving to Portland, Oregon, I taught a sixth grade classroom from 1974-1975. Again, this school had no pull-out programs and each classroom teacher had to modify the curriculum as best they could if a number of students were to achieve success.

After a year of teaching sixth grade, I was quite dissatisfied with my overall teaching performance. I felt I did not have the requisite skills necessary to assist all the students, with their wide-range of academic skills, achieve academic success. I resolved to upgrade my teaching proficiency, and entered the master's program in Special Education at Portland State University. Upon graduating from PSU, I taught in a junior high resource room for three years; subsequently I have been involved in the administration end of special education.

As someone who has been involved as a classroom teacher before the advent of pull-out programs, and as a resource teacher and special education administrator, I believe I bring a unique perspective and a possible bias to the "problem" of students being pulled out of their classrooms to receive academic help.

I believe that in many instances, classroom teachers are much too willing for a student to go to a resource room. It relieves them, I feel, of the responsibility of having to deal with the child's disability, at least for part of the school day. Too many teachers, in my opinion, are of the view that once a child has been identified as having a disability, the child becomes special education's responsibility. However, even though I brought the aforementioned bias with me in the investigation of the issues reported in this study, it must be emphasized that in this type of study the data drive the findings, not researcher biases. As Guba and Lincoln (1981) wrote, "Whatever degree of apparent objectivity may be lost is more than compensated for by the continuously emerging insight that naturalistic methods produce" (p. 127).

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Introduction

In the interview process, 46 different categories with distinctive attributes were described by the respondents. The categories ranged from major areas such as "Impact of the In-Class Model" and "Curricular Adaptations" to some very minor points such as the "Slingerland Teaching Method" and "Formal Identification." The findings are presented under 10 different categorical titles, as many of the categories either were not relevant to the major questions posed in this research study or salient illustrations from minor categories were incorporated into other categories.

Vignettes of the Students and Their Families

Introduction

The following vignettes of the six families who agreed to be the primary respondents for this study are provided as background information and to enable the reader to identify more closely with each of these individuals.

Pseudonyms have been used to protect the subjects' identities so that none of the collected information will embarrass or prove harmful to them.

The descriptions of the students and their families include such areas as the parents' employment; the education of the parents and any difficulties that they may have experienced while attending school; siblings and whether they were experiencing difficulties in school; marital status of the parents and any previous marriages they may have entered into; an estimate of the family's socioeconomic status; and various descriptors of the students' educational status such as IQ, achievement scores, and statements from the Individualized Education Program.

There was a paucity of information regarding most fathers. This is because in the majority of cases, only the mother of the student was interviewed. The possible explanations for this phenomenon were presented in Chapter 3.

The IQ score is provided to demonstrate the intellectual potential of each student. It will be noticed that each student's total score falls within the average range of intelligence from the lowest IQ score of 91 for Charlotte to the highest IQ score of 111 for Mike.

Under the subheading of achievement tests, reading test scores from the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) (The University of Iowa, 1986) and the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery (Woodcock & Johnson, 1977) are reported for each student with the exception of Jason Rosenblum who

only had ITBS scores to report. The ITBS scores are stated in percentiles. "A percentile is a score or point in a distribution at or below which a given percentage of individuals fall. If 63 percent of the cases fall below a given score, then that score is at the 63rd percentile" (Sattler, 1982, p. 19). The ITBS was the district-wide achievement test during the time this study was conducted. The student subjects' scores are disclosed to give the reader more background information into how these LD students compared nationally to other sixth graders in the areas of reading, vocabulary, and spelling.

The Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery reading subtest scores were not a feature of the research design for this study. Furthermore, these particular scores should not be viewed as a true pretest/posttest design as the date of the first test varied with each individual. The statistics are provided only to buttress the feelings and perceptions of the parents, teachers, and students which follow later in the chapter. The scores are stated as grade level scores to provide the reader a better grasp of the functional level of the LD students' reading skills. On the second Woodcock-Johnson reading subtest score all the LD students did demonstrate at least a three-month increase when compared to the first test.

Adam Schluter

Retention. Adam has been retained twice in his school career: once in kindergarten, and then again in first grade.

Referral. Adam was referred by his second grade teacher and initially placed in the resource room on January 26, 1987.

IQ. Adam's full-scale IQ score of 105 on the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children — Revised (WISC-R) (Wechsler, 1974) is demonstrative of a student of average intelligence. His performance score of 105 was somewhat higher than his verbal score of 101.

IEP. Adam's second grade teacher stated on the first IEP that he was highly distractible and had a hard time staying on task. By the third grade his teacher remarked that Adam was very well behaved and put forth a good effort. Adam also was seen by the speech/language pathologist because he had a problem with articulating the "r" sound. By the time he reached fourth grade, however, that particular goal was no longer on his IEP. His third grade teacher stated that Adam was an auditory learner who seemed to learn best through a lecture format. In the fourth and fifth grades his teachers mentioned that Adam often did not complete assignments or turn in homework.

Achievement tests. On the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills taken in March 1991, Adam had percentile scores of 15 in vocabulary, 15 in reading, and 4 in spelling. At a Child Study Team (CST) meeting held on December 18, 1989, his reading score was reported to be at the 3.2 grade level as measured by the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery. In May of

1991, Adam had a reading subtest grade level score on the same instrument of 4.6, an increase of 1.4 years.

Parents' employment. Cindy Porter, Adam's mother, currently is employed part-time maintaining plants (watering, fertilizing) at a local fast-food restaurant. She has been a grocery checker and a sales clerk at a large retail store. Between her first and second marriages, Cindy was on welfare. Adam's stepfather works as a heavy equipment operator.

Parents' education. Cindy dropped out of school in the ninth grade. She had trouble reading and was placed into a special class in the eighth grade which made her feel "bad and labeled." This feeling plus the fact that she was "rebellious" were what led her to quit school. Cindy now has a GED high school equivalency degree, which took one and one-half years to earn because of her reading difficulty. She also has taken a cashier's course at the local junior college.

Town. Cindy grew up in Four Rivers, Idaho, and has lived here all her life. Adam was born and has been raised in Four Rivers as well.

Marriage. This is the second marriage for both Cindy and her husband, Jack. Cindy's first marriage lasted eight years. She is now in the third year of her second marriage.

Children. Cindy's children, Adam (13) and Kari (11), from her first marriage live with her. Terry (9), her husband's son from his first marriage, is enrolled in an Individual Education Program (IEP) for a learning disability and

lives with them. Chad (3) is so far the only offspring from the second marriage. Tracey (8) lives with her natural mother, although Jack Porter retains visitation rights.

Socioeconomic status. The Porters are renting a house. The family would best be described as being from a low-middle socioeconomic strata.

Miscellaneous. Adam has had a long history of middle ear problems and had tubes inserted in his ears to aid in the drainage. By second grade, Adam no longer needed tubes and had normal hearing.

Charlotte Casey

Retention. Charlotte was retained once in kindergarten.

Referral. She was referred by her second grade teacher in September 1986, and entered the resource room on December 1, 1986. On the referral form, Charlotte's second grade teacher commented that she failed to do classroom work, did not hand in papers, acted belligerently, and was listless. Charlotte was in Chapter I reading and math at the time of the referral.

IQ. On the WISC-R, Charlotte had a full-scale IQ score of 91 with identical scores of 92 on the verbal and performance sections. This placed her near the lower regions of the average ability group according to the psychologist's report.

Achievement tests. On the ITBS administered in March 1991, Charlotte had percentile scores of 7 in vocabulary, 33 in reading, and 5 in spelling. The Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery reading subtest score cited on

Charlotte's IEP dated December 5, 1989, was at the 3.6 grade level. On the same subtest given in May 1991, a 5.4 grade level score was reported, an increase of 1.8 years.

IEP. On Charlotte's most recent IEP dated May 20, 1991, the following comments were written under strengths: "Socially well adjusted, works well in cooperative groups, made an improvement turning in assignments." Under the category of weaknesses were cryptically written: "Organization, written expression." On earlier IEPs, it was reported that Charlotte was easily frustrated by academic work but exhibited a positive attitude. Her decoding skills were stated as being quite low.

Parents' employment. Stacie, Charlotte's mother, works as a carpet layer with her husband in a family-owned business.

Parents' education. Stacie dropped out of high school in her junior year because she was pregnant. She had a difficult time in school with reading and spelling. Stacie subsequently received her GED.

Town. Stacie grew up in a small town a few miles from Four Rivers, Idaho. Charlotte was born in Four Rivers and has lived here her entire life.

Marriage. This is Stacie's third marriage. She lived with her present husband before eventually marrying him. They have been together for six years. Stacie's first marriage lasted four years and her second marriage two years.

Children. Charlotte (13) and Jennifer (11) are offspring from the first marriage. A son (8), who is from Stacie's second marriage, also lives with them. Charlotte and Jennifer are both on IEPs with learning disabilities. The son is taking Ritalin (a medication prescribed for persons diagnosed as having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and is in Chapter I reading.

Socioeconomic status. The family is buying their house. They would be considered to be in a low-middle socioeconomic strata.

Randy Creighton

Retention. Randy was retained in first grade.

Referral. Randy was referred by his first grade teacher and entered the resource room during his second time through first grade on February 6, 1985.

IQ. Randy's full-scale IQ score on the WISC-R was 98 with a verbal score of 85 and a performance score of 114. The psychologist's report noted that the significant superiority of the performance scale over the verbal scale subtests indicated a consistent and important pattern of better perceptual-motor development than language or auditory processing skills for this child. In the "notes" section of the WISC-R record form is the handwritten comment that Randy is "inarticulate — much difficulty with self-expression."

IEP. On Randy's first IEP it was reported that his ability to use language was below average and that he had poor readiness skills. He was

subsequently placed with the speech/language pathologist to work on his language deficit but was dismissed from therapy on May 28, 1986, due to parent request. When his mother was questioned about this, she stated that she did not want Randy missing out any more than necessary from his regular classroom.

Randy's later IEPs mentioned that "he daydreams quite a bit," that he "interacts well with his peers," that "another student helps Randy by reading to him," and that he was "a very pleasant child to work with."

On the IEP dated November 30, 1989, the goal of improving written language was added. This increased Randy's time in the resource room from 40 minutes a day to one hour daily.

Achievement tests. On the ITBS, Randy had percentile scores of 1 in vocabulary, 2 in reading, and 1 in spelling. On the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery reading subtest, Randy had a grade level score of 2.2 in March 1989, which increased to 3.8 in May 1991, a gain of 1.6 years.

Parents' employment. Mary, Randy's mother, works part-time six hours a week with a local weight-loss clinic. Before her marriage she worked as a nanny for a well-to-do family in a large metropolitan area. Larry Creighton, Randy's father, was employed until recently in his family's construction business.

Parents' education. Mary left school at age 16. She attended a junior college for one semester. Randy's father is a high school graduate and is now attending junior college on a full-time basis.

Town. Mary grew up in the United Kingdom. She came to this country in 1974, and has lived in Four Rivers, Idaho, for the last 15 years. Randy was born in Four Rivers and has lived here his entire life.

Marriage. The Creightons have been married 15 years.

Children. The Creightons have five children. Two are in Chapter I reading. Randy is in special education under the category of Learning Disabled.

Socioeconomic status. The Creightons are renting a house and would best be described as a low-middle socioeconomic status family.

Mike Johnston

Retention. Mike has never been retained in school and continues to be with his age-appropriate peers.

Referral. Mike was referred by his second grade teacher and identified as having a specific learning disability; he was placed in the resource room on March 31, 1987.

IEP. Some of the comments on his first IEP and others that follow include: "Mike tries extremely hard in class and puts forth much effort; he has a good attitude about school." "Mike has a great deal of difficulty in the

area of reading and spelling." "Reading test questions out loud has helped Mike tremendously."

On his most recent IEP dated May 29, 1991, it was reported under "strengths" that Mike was "diligent, cooperative and easy going; motivated, participates in classroom discussions; has a good general knowledge base and has excellent comprehension (auditory learner)."

IQ. On the latest WISC-R administered to Mike, he had a full-scale IQ of 111, a verbal score of 101, and a performance score of 121. The psychologist's report noted that the significant discrepancy between the verbal and performance sections indicated that Mike had excellent skills in the areas of perceptual organization.

Achievement tests. On the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery reading subtest, Mike had a grade level score of 3.2 recorded in May of 1990 and a 3.8 reading subtest grade level score in May of 1991, an increase of six months. On the ITBS administered in March 1991, Mike had percentile scores of 9 in vocabulary, 35 in reading, and 19 in spelling.

Parents' employment. Linda, Mike's mother, is a hair stylist and her husband, Sam, is a barber. They operate their own shop.

Parents' education. Linda is a high school graduate who subsequently enrolled and graduated from beauty school. Sam was in the Navy for three years before going to barber college and embarking upon his career.

Town. Both Linda and Sam were born and raised in a small, neighboring town. Mike was born and has grown up in Four Rivers.

Marriage. The Johnstons have been married 24 years.

Children. The Johnstons have three children: Jeff (21), Tim (15), and Mike (12). Jeff was diagnosed with a specific learning disability and was in a resource room through seventh grade. Mike also has been diagnosed as having a specific learning disability.

Socioeconomic status. The Johnstons are buying a home. Mike comes from a solidly middle-class family.

Miscellaneous. Mike has many hobbies. He plays the piano, is a beginning woodcarver, and enjoys golfing.

Shawnee Malinoski

Retention. Shawnee has never been retained in school, although her parents have often thought about it. Shawnee's teachers have consistently persuaded them against retention.

Referral. Shawnee was referred and placed into the resource room in second grade.

IQ. According to the WISC-R, Shawnee is functioning in the average range of intellectual ability with a full-scale IQ of 97. She had a verbal score of 95 and a performance score of 101.

IEP. On her IEP dated October 25, 1990, it was commented that Shawnee learns and comprehends better through the auditory channel. Another remark added that she participated well in the regular classroom.

Achievement tests. The ITBS scores administered in March 1991, were as follows: percentile scores of 34 in vocabulary, 41 in reading, and 30 in spelling. On the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery, Shawnee had a reading grade level score of 4.3 in October of 1990, and a 4.6 reading grade level score in April 1991, an increase of three months.

Parents' employment. Sally Malinoski, Shawnee's mother, does not work outside the home. Joe Malinoski, Shawnee's father, is a food procurer for a food processing company.

Parents' education. Sally is a high school graduate, and Joe has a Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture from a large state university.

Town. The Malinoskis lived in a small town out-of-state for 13 years before moving to Four Rivers, Idaho. This is Shawnee's first year in the Four Rivers School District.

Marriage. Joe and Sally have been married 16 years.

Children. The Malinoskis have two girls, Jessica (14) and Shawnee (12). Shawnee has been diagnosed with a specific learning disability.

Socioeconomic status. Joe and Sally are buying a newly built home. The Malinoskis are a solidly middle-class family.

Jason Rosenblum

Retention. Jason was retained in kindergarten.

Referral. Jason was referred for special education testing and subsequently placed on an IEP at the beginning of first grade.

IQ. On the WISC-R, Jason had a full-scale IQ score of 92 with a verbal score of 91 and a performance score of 95, which placed him in the average range of intellectual ability.

IEP. On an IEP dated January 9, 1991, it was stated that Jason really worked hard but had a difficult time with reading content subjects like social studies. Math continued to be a problem for him as well as grammatical and compositional skills. On another IEP dated May 14, 1991, under strengths were listed "spelling skills, good attitude, willingness to work, completion of assignments, and reading gains."

Achievement tests. On the ITBS given in March 1991, Jason had percentile scores of 30 in vocabulary, 41 in reading, and 63 in spelling. These percentile scores were higher than his last reported ITBS scores of June 1989, which reflected percentile ratings of 21 in vocabulary, 35 in reading, and 37 in spelling.

Parents' employment. Carla Murphy, Jason's mother, is presently unemployed, although she has previously worked in nursing homes and as an assistant manager for a convenience store. Jason's stepfather is employed by a charitable organization and worked as a cab driver in a large

metropolitan area for 11 years. He is attempting to start a nondenominational Christian ministry and is meeting with potential parishioners in small gatherings in various homes.

Parents' education. Carla quit school and got married at age 16. She went back to school and received a high school diploma when she was 28. She had difficulty with reading while in school and her family moved around frequently.

Town. Roy and Carla have been in Four Rivers, Idaho, less than a year. They previously lived in a large, out-of-state, metropolitan area for a number of years. This is Jason's first year in the Four Rivers School District.

Marriage. This is the second marriage for both parents. They were married two years ago. Mrs. Murphy was married for nine years to her first husband.

Children. Jason (13) is Carla's only child. Roy Murphy's two children visit for a month in the summer.

Socioeconomic status. The Murphys are renting a home. They could be considered a lower socioeconomic status family.

Miscellaneous. Jason was sexually molested at the age of six by a 21 year-old man who lived in the same apartment building as Jason. The sexual molestation took place over a six-month period before it was discovered. Jason's mother said that she was a single parent at the time and could not afford more than three or four visits to the psychiatrist for therapy. However,

Mrs. Murphy stated that Jason has not appeared to have suffered any irreparable harm from the incidents.

Jason also attended Head Start when he was four. Mrs. Murphy commented that she did not have a normal conversation with Jason until he was about four and one-half years old. Apparently, he had an abnormal wax build-up which obstructed his hearing. Once Jason's ears were unclogged, his mother noted that his speech markedly improved.

The Reading Class

The six students who were followed in the In-Class model were observed during their reading class. Cooperative learning methods were used with the students who generally were in groups of four, although occasionally there were groups of five and six. The reading classes at Sunrise Elementary that were observed averaged 28 students and did not consist of a true heterogeneous mixture of students. Instead, the classes were divided into two groups: low-to-average and average-to-high. The LD students were, of course, in the low-to-average reading group. This was done to enable the special education and Chapter I teachers to co-teach in one or two classes at each grade level which they otherwise would have been unable to do if the special education and Chapter I students remained in every class.

The reading classes used the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) program. It was developed at the Center for Research

on Elementary and Middle Schools at Johns Hopkins University by Robert Stevens, Nancy Madden, Robert Slavin, and Anna Farnish. This reading program integrates reading comprehension with language arts and writing and is designed to be used within heterogeneous cooperative reading groups. Under the direction of two representatives from Johns Hopkins, the Sunrise faculty attended a three-day workshop in June 1990, in which the tenets of CIRC were taught.

In addition to the CIRC training, a corps of teachers and administrators also attended a series of workshops presented by the state on collaboration and co-teaching. References to cooperative learning, CIRC, and co-teaching occurred frequently during the interviews.

Co-Teaching

Co-teaching was an integral component of the In-Class model. It differed substantially from the reading instruction offered to students in the resource room and the conventional reading lessons in the general education classroom. A complete description of how it operated follows.

The three resource teachers co-taught reading for differing amounts of time. The sixth grade resource teacher instructed two reading classes of 50 minutes each. The third, fourth, and fifth grade resource teacher taught one one-and-one-half hour period and two 50-minute reading classes. The first

and second grade resource teacher had two reading classes of one and one-half hours each.

Although the CIRC training gave the co-teachers a new strategy for teaching reading, their previous experiences and training enriched and enhanced the CIRC methodology. The special education teacher received her preservice training in Direct Instruction and small group teaching techniques, while the general education teacher was trained to teach reading in a large group presentation with a predilection to a lecture/question-and-answer format.

Direct Instruction, as performed in a resource room, entails small group instruction where the special education teacher breaks down complex tasks into their component skills. There is also frequent oral response from the students with the teacher providing feedback. The small homogeneous groups of students actively practice each skill by responding in unison and also individually. The teacher signals when she wants the students to respond so that they answer together and do not have the opportunity to imitate their classmates. If there is a mistake, the teacher corrects the group by providing additional oral practice. This includes modeling by the teacher and frequent positive reinforcement.

In special education, much of Direct Instruction is implemented using commercial programs. These programs are written for curricular content areas such as reading, written language, and mathematics. The special

education teacher follows a lesson plan which spells out exactly what must be covered and explains the presentation techniques.

The approach of the general education teacher was from an entirely different perspective. As previously mentioned, she was oriented toward large group presentations and was apt to present the lesson in a lecture format. The classroom teacher might have had a reading group for her slower readers to provide additional instruction, but it was usually to allow the students more opportunity to read aloud so that the teacher could correct mistakes. Even in this small group situation, the classroom teacher did not utilize Direct Instruction techniques. The better readers were left to work independently, frequently from assignments in their reading workbook. Of course, the classroom teacher also had suggested ideas for the reading lesson offered in the teacher's edition of the basal reader. These suggestions generally involved vocabulary and enrichment activities that supplemented the story found in the text.

In the co-teaching model that was observed during the course of this study, one teacher (which could be either the special education teacher or the classroom teacher) would present a lesson from the reading text while the co-teacher provided the following support:

- (1) Made sure the students attended to the task as she wandered casually around the room.

- (2) Checked to see that the students had a clear understanding of the directions and answered any question the students may have had.
- (3) Kept track of students' positive behaviors through a point system. (These points were subsequently posted on a chart listing all the students' names. Once the class reached a certain point total, they would have a class party. Individual students could also earn free time with a certain predetermined point aggregate at the end of a week.)
- (4) Encouraged students with verbal praise.

When asked if she had grown professionally since the In-Class model had been established, a sixth-grade teacher stated that the special education teacher "opened my eyes to the power of positive reinforcement" and demonstrated to her how well students can learn when the teacher provides alternative instruction to meet their particular learning styles.

The special education teacher remarked that she had learned a variety of classroom academic strategies — what works and what does not work in whole group instruction. The special education teacher also mentioned that before teaming with her co-teacher she was unaware of how to prepare an entire week's lessons from a single story in the basal reader.

The two teachers believed there were three distinguishable benefits emanating from co-teaching:

- (1) Two teachers in the classroom kept each teacher accountable. Lessons were better prepared and thought out.

- (2) There was more follow-through after the presentation: Students' individual needs were met and no one "fell through the cracks."
- (3) Better data were kept on student progress and the teachers knew on a daily basis if a concept required reviewing.

As one teacher stated, "Co-teaching is a philosophy, not a technique." This philosophy is simply that all kids can learn and learn well.

Impact of the In-Class Model

Pull-out programs focus on what the child can't do in the classroom.
In-class programs focus on what the child can do in the classroom.
(Resource Teacher, Sunrise Elementary School)

Bringing the resource teacher into the general education classroom represented a tremendous paradigm shift in the service delivery system for students with a learning disability. Prior to this innovation, all special education services were exclusively via the pull-out program with the resource teacher. Now, not only were the students with disabilities to remain in the classroom, but they were to be taught in the same manner as everyone else in the room using cooperative learning techniques and collaborative teaching. Certainly, none of the participants in this new service delivery model quite knew what to expect when this change took place. It is true that the staff had received training in collaboration and cooperative learning and had engaged in group discussions revolving around the philosophy behind the In-Class model, but to actually implement the innovation brought many

concerns to the fore. Will this prove to be an effective teaching strategy for LD students? Will the LD students progress at the same or a faster rate than previously demonstrated in the pull-out program? Will the self-concepts of the LD students be affected in a positive way? As it turned out, these questions were all answered affirmatively.

Self-Image

Many of the concerns raised in the literature (Affleck, Madge, Adams & Lowenbraun, 1988; Avazian, 1987; Burbach, 1981; Dunn, 1968) centered upon the negative impact that pull-out programs had upon the self-esteem of students in special education. Parents and teachers in this study shared the concern that pull-out programs contributed to the feelings of lower self-worth exhibited by LD students. The findings from this category revealed that pull-out programs for children with learning disabilities do exacerbate their feelings of being "different" from their peers. However, with the implementation of the In-Class model, a transformation occurred in how the LD students felt about themselves. In comment after comment, the teachers, parents, and students told of new-found confidence, happier attitudes, and better self-concepts. All of the parents talked about the changes that they had observed in their children. Jason's parents felt that now, "he is very confident with himself. You can see the difference. Jason is willing to speak up on his own now, and he wouldn't before." Randy's mother was especially enthusiastic with the positive attitudes seen in her son.

Randy's self-esteem just soared this year. . . . I think that this sixth grade year was the best thing that has happened to him in the fact that he was moved to Sunrise. My first reaction when they told me that he was going to go to Sunrise was that I would have kids here and kids there, and this would be a lot more running around and more PTO work, but it has been a very positive experience for him, and I think that junior high will not be as scary to him.

For Randy, school was now fun.

This was the first year that she [a teacher who has known Randy] has ever seen Randy smile in all of his school years. He had some miserable years at school. It is really good for both Larry and I to see him so happy and lively, and just wanting to go to school. He states that school is just so much fun. This just pops out of the blue. . . . He is really enjoying it. . . . Randy is more positive. He has more confidence in himself. He is just a happier child.

Charlotte's mother also saw a change for the better in her child. "It makes Charlotte feel better. She would rather be in with her own class, instead of being taken out, and miss out on what is going on in the room. For her it is better."

Although Mike was bright and could compensate in school for his learning disability, his mother still felt that until this year, he lacked the confidence necessary to be successful.

The teachers do not pick it [LD] out because he is able to compensate. Mike does do beautifully with it until he is pushed into a corner and has to read. . . . I think that he felt that if he did not have that constant one-to-one that he just was not going to make it. Now Mike knows that he does not have to have that one-to-one and that he can compete with the others and do well.

The students corroborated what their parents heard and saw regarding the benefits of the In-Class model. The LD students found it easier, fun, and no longer worried about missing any assignments while in the resource room.

They also felt that they were learning more by staying in their classrooms. The LD students perceived themselves to be full members of the class and not part-time members singled out by the pull-out program.

It is easier. You do not have to go to the [resource] room. If you forget something you do not have to worry about it because I sit right there in my desk and the teachers come to our room. . . . I enjoy reading and just staying in my room. . . . [It's] like a normal class. . . . I like the way it is right now. . . . When the bell rings it is a class. It is not like you skip a class. You do not miss work.

Shawnee just liked staying with her friends. For her, the new approach was "fun because you get to be with all your friends. . . . There are more teachers, and they tell you a lot more, and they give you homework to do, and you learn more in class."

Jason felt smarter. "It makes me feel like I am not really stupid, that I am really smart." In contrast, when he attended the resource room, Jason explained:

I felt that I really wasn't part of the class. . . . When I go to this class [In-Class model], it is like: So I have learning disabilities. Who cares? At least I am learning something. . . . Well, I like it because I don't have to leave the classroom and have to go to a different classroom without anybody else. . . . I get to be with my classmates and get help at the same time.

Randy commented, "I am getting smarter and believe that I can do it. . . . Yes, I believe more that I can do better. . . . They [classmates] used to say that I was retarded, dumb, and stuff like that." When Randy was asked if the name-calling was continuing, he stated flatly, "[No], because I am not going out for help." Likewise, Charlotte liked the idea of being with

her classmates because, "I am there more, and I am not in the resource room; and I can do the stuff that they are doing. I think it helps a lot."

The members of the teaching staff at Sunrise Elementary were equally complimentary toward the In-Class model. They observed increases in self-confidence, positive attitudes, and self-esteem in the students with a learning disability.

I think for a lot of them it is an esteem builder, for some of the low ones, perhaps, and even some of the top ones, when they can put their ideas together, and then they think, 'Well, hey, that is really good.' I think it is beneficial in that way. . . . His success in the In-Class model has, I think, built his self-esteem, and his ego, just because he's on top, and he knows it, and they tell him, and this excites him, and it carries over. . . . When he got his first 100 in there, he came right back in and told me. So it has helped him. . . . He is just naturally a hard worker, but possibly he is working a little harder.

One sixth grade teacher waxed enthusiastically about the In-Class model and how it had buoyed the self-confidence of her resource room students.

Being pulled out slowly erodes the child's self-esteem. You can see it in a million different ways. You can see it in the way they walk down the sidewalk to the classroom. You can see it in the way that they enter your room. It is either there or it is not. They either have confidence in themselves or they do not. After so many years of being the kids in the classroom that were the 'I can't do this [type],' to being a whole group of kids that 'can,' did not start out this way. It took them awhile to believe in themselves a little bit, but they do now. They have a sense of cockiness about themselves like, 'What do you mean?'; 'Yes, we can do this'; or I will say that I don't think that you can do this and they will say, 'Oh, yes!' They are ready to meet a challenge as opposed to being defeated by a challenge. They are ready to try and do some homework as opposed to being defeated and not even take the book home. They will give it an effort where they would not even give a second thought before.

The principal also believed that students' self-concepts were bolstered through participation in the In-Class model.

I would say the greatest advantage is for those [LD] kids, because those are the ones that were being pulled out. They were missing something else. They were not keeping up with their peers. They were appearing different. Often when they were pulled out, they were into a different reading program altogether. Now all the kids, highest to lowest, are all in the same reading program, the same book. In fact, on any given week they are all on the same story; and never before have we had the lowest children reading the same story as the highest children and being successful. The slower ones may be receiving more support from the co-teachers than the high groups, but by the end of the week they have all completed the same story, read the same story, and learned the same vocabulary. I think those kids are feeling highly successful, and I think it has really boosted the self-esteem of the kids who are struggling.

A sixth grade teacher liked the growth she observed in her students' self-concepts with the In-Class model.

It [self-esteem] is not all measured by your behavior points. It is something that may not be able to be quantified, but you know that they have got it when they got it. . . . I like the way the kids feel about themselves. I can see their self-concept growing.

As the students experienced success, their attitudes toward school and their participation in the learning process in general underwent a fundamental alteration. A Chapter I teacher found that the learning environment changed as the students' belief in themselves grew.

I can discern a difference in all of their attitudes since the beginning of school. They participate more. . . . I like the on-task behavior that I see. I like the level of participation and the accountability, the responsibility level that they are starting to feel for doing this. It is like they are saying, 'I have to do this. I can't hide. I can't run. I am right here.' That really pleases me. . . . All of them have a higher risk-taking, positive risk-taking behavior. The hands go up. Frequently we have to say, 'Raise your hands to participate,'

because a lot of times they are blurting their answers out, giving their answers out because they want to be in there and be first. Sometimes I encourage that. Sometimes I want sort of a free-for-all feeling, like: 'You tell me. Now you tell me. Now you tell me.' And sometimes we have to say, 'Okay. Stop and put hands back up.' They seem happier to me. They seem more accountable to me. They seem to feel that their time in the classroom has been better spent and has a direct tie-in connection to the reading process, I think, than when they came down to my classroom.

One teacher observed more positive attitudes with the In-Class model.

When the resource kids first walked in here they thought: 'Here we go again. Yuck. This is the class I really don't like. The others I don't like either, probably. But this is the one [reading] I really don't like. And I don't want to be here.' But now I think they look forward to it. I think the resource kids do a good job. . . . I think the In-Class model is very good for them.

When a sixth grade teacher was asked if she detected any new-found confidence in one of her LD students since the In-Class model began, she said, "I perceive it as that. I was not his fifth grade teacher so I cannot say for sure, but this is the way I perceive it, and I live with him every day."

One of the resource teachers at Sunrise shared a story told her by a classroom teacher regarding a resource student. They both believed that if the resource student had not gained self-confidence through participation in the In-Class model, this incident never would have taken place.

One of our really high students was kind of goofing off and not paying attention while math instructions were being given. So one of the resource students at that point got up, went over to his desk, and helped him through the first part of math while two or three of the other kids around him were going, 'Oh, look at so-and-so helping the high student.' He was just turning inside out. He was grinning from ear to ear, because here he was helping the brightest kid in the class.

A sixth grade teacher recalled that the LD students first entered the new reading program with some trepidation but soon discovered new self-confidence.

They were excited to try something new, but they also had the old feelings: 'I can't do this.' So I need to qualify that a little bit. They were excited about trying it in a new way, but they still had some reservations about being able to do this. . . . They have found some self-confidence, and I think confidence has a lot to do with what you are able to do. They have had the group support.

Feelings of Being Different

Responses from teachers, parents, and students clearly indicated a preference for the In-Class model because no one had to leave the classroom and appear different from the other students. For instance, Mike's response as to why he liked the In-Class model was, "Because there are more people that are the same like me." Shawnee also preferred the In-Class model; she stated, "I like it better than having to go out of the classroom." Shawnee's parents recognized that their child felt better because she was no longer singled out. "Shawnee just tells us that the other kids don't notice as much that she has a reading problem because she doesn't have to go to a special reading class. Shawnee has said she likes it better in the class. She has mentioned that a couple of times."

Jason also remarked that he liked staying with his friends and added that he did not like to be viewed as different. "You get to be with the rest of your classmates, and that way they won't know you are really in resource . . .

because it makes you feel like you are more part of the class, and they kind of help you a little bit."

Many of the students' views of themselves, while introspective, were quite poignant and demonstrated how emotionally wrenching the feeling of being different can be. They learned to adjust and rationalized these differences. Often the LD students felt they were different from other kids. "I have a learning disability. I do not do very well in reading. . . . Sometimes when I cannot do the problem, I get real mad and call myself stupid. I really do not mean that." They realize that they cannot work as rapidly as other students and that, "I am kind of different, just the way I learn it. It takes me a little bit longer." For example,

On tests it would take me a lot longer to get through them which made me feel a little bit dumb, and the other kids would get done much faster. . . . A lot of the kids can read a whole book in two hours. It takes me a week to two weeks on regular books. Through the years I have learned that this does not matter.

Mike stated that it wasn't so bad at first. "During first and second [grade] I did okay, but once I got up there [third and higher], I thought it was kind of hard [reading]."

Adam appeared to have adjusted to his disability:

I learn at a different rate and I learn differently from other people. . . . I think I don't read as fast [as my classmates], but I can get the words and read. Reading just takes me a little bit longer. . . . No, it doesn't [bother me], because I just look at it like I just don't learn as fast or I learn differently than other people. . . . Everybody is a little different.

Charlotte stated she felt inferior to other students:

Sometimes . . . [I feel different] because I don't know how to do the stuff that they do and it's hard. . . . It just makes you not be able to be at the same level or do something at that level as everybody else is doing. . . . Sometimes when I don't understand something, and the other kids understand it better than I do, they can read it better. . . . Sometimes I think that I would like to be like them.

A fifth grade teacher made the observation that students with disabilities have low opinions of themselves before ever attending the resource room. "Most of those kids [resource students] have a lower self-concept and self-esteem than the average child. In fact, sometimes I think that is the whole reason they are in there to begin with."

Many of the parents openly acknowledged that their children did not feel good about themselves. Jason's parents, when asked if they noticed a difference in Jason's attitude since the In-Class model was implemented, said,

Yes. There is a difference, definitely. . . . He has not even voiced himself as being dumb anymore. Jason had a relative who would tell him, 'You will never amount to anything. You are just a dumb kid. You are just a confused child. You won't amount to very much, and I am sure you will not lead a productive life.' They voiced that a lot, and he started believing it.

Charlotte's mother stated how she believed her daughter's retention affected her self-esteem:

When Charlotte knew that the kids who were in kindergarten with her were now in second grade and she was just in first, it made a difference for her. She was, at the time, one of the 'bigger' kids in her class. I don't know if it was that that bothered her or if it was the fact that she was just held back. She had no self-esteem. She gets down on herself. Sometimes she will tell me how stupid she is. . . . If she doesn't understand something, she just thinks she is stupid. . . . It's what she feels about herself that stops her from

going any further. She will be real outgoing to a certain point, and then she will wonder what other people think, and that holds her back.

The frustration that Charlotte's mother felt not only about Charlotte, but also for her two other children, came out quite clearly in this remark:

But I am beside myself in all of them, because if I could get in their minds and see what they see, I could tell you, you could tell me, but I can't. And nobody has yet, what it is, where it comes from, why all of a sudden are these kids having these problems.

Randy's mother believed that retaining Randy was, in retrospect, the worst decision she ever made for him in terms of the damage to his self-worth.

He had a very low self-image. [He was retained in] first grade. Now I would not have done that if I had known the extent of his problems and had the resources available to me to help him. I would never have done that. . . . It just about killed him. It was very hard on him. I remember the day that I told him. Randy cried and cried. It was just awful because all of his friends were moving on. This to him was just another sign that he was different. The teachers never saw the tears. They did not see that. They did not see the anger or frustration or the tears that I saw and that we saw when he came home from school. I remember him standing at the kitchen door one day saying, 'I am not a dummy, mommy. I am not a dummy.'

It became apparent to Randy's mother that much of her son's frustrations and anger emanated from her own frustration over his developmental lag.

This was very difficult. . . . When Randy was three he could not talk as a normal three-year-old would. He was a very angry, frustrated baby. He could not express himself and get it across to us that something was wrong. . . . When he went into kindergarten he still was not expressing himself. He did not have his vocabulary. Randy has physical problems, too. He has bed wetting, which is very prominent in children who are frustrated and angry and have emotional problems. Once we discovered what was wrong with

him, and we were able to work with him, he became more self-confident and then this stopped.

I think our attitude affects him. He saw the frustration in us before hand, and he wondered, 'What am I doing wrong? What can I do to make Mom and Dad happy with me?' We were happy with him. We were just frustrated because we did not know what to do. We did not know how to help him. Over the years we discovered what things helped him to learn. It is a very frustrating illness if you want to call it that, for the want of a better word. It is very frustrating.

A mother found that her daughter's low reading skills were the causative factor in her negative feelings toward herself.

I noticed it [low self-esteem] more at home. She was more emotional about things like for instance when we told her that she could do that [classroom work], and she would say that she could not because she could not read it. . . . She would then start crying and becoming emotional. She has kind of worked through that now. She very seldom does that now. The only time she does that is when she is really tired. . . . We just told her that she was not stupid, but that she just had a problem and needed to work through it.

A resource teacher also observed a student's frustration:

I think that she would look around and would think, 'Why can these people read and I cannot seem to do it?' She is like a lot of kids who think that is some kind of magic thing that touched you that had not touched her yet. She did not realize that it was her, and that it was within her to be able to read. She was just kind of waiting for something to happen, but I think she felt that something must be wrong.

Similarly, Jason's parents described how their son would come home and wonder aloud about why he was so different:

He would say, 'It's not fair.' He had a very low self-esteem. . . . He has always had friends that do very well in school, and he is always saying, 'Well, how come it is so easy for them?' He notices that. One day Jason just kind of came to us and said, 'How come I'm not as smart as the other kids?' I told him, 'It is not because you are

not as smart; you just have to work harder.' Jason said he couldn't wait to grow up so that he would know. He thought that if you just grew up and became an adult, it came to you by osmosis.

Shawnee's parents noted the self-doubt that their daughter went through, but remarked that it did not appear to bar her from attaining success in school:

They [her classmates] always knew that Shawnee needed extra help, and she did have a complex about it. Shawnee knows she can't read as well as other people. She knows that very well. She feels really good about her accomplishments, and she is just the hardest worker you have ever seen, as you will find out if you talk with her a little bit. Shawnee doesn't view this whole reading problem nearly as critically as her parents do. I can tell you that for sure.

Mike's mother acknowledged that her son went through his own traumatizing emotional experiences as a result of his poor reading ability:

Last year was his first year that he did not cry about it [going to the resource room]. . . . He would come in there [resource room] and she [resource teacher] said he would cry. She could not understand why. Mike would not get to the point where he would refuse to go, but she said he would just shake with this. I accept that the problem is there. At times he will cry about it. He still does cry about why he cannot read or he will ask, 'Why is it so hard for me?' I say to him, 'Mike, if there were any way I could go in there and unhook the little problem that I certainly would,' because I know that it is frustrating to him. It does not help for me to be upset at him. . . . I feel that Mike does have talents, and I guess that is why I feel like I have to be very open-minded. I do not look at him as having a disability.

After the interview, Mrs. Johnston mentioned that Mike once told her he wished that a doctor could operate on his brain so that it could be fixed.

At times, however, some LD students seemed to engage in denying that anything about them was different. For example, Randy said, "I am not the

only one that needs the help. There are a whole bunch of other people in my class." Shawnee was quick to point out why she believed she might be behind in reading: "Well, I think it is because of my teachers, because when I was in first grade, I had four different teachers. One got pregnant, the other one got pregnant, the other one got sick, and one died." When asked what a learning disability meant to her, Shawnee said, "I don't know. What do you mean?" Yet her parents responded to a question concerning whether they had ever talked to Shawnee about her learning disability by saying, "Yes, lots . . . although I don't like that word 'disability.' It sounds like maybe she isn't as good as everybody else."

Opposition to Pull-Out Program

Opposition to the pull-out program was general and widespread among the teachers, parents, and students. Issues such as labeling, feelings of embarrassment, less instructional time, social ostracism, segregation, and teasing were voiced by the respondents.

Students did not like the label of "different" that was applied to them. Although it was never spoken aloud or written down, the "different" label was what they felt when they were pulled from their classrooms. The LD students simply did not like leaving their classrooms. Many of them were very self-conscious about having to get up and leave. This discomfiture was felt and observed by many of the respondents.

Mike's rationale for wanting to stay with his classmates came out succinctly in this statement: "Probably because I like to be as good as other people." Mike's mother clearly saw that her son resented being pulled out of his class:

Mike did not like it [resource room]. He felt embarrassed about it. . . . He felt funny about it. He stated that 'Everybody knows that I get up and walk out.' They accept it after a few days, but at first they all ask where he is going. . . . Mike would never really admit to me that he was really that upset about it. I knew he was upset because when things bother him he talks about it. . . . Mike would talk about it and say that he wished that he did not have to go in there anymore.

Adam recalled why he did not like going to the pull-out program. "Well, just having to leave and stuff. Like at the beginning of the year people not knowing where I was going and everybody asking me where I went."

Randy remembered back to when he was first pulled out:

I felt funny the first year because it was the first year and I was kind of scared because I did not know what we were going to do in there or what everybody would say when I got back. . . . When I was in second grade, I would go to the resource room and come back. I would leave my room all the time, and I hated that part.

Randy's mother asserted that her son, too, felt different from everyone else.

"No matter what the child tells you, there has to be some deep down feelings that say, 'Why do I have to do this? I am being pulled out. I am different.'

No matter how much Randy liked his teachers he always felt different."

Jason was more ambivalent in his feelings. "I didn't really mind it [going to resource in previous years], but I would rather have stayed in my regular

class. I knew I had to go." Yet in another interview, Jason directly equated the pull-out model with how he felt about himself:

Everybody is staying in this one class, and I am having to leave; and I just felt stupid because of them watching me. It's like, 'Oh, I'm stupid, man.' Like I didn't know anything and people knew that I was stupid and stuff. . . . Like everyone knew . . . that I didn't know how to do stuff they did.

Jason's parents preferred the In-Class model "just because they don't get labeled. They don't seem to be labeled. And they can pretty much be a part — and this is very important — to be a part of things. . . . He is not being called the dumb kid that has to leave class."

This past year Adam's former resource teacher had two students who did not like to be pulled out of their classroom:

I have two, a boy and a girl right now, that are similar to Adam, in the respect that they forget their times and say, 'Oh, can I please stay in the room?' And, 'I want to do this . . . I want to try this in the classroom.' And, 'Can I get out of the resource room?' I try to explain to them that they are coming in here not because they are dumb but because they need some extra help and that just because they are low in reading doesn't mean they are low in everything. I try to pick out their stronger points. For some of them that is in science or social studies, so it is real easy to say, 'Look what you can do in science,' and that is a real difficult subject for a lot of kids.

The Chapter I teacher discovered that labeling was emotionally hard on pull-out students:

Once the kids left the classroom and once they got down to old Mrs. Tompkins' room or old Mrs. Erickson's room or wherever they were going . . . it wasn't that they disliked me or disliked Judy or disliked the Chapter I or resource teacher. It was the very idea for lots of them that, 'I have to have this done in a very, very different way from the way my peers have it done.' It was just the getting

there that was so emotionally hard for them, and if we can by-pass that, why not?

Charlotte's mother recounted how her daughter felt labeled:

Charlotte didn't like the other people knowing that she was that far behind. . . . She just doesn't like being taken out of class. But then it got to where it didn't bother her. . . . Charlotte would continually ask me not to make her go to resource. I know she wants the help. Well, that was at the first of the year. She doesn't say much about it any more. But she didn't want to be pulled from her class.

Students were embarrassed to be pulled out. However, this model is changing that. For example, a classroom teacher saw for herself how the In-Class model negated the scenario of possible embarrassment for the LD student:

It is not all measured by your grades. . . . The kids are not singled out in any way [with the In-Class model]. They feel part of the group, which is very important, especially to sixth graders. . . . At no point in time are students standing up and leaving the room, which is a signal to the other kids that 'Hey, I am different and I need to get out of here.'

A resource room aide observed that now that LD students were served in their classrooms for reading, the embarrassment that might have accompanied a student who was pulled out no longer appeared to be a factor:

I think the In-Class model really has made a big difference [regarding a child's self-esteem], because a lot of times kids do not like to come to the resource room because other kids know they are coming. This way they don't know really that they are in resource or that they have a problem. Well, I guess some of the children can realize that they do have a problem, but they don't look down on them.

A resource teacher at Sunrise with 15 years of experience related how students would tell her they were embarrassed to be pulled out of their classroom:

I think especially when they get to third grade and beyond, certainly in fourth, fifth, and sixth grade, they are very, very self-conscious about leaving the classroom. Just to have to get up and walk out is embarrassing to them, and they will tell you that. They have told me that from time to time. They will say things like, 'Oh, do we have to come?' And I will say, 'Thanks a lot. Are you insulting me or what?' They will say, 'No, it is not you, and it is not the work we are doing. It is just so embarrassing to have to leave.'

Another resource teacher at Sunrise suggested that resource students were more than just embarrassed about being pulled out; they thought of themselves as failures:

I think that it is a sense of embarrassment along with a sense of failure. Many do not understand that they are going there for help. Many of them think that they are a failure. . . . We can do great for them academically in here [resource room]. They get wonderful direct instruction, and one-on-one, and small groups, but I have seen some that have even gone further and have raised their grades even higher because their self-esteem was higher, and they were feeling successful being in a classroom as opposed to being pulled out.

LD students also felt socially ostracized from their classmates; whether it was a girl with a learning disability relegated to a resource room full of boys, or LD students being teased by classmates, or LD students feeling singled out, they did not relish leaving their classroom. Shawnee's following comment on why she did not like the resource room may strike people as funny at first, but with the realization that nationally there is approximately

a 4:1 ratio of boys to girls in special education, the comment is placed in a different light: "Probably because I was around all boys."

The parents were not blind to their children's feelings about being pulled from their classrooms:

I know that every year Shawnee would want not to go. She would want to try not to have to go, but eventually, of course, she would have to go back. . . . We talked about it at length and we visited with the principal, with her and everyone else, before we ever did that [placed her into the resource room] in Oregon. Shawnee said to them that this being singled out and pulled out of the class was kind of stressful, but she was willing to do that to learn.

When they moved to Four Rivers, Shawnee's parents told of how they attempted to adhere to their daughter's wishes by not informing anyone of her learning disability. They did this to prevent her from being pulled out and, therefore, appearing different than her classmates.

Well, when we moved here and I went and enrolled her in class and stuff, she wanted me not to mention that she had a learning disability, because she did not want to be pulled out of the class again. She wanted to try to be like everybody else. That's why we didn't mention it to the teachers here. We were going to see how she did. And so after the first three or four weeks we got the letter saying that she couldn't do the work. So I called the teacher and we came in for the conference. The teacher asked us then if we knew that Shawnee had a reading disability. And we said yes. So then they showed us how they would help, and explained to Shawnee that if she were in that [In-Class model], that it would be in a different situation; and Shawnee likes this situation a lot better.

Charlotte's mother saw that being pulled out disturbed her daughter:

It is more definite that people know you have a problem and that bothered her. . . . Charlotte hated going up there [to the resource room], was basically what she said. . . . She just hated the thought of going from her class and people know where you are going, and I am sure they get teased.

Adam's mother believed Adam felt better about himself now that he was no longer being pulled out of class:

I think that In-Class is helping Adam more this year than resource room has in the past years. . . . He feels more with the class. He is there, still in the class. . . . Adam didn't feel like he was being punished or anything and always felt good about that, and he didn't have any problem being pulled out of the class for all these years. But I know he does feel better staying in the class, definitely.

According to Adam's resource teacher last year, his mother was much more outspoken and forthright when speaking to her about Adam's special education placement.

Every time we had a meeting, Mom would ask, 'Is there any chance Adam can get out of the resource room? He doesn't like coming here.' She said that Adam doesn't like to go in the resource room. He is really bothered about getting up and leaving the room and not being part of the regular classroom. He feels like he is an outcast.

For exactly this reason Mike's mother preferred the In-Class model as it did not socially stigmatize her son:

I think that the one thing in which he does feel better is the fact that he is not taken from the classroom. This way the kids do not single him out. I do not think that they really did, but I think that he felt that they did. . . . I think that it really was just the fact that he had to get up and go out of the room. . . . I really think that he had a stigma that he went to resource or special reading and that he was singled out.

Many of the LD students related how other students teased them for going to resource room. One sixth grade girl, when asked if she had ever been made fun of for going to resource, said, "Sometimes, but not a lot. It was just a little. . . . They would say things behind my back a little bit, but that was about it."

Another student was even more vivid in his description. "The people who did not have to go . . . would call you 'stupid' or 'retarded dork.' It was things like that [It stopped] after I ignored them. That is one of the reasons why I hated school. People would usually just make fun of me and I did not like that."

Charlotte remembered classmates saying, "'You're dumb,' or something rude." Another sixth grader stated that no one ever made a derogatory comment to him unless they were angry with him. "No, not unless we get in a fight or something. They would say, 'At least I do not go to resource room' and stuff."

Other LD students reported no teasing. Adam remarked, "All they do is just ask me, like why I went and stuff. I just said that I needed a little extra help in some subjects." Shawnee stated that other students "want to be in resource room. They just think it's fun to be in resource." Mike said, "Some kids said I was lucky because I never had to catch up on my reading in my room. So it was easy."

Many of the parents felt, however, that there was teasing. Randy's mother commented on the feeling of isolation experienced by her son:

The teasing did not start until the first grade. Kindergarten seemed to be okay. Randy had some young man call him 'dummy.' He got called 'dummy' a lot, and that 'you cannot read,' and they laughed at him. . . . It was just real embarrassing for him to be around other kids. He did not want to participate in things. He played by himself a lot. He did not want to be around people. He would not communicate. . . . He had this low self-image and opinion of himself.

She further believed that Randy's earlier humiliating experiences have had a long-term impact on how he approaches building new friendships:

In the new ward at our church he has made a lot of new friends. This is a real concern of his. He was afraid that nobody would like him because they did not know what was wrong with him. . . . It is a definite fear. I do not know what we can do to conquer this. I think that this is something that he is going to have to do himself. He is going to have this fear all of his life. Next year he goes to junior high. It is going to start all over again. Then he will go to high school. It will start all over again, and then when he goes into college it will start all over again. I think that this is something that he will have to conquer.

Charlotte's mother surmised that her daughter was teased. "Charlotte just hated the thought of going from her class and people know where you are going, and I am sure they get teased." Shawnee's parents attributed the teasing to the natural tendencies of children:

It is just what other people would say to Shawnee about having to have extra help: 'You can't read this?' and they would try to read it for her, and they would really try to put her down. . . . It was just as mean as kids can be. They are mean when they don't even want to be. Shawnee has learned to handle it a little better, because she has a pretty strong personality. So as she got older, she could handle it better; but in second and third grade, it was difficult.

Jason's parents asserted there were occasions when they thought Jason was teased. "I think at times, yes. Last year there were times that Jason did make comments about 'the dumb kids go into resource.'"

A resource room aide with many years of experience recalled students coming to her and complaining of being teased:

They [students] would come and tell me. They would say, 'I don't like to come here, because the kids are making fun of me.' I have had them tell me that. I just would say, 'Well, if you ignore them,

then they won't bother you, because they know they can't get to you.' But that is hard to tell a child that. It is hard for them to deal with.

One resource teacher was aware of students being teased for going to the resource room. "It has happened on lots of different occasions." A fifth grade teacher recounted how children in her class reacted when Adam read aloud:

There would be times when he would read, and I could tell that the kids were sort of laughing . . . and I had a real problem with that. I don't like that at all. But you could kind of tell. It didn't seem to bother Adam because he would continue to read. But I think the kids probably wouldn't treat him as an equal, probably felt like he wasn't quite as good as they were, maybe.

She went on to qualify her statement. "Occasionally, you will have maybe one or two students that are like that, but they are like that with anyone. They will find something about anyone and not particularly a resource kid, but they will tease anyone." Adam's resource teacher last year perceived he felt that the resource room was not socially acceptable and that he may have been teased for coming. As a result, many times Adam would conveniently forget to come to the resource room at his assigned time.

He was one student that . . . it was real easy for him to forget his time to come to resource room, and if he could do something in the classroom, he would stay and do it. Socially, he felt it wasn't accepted, and his self-esteem seemed to be affected being part of the resource room. . . . He wouldn't say things to me, but indirectly I would hear from other students: 'Adam doesn't like to come to the resource room because he hates it in there. He thinks the other kids are making fun of him. He thinks he is a dummy.' Adam never did tell me that himself, but his friends would tell me that is what he was saying.

Most of the other teachers interviewed did not report incidents where they witnessed students teasing children who attended the resource room. A sixth grade teacher observed teasing but it was not directed specifically to LD students. "Not that I am aware of. I have not seen any of that. Some of the kids do tease a couple of the other kids, but it isn't because they go to resource. It is for other reasons." A fifth grade teacher spoke about how she did not tolerate teasing. "I would not allow it. . . . I impress upon my students that we laugh together, and we do not laugh at someone. If that person is laughing, then we can laugh, too, but if they are upset, then we do not laugh."

A resource room teacher at another school did not believe teasing was much of an issue anymore:

Not like it used to be, I don't think. I don't see the kids doing that. Well, it seems to be a label, and it used to be a label on special ed kids . . . 'retard' or whatever. But anymore I have regular classroom kids wanting to come into the resource room just for that help. I think they are realizing that they get help in there.

A sixth grade teacher remarked that she discussed the subject of teasing with her students:

I just do not allow that kind of thing as far as I have control. I am sure that it may have happened, and if it did I do not remember. The kids have to realize that not everybody is the same, and that you accept people for what they are, not for what they are not. . . . I just tell them. Sometimes when they [LD students] are out of the room, we talk about it in a positive way. . . . They should be thankful for what they have and what they should be doing with it.

A fifth grade teacher appeared to contradict herself concerning the issue of teasing experienced by LD students:

I don't really find them teasing because of resource, no. I just find a lot of those kids have low self-concept and tend to get into more trouble than others, particularly boys. You can give them a lot of things around the room and have them do extra special things [and] I try to include them as much in everything we are doing in the room. But let's face it, the kids know they go to resource room. I am sure that at this age I would not have known what a kid was doing in resource room, but these kids seem to know, and I think that is the way life is.

One aspect of resource room that appeared to perpetuate a feeling of inferiority among LD students was the utilization of entirely different curriculum materials. Adam stated that the resource room books ". . . made me feel kind of like I am behind everybody, and [when I returned to class] everybody was talking about the story, and I didn't know what they were talking about and stuff." When asked how he felt now that he was reading the same book as his classmates, Adam said proudly, "It makes me feel like I am at the same level as everybody else and stuff."

Charlotte said that the resource room books made her feel

really dumb. . . . Now I get to do what they [classmates] are doing instead of what the little kids are doing. It is a lot better reading at the level that I really am in than the level that they just put me in. . . . We don't have to read out of the little kids' book. . . . They are at my level, and in resource I had to read like on the second grade level. Now it doesn't make me feel like a dummy.

Jason also felt the resource books made him feel "dumb . . . because it made me feel like I didn't know how to do the regular stuff."

A resource teacher suspected that working out of a different book affected the self-esteem of resource students:

They [LD students] now have the same responsibilities as the other kids. When they get on the bus and pull out their book, or whatever, they have the same book that the other kids have. They don't have the *Reading Mastery II* book . . . you know, a workbook that is completely foreign and completely different from the average sixth grade student.

She also noticed the marked difference in curriculum materials between the resource room and the regular classroom:

These kids say what they feel, and they will say, 'I really like going into the classroom. I really like being here.' One boy said, 'Last year I hated it when we had to do —,' and he would give me an example from a resource curriculum that they were doing last year. The one child said he did not like it because they were 'reading baby books,' were his exact words. Even though their reading ability was right at that level and that is what they needed to read, sometimes we forget the content and their maturity is much higher than that.

Segregation

One of the parents felt very strongly that her son should be included in every aspect of the general education classroom. Although Randy's mother spoke enthusiastically about the new program, she was much more dogmatic in her belief that students should not be excluded from what their classmates do.

Yes. I am real excited about it. . . . I think that it is good that the kids are not segregated. . . . I am definitely for the In-Class model in all subjects unless the child is severely handicapped and needs special physical therapy or something like that. I do not think a child should be separated from his peers at all.

Randy's mother saw the frustration in her son and in herself.

Randy has always liked his resource room teachers. He has not come across any that he has not liked. He states that it was frustrating 'because they wanted to put me in this and that,' and then they wanted to put him in physical 'something.' He did not know what the word was. They wanted him to walk boards. It was physical therapy or something. . . . Randy was in the resource room for a number of years and still was two-and-a-half to three years behind in school, and at this point I talked to his teachers and principal. I asked why is he still so far behind while in the resource room and getting all this help. This was an indication to me that he needs more, and that there is something missing and he has to have more. At that point they were all real blinded to the idea of change. It is like a situation where you do not know any better so you accept what there is.

Siblings

Many of the subjects had siblings. An effort was made to determine if the self-esteem of the LD children may have been affected because their brothers or sisters did not have the same struggles as themselves. Randy was asked if he felt badly because he could not read as well as one of his brothers. "Not really . . . because I know what type of problem I have, and he does not have any problems. He is just real good at reading." Randy answered honestly when asked if he felt any jealousy toward his brother:

Yes . . . because I cannot read as well as him. Sometimes, like when I am trying to get this book and cannot understand a part or sentence. I am going over and over on it, and I just cannot understand it. . . . Yes [I get upset] . . . I get mad. Sometimes I just hit the desk. . . . I have dyslexia.

When asked if she ever felt jealous of her older sister because reading came easier to her, Shawnee replied, "She is jealous of me because I can do

math better than her. I am at her level in math, and she is about seventh grade in math."

Mike seemed to rationalize the fact that although reading came easier to his brother, it did not matter since "he never reads." When pushed a little more with the question of, "If he wanted to read, do you think it would come easier for him than you?" Mike answered, "Probably," and said that he felt fine about that "because he is older."

Adam, on the other hand, did not display any jealousy or try to rationalize why his sister read better than him. On the contrary, he appeared to have no inhibitions about asking for his 11-year-old sister's help: "Really I just need more help, because if I didn't get a word and stuff, the only people I would be able to ask is my mom, my stepdad, or my dad. But now, since my sister can read better than I can, I can ask her for help, too."

A mother explained how the family attempted to tiptoe around the situation that their younger son does better in school than their daughter: "Tara has a brother who is only 15 months younger than what she is. He has no problem with school. He does not work at it and he gets good grades. So we try not to build him up too much and put her down. We try to play it low key."

Least Restrictive Environment

In special education the term "least restrictive environment" is often used. A general education classroom is generally thought of as the least

restrictive environment because that is where typical students are placed. A resource room would be more restrictive, and a self-contained special education classroom would be even more restrictive since very little mainstreaming occurs.

The resource teachers believed, as one of them stated, that "the regular classroom is where it should be happening for a kid. That is the most appropriate environment for a child, and it is a whole lot less restrictive, to me, than the pull-out program." Such an approach can benefit both the child with a disability and the typical student. The teachers further observed that with LD students in the classroom, they could form lasting relationships more easily with their classmates. The teachers also found it more difficult to make distinctions between students with disabilities and others. The staff at Sunrise saw that the LD students now wanted to be in their classrooms because they felt good about themselves there. The accomplishments that the LD students were now making in the classroom disposed of the feelings of inferiority that they once had. They discovered, too, that LD students benefitted academically over the entire curricula, not just reading, because their skills transferred better than when they were separated and taught from a different curriculum. The component of co-teaching also helped meet the LD students' instructional needs. Various staff members voiced their feelings and observations.

A resource teacher. "One that we don't really talk much about and that you really have to sit and watch and think about is how the other kids are reacting to the resource kids. They haven't had them in the class before. It has helped them. They have learned some peer-tutoring skills. They have learned some social skills on how to deal with those kids . . . they are learning a lot of life-situation type things."

Another resource teacher. "They are part of the group. They [LD students] are not leaving for five hours a week. They are not being taken out of their peer setting. We do alternative days where we are doing something fun if they have earned enough points. The resource kids also get to associate with the rest of their peers that way also. Friendships are formed easier when they are together more."

A classroom teacher. "Where the LD kids have the chance to be in a regular classroom and work with other kids, they develop a real camaraderie. I am real proud of the kids in my room because they really do protect them and help them, and they understand the difficulties that they have."

A resource teacher. "They [LD students] did not give much thought to being pulled out before the alternative, but now they know what it is like to be in the class and they know that they can be successful. 'In the classroom' before meant failure to them. Now 'in the classroom' means success. They now voice that they like being in the classroom more. They have something to compare it to which is success for them."

A resource room aide. "I think they really would rather be in there than being pulled out. . . . They feel like they are just like the rest of the class. It doesn't make them feel labeled. . . . I didn't like it at first, of course, because it was new and it was noisy, and it can be noisy; but I can see now, as time has gone on, that is getting better and better."

A Chapter I teacher. "For a lot of resource kids and a lot of Chapter kids, this is an ideal vehicle; and in some respects I would say it is more ideal for the resource kids than it is for the Chapter kids. . . . Frequently I have had resource students who are quite bright. I mean, they've got it, and you know it. They have trouble getting it out. They have trouble showing how that bulb is on, but it is on. This is an ideal vehicle for that kind of resource student."

A sixth grade teacher. "They [LD students] have the opportunity to experience a regular sixth grade program and their skills generalize better. . . . When you go into a pull-out program you are working in different materials that do not necessarily generalize over to the normal sixth grade curriculum. . . . They have the opportunity to experience lessons from two different points of view from two teachers that complement each other well. Because they have two teachers, nobody is falling between the cracks. . . . I just feel so firm and good about this program because I feel like so many building blocks are so firmly in place with it."

Another sixth grade teacher. "I want them to be part of the classroom as much as possible. Even in reading we do an activity every week. It may not require reading necessarily. It may be art or something. I would just like to have them there. I just feel like they are my kids. I want them there."

A classroom teacher. "Resource children don't have the language experience, and the best way to get it is to spend time with people who have it. . . . I think kids like Charlotte and Adam lack rich language experience, and I think we need to provide that for them. I think we need to understand that reading is a process, not teaching knowledge."

A Chapter I teacher. "Those lines have become definitely blurred. Frequently I have to consult my list to remember if this child is Chapter or this child is resource or this child is simply at-risk and doesn't fit one of the two categories. It seems like we are all in there, and we are all learning, and we are all trying to do the best that we can do."

Teacher Attitudes

This program affected all of those involved. The children not only developed better attitudes, but the attitudes of the teachers were also positively affected. One resource teacher noticed this attitude change: "I have seen such an attitude change. I think it is the attitude change that excites me more . . . I was going to say on the students' part. But I think it is both student and staff, because now, the teachers don't want these kids pulled out either."

The principal also perceived a change in his school's overall atmosphere precipitated by the new energy level of his staff:

We are still excited. Teachers have been very excited this year. I think it has really changed the mood of the building. When you go into the faculty room, they are talking about what worked and what didn't work and co-teaching and that sort of thing, instead of the petty disciplinary things and so forth that have gone on in the past. So I think it has changed the mood, and the whole mood has now gone academic: 'Let's get involved.' School is good fun. It was always good here. The teachers were always very friendly toward one another and had a good relationship, but now that relationship is built around what we are teaching and how we are teaching, and I think it has really increased the energy level that has gone into the classrooms.

Teachers became committed to the In-Class model:

I believe once these other schools see the In-Class model and they see the benefits — and maybe this is very naive and optimistic — the most hard-core individual I think can be changed. . . . I have seen some who I wouldn't even call hesitant; I would call them opposed to this philosophy, and by seeing it they have become believers.

The principal mentioned that more teachers wanted to be directly involved with the In-Class model:

The teachers' survey this spring, compared with where they were last fall, again indicated overwhelming support, nearly unanimous support, for the continuation of the program and working in-class. A lot more teachers want to be more involved and have co-teachers in the classroom. They want resource and Chapter I teachers coming in. A lot more people want to be involved there.

The news about the In-Class model began to filter to other teachers around the district: "Somewhere we are getting the word around that we are doing something good for kids here. Teachers that I know throughout the district are curious about what I am doing."

Although the In-Class model was not utilized in her school, a fifth grade teacher appeared to favor its philosophy:

They [LD students] love most of those teachers in the resource room, and rightfully so. They get all the attention in there that they aren't getting in here. But I have often wondered if their academic process wouldn't be better served staying in the room and having somebody come in and give them that extra attention in the room. I have thought about that a lot.

The teaching staff members at Sunrise were not oblivious to the positive changes they saw in the students, which only reinforced their dedication to the principles of the In-Class model. For them a return to the pull-out program was unthinkable. They had made a discernable breakthrough in the way children with learning disabilities felt about school and now there was no turning back. The following comments by staff members illustrate this attitude.

A resource teacher. "I would never want to go back to a pull-out program. I really enjoy working with the classroom teachers. It is really neat to watch the classroom teachers take total responsibility for that child's academic growth, and it is really nice to share that responsibility. In turn, it is really nice to be able to service some children that don't qualify but are having a hard time at a certain period in the curriculum, that if you can boost them through that, you are not going to see them for a referral later on. That has a lot of value."

Another resource teacher. "If we were to go back to a pull-out situation, to be quite honest, I would probably think about teaching regular education.

And I say that very sincerely because I believe in the In-Class model, and I would never want to go back to full pull-out."

A regular classroom teacher. "I do not think it would be easier (going back to a pull-out program). When my kids leave the room and miss instruction and have to come back to me, and I have to weasel some English time out of social studies or fudge in this or that, especially with the way we shift classes in the sixth grade, I find it infinitely easier to have them in my room and work with them right now. I can do that."

A Chapter I teacher. "It is easier going to the In-Class model, because I am not looking at 10 groups, 10 almost like doctor's appointments. By the time they made it down to my room there was an incredible amount of transition time that had been lost. Things seemed more superficial when they were being pulled out for half an hour. By the time they would get to my room and I would have a chance to say, 'Hey guys, glad you're here today. Hey, you're looking spiffy,' you know, something like that, some social nicety, we had maybe 20 minutes, because of transition time and my trying to give them some good strokes to set them up for the little bit of time that we had together. I was canceled out a lot. I would get kids coming to me saying, 'Can I miss reading today? Can I not come because my class is doing this?' or there is a birthday party going on, or this or that is happening. All of that sort of messed up my lesson plan, so I was constantly reworking lesson plans; and I never really felt like I had time enough to get going, go

in-depth with anything. So, no, I do not think it would be easier to go back to pull-out."

A sixth grade teacher. "I would be really disappointed [to see the In-Class model end]. . . . I think it has a lot of strong points, and I would hate to see it dropped Teaching the kids to believe in themselves, to teach self-confidence, to really get their feet on the ground. As far as understanding that this is something they can understand, this is something they can function with and do, that they are not out there drowning, and that they are involved with other children."

The In-Class model was enthusiastically received by the parents, teachers, and students involved with it. The significance of its impact was in the unanimity of the In-Class model's acceptance by the respondents.

The students perceived that they were learning more and, therefore, were feeling better about themselves. LD students' self-concepts appeared to be more positive. One parent mentioned how her son was now having fun after some miserable years in school. The LD students liked being in their classroom and not appearing different. This provided opportunities to associate more with "typical" students. Consequently, they seemed to form friendships more easily and readily.

The teachers also stated that the In-Class model was the least restrictive environment for LD students. Students with learning disabilities could accrue

an educational benefit in the regular classroom without suffering possible blows to their self-esteem through a pull-out program.

The principal and other staff members at Sunrise believed that LD students' self-confidence had received a tremendous boost. Students participated more in class and readily volunteered. One teacher said that the distinctions between students in the resource room and her other students had become blurred.

The staff at Sunrise believed in the effectiveness and the philosophy espoused by the In-Class model. Their loyalty was such that a resource teacher stated she would no longer teach special education if she had to return to a full-time pull-out program. The principal noted the staff's energy level had increased and that the focus of his teachers was now on teaching and not on petty disciplinary problems.

The self-images of students with learning disabilities were further damaged by pull-out programs. LD students, prior to being formally identified, already professed to feeling different from other students because they were not able to achieve at the same academic level. As one teacher noted, LD students may have a lower self-concept before ever entering the pull-out program. If these students are unsuccessful in the regular curriculum and little effort is made to modify the existing curriculum to meet their specific needs, then it is logical to deduce that their self-concepts will be lower than students who achieve success in the curriculum. This feeling of

being different was further exacerbated by being singled out to go to the resource room and taught in an entirely different curriculum than what was found in the regular classroom. The pull-out program made students feel labeled, embarrassed, and socially ostracized. This further affected their already low self-esteem. Parents, too, related that their children would tell them how embarrassed and upset they were to have to leave their classroom. A resource teacher believed that LD students perceived themselves as failures because of their placement in the resource room.

The teasing and taunting of LD students was also an issue which obviously affected the self-concepts of some of the students. Two of the six LD students reported outright teasing by their peers. Others stated the teasing was more veiled. One student mentioned her classmates would say things behind her back. Another student stated the only instance he could recall of being teased happened when he got into an altercation with a classmate. Other LD students reported no teasing by their classmates. However, the parents of one of these LD students told of their daughter enduring stinging comments from her classmates about her low reading ability. In the words of her father, "It was just as mean as kids can be." Other parents and teachers substantiated the testimony of students that teasing did occur, although some teachers maintained that they were not aware of LD students being teased.

Even when LD students professed not to mind going to the resource room, qualifying statements were recorded such as, "It was alright once I got 'used to it.'" However, teachers and parents of these particular children who thought the resource room was "alright" told a completely different story about the pull-out program. A teacher related how Adam's mother would come to a Child Study Team meeting and implore the resource teacher to find another way of helping her son because he was embarrassed going to the resource room; Shawnee's parents, at their daughter's insistence, withheld information of her learning disability from Shawnee's new school so she would not have to be pulled out; Mike's mother described how Mike would shake when he went to the resource room because he did not want to be pulled out. It appears entirely possible from these reports that the children who did not recall the teasing or their negative reactions to being pulled out learned to cope with their situations and then suppressed their earlier memories of these negative occurrences.

Teachers noted that students in pull-out programs lost important instructional time in their transition between the classroom and the pull-out program. A Chapter I teacher stated she was "canceled out" whenever there was an activity of interest in the regular classroom.

Two parents observed that having their child repeat a grade may have had a direct causal effect on their child's self-esteem. The moving description provided by one mother of her son's reaction to the news that he

would not be promoted from first grade illustrates how retention can affect a child with already low self-worth.

One of the students did not acknowledge the fact she had a disability. Shawnee even denied knowing what a learning disability was, although her parents stated they talked to her about it "lots."

Reading Skills Improvement

A major question in implementing the In-Class model was whether an increase in reading skills would be demonstrated by LD students. Since the students with learning disabilities no longer would be taught in segregated, single-ability-level groups, but rather in cooperative learning groups as part of an entire class, everyone involved in the implementation of the In-Class model was particularly interested in the reading progress of LD students.

The most important issue of any instructional program is whether it is helping students learn. The teachers reported much more enthusiasm, confidence, and productivity displayed by the students toward their work subsequent to the introduction of the In-Class model.

Self-Confidence

As will be seen, this new attitude translated into academic success. For example, a sixth grade teacher saw more risk taking by LD students with the In-Class model. "The resource students would hesitate to write a sentence

before, and now they are willing to take a risk to write a sentence. If they make a mistake, their self-esteem is not shattered by that mistake."

A resource teacher counted success in a number of ways. "I see higher test scores, enthusiasm, and more output from the kids. The kids have a reason for being there. The kids themselves say that they like the In-Class model better. They are happier there than being pulled out."

A Chapter I teacher noticed success in the active roles of her students in classroom activities:

I think it [In-Class model] is successful with their level of participation. These are children [Chapter and resource] who normally in a regular classroom setting, when reading time occurred, would not engage in much risk-taking behavior. They knew that there were other kids who could answer the questions, maybe answer the questions better, and were willing to let those kids do it.

The parents and students also agreed with the teachers' assessment that the In-Class model contributed tremendously to a sense of academic accomplishment. Adam found particular delight in the fact that he was performing at the same standard that applied to the rest of his classmates:

I am reading out of *Where the Red Fern Grows* right now. . . . I find that I know what everybody else is reading and stuff, so I pick out what they are reading and getting to know what they are talking about. . . . I get a feel for the books more, and I can think in my mind about how somebody else would think about it, too. . . . It makes me feel like I did something. I am learning a lot. It's fun because you are at the same level as they are. It just makes me feel like I am doing something, like I am succeeding.

Although Randy's reading was still a struggle, his mom was encouraged by the improvement seen in his written language and in his increased self-confidence:

I think that Randy still has to struggle with it [reading]. I have seen more change in his ability to write and form sentences. I see him stopping and pausing, thinking for just a minute and noticing that he has spelled that wrong. I see more changes that way as opposed to becoming a fluent reader. . . . Randy is still reading on a second grade reading level. It may be edging closer to third grade. I would like to see his reading skills be picked up, but I am real pleased with the other parts of his progress. I think that will come. I believe that this reading program is helping his self-confidence, and this self-confidence is flowing over into other areas.

Mike's mother was especially exuberant concerning her son's new attitude toward reading:

The first time Mike read for her [classroom teacher] he told her that he did not read very well and that he could not do it. She says that he never says that anymore. Mike just goes ahead. This had made him feel like the kids are looking up to him because he knows the answers.

At home, too, Mike worked more independently:

I know that when we reviewed assignments that he would just let me totally read it to him, and now he does not. Mike will read the basic words that he is looking for, and if the meaning is there he will read it out loud to me, where before I would have to ask him to try and read it, but he would not. Now he just goes ahead when we get to that part. Mike will say this means that and then read it. I think he feels like the words are coming.

Mike was willing to become a risk-taker in his reading:

If we go out to eat or someplace, Mike is more anxious to read things. He would never do this before. He wanted to, but I really do think that he felt he would make a mistake. . . . Maybe it is hard for you to understand if your children read well, but even little things like when going to the grocery store and he was able to read

signs. He had not done that before. He would not read because he was afraid of making a mistake.

Mike's mother perceived gains in his self-confidence. She commented, "Mike is a lot more positive. He tries to do a lot more on his own. I just feel like that he was afraid that he would make a mistake. He was just so unsure. Mike just seems like he is a lot more sure of himself."

Grades and Awards

In the Four Rivers School District, students who were in resource room for a particular subject did not receive a grade for that subject; rather, they had an "RR" for resource room put in place of the grade on their report card. In lieu of the grade, the resource teacher sent home a separate report on the child's progress in the resource room.

Mike noticed the change when I asked him to tell me how the In-Class model was different from the pull-out program. He explained, "This year they are giving us grades in reading, and last year I just had an RR on my report card for reading."

A resource teacher believed that since resource students were actually receiving a grade for reading on their report card, it provided them the recognition which had previously been denied them:

They know when their report card is an A, B, or a C in reading as opposed to our RR. That to them is very meaningful. They see that the hard work and the effort really pays off. . . . Academically, it is nice to have a grade. You get recognized for certain things, such as an Honor Roll. When a child is in the In-Class model, and they are doing everything that the rest of the class is doing, they do get

an actual grade from the Regular Education teacher. I do not do those grades. We work together on grading and grading the papers, but they are all kept in the teacher's grade book, and that is what goes down on the paper. . . . They are getting a real grade on the report cards that doesn't say RR that they have had for five years, if they have been in the program that long.

The students were now not only receiving a grade for reading, but also saw improvement in the grades of other subjects as well. Jason was asked how he did on his report card. "A lot better. I got A's and B's. I have been getting like C's and D's and F's." Charlotte commented that since the inception of the In-Class model her grades had improved. "My grades have gone a lot higher."

The parents were quite enthusiastic with the success their children were now experiencing under the In-Class model. Charlotte's mother pinpointed the kind of success her child was enjoying this year:

One reward was Student of the Week. Another one was getting on the Honor Roll for bringing her grades up. And another one was for going on a field trip in which her whole class was commended on the way they acted. . . . She likes it. The more self-esteem the better.

Randy's mother stated how ecstatic Randy was when he received his first ever A:

I am real proud of him. I am happy because it makes him happy. He pulled his reading up from a B to an A and the rest of them were average. They were C's and B's. Randy pulled up a couple, but reading was the one we remember. There was a definite improvement in his report card this semester. . . . He was absolutely thrilled. He was pleased that he got this. If I think back, I think that this was probably the first A that he has ever gotten in his whole school experience.

Similarly, Mike's mother believed the In-Class model was influential in the better grades he received.

I think that this [In-Class model] has really benefitted Mike a lot. I have seen a lot more confidence this year. . . . Mike got an A in science, health, and math. He is doing so well. In fact, his math teacher could not believe that he was in special reading. She asked Mrs. Schmidt [the resource teacher] how she knew Mike, and she told her that she was his teacher, and she could not believe this because he was in accelerated math in her class.

The teachers commented on the accomplishments achieved by the LD students and the accompanying outgrowth of self-confidence. Teachers saw better grades, happier students, and turned-on readers.

A sixth grade teacher. "The criteria as to whether or not we were serving these children adequately was if their first quarter grade in sixth grade was the same or better than their grade last year. Ninety-seven and a half percent of the children that we are serving meet that criteria. In bare numbers in raw form, there were two children out of our classes for third and fourth hour that did worse in this model than before . . . I believe we are serving 12 children on IEPs. Out of those 12, it was about a 60-40% split. Sixty percent were doing better. Forty percent were holding their own. No one was doing worse."

A resource teacher. "My standardized testing and my CBAs [curriculum-based assessments] are not down and they have made gains. Nobody, not one of my 24 case-load children, went down. . . . On top of the academic gains that the child has made, their self-concept has gone up. I am basing

that on observation. I am basing it on child-study teams where the parent has reinforced that [by saying] that the child is happier, the child reads more. And when I hear parents say this child reads more, this child turned in a book report, this child reads the newspaper, or this child reads to his brothers and sisters, and he has never done that before, those are the types of things that tell me this program has helped his self-concept."

A sixth grade teacher. "I like the In-Class model for a lot of reasons. I like the way the kids feel about themselves. I like the fact that they get A's and B's in reading and they come to me and say that this is the first time I have ever gotten an A or the first time that I have ever gotten a B. I can look them square in the eye and say with honesty, 'And, by George, you earned it.'"

Reading Gains

The teachers were greatly encouraged by the reading progress the LD students made in the In-Class model. They found that these students could be successful in the sixth grade curriculum when given more time to absorb the concepts. The teachers also noticed reading skills improvement at a faster rate for LD students with the In-Class model compared to the pull-out program. A sixth grade teacher stated:

I can see their abilities in reading becoming more sure. . . . We are fully exposing them to what they need to know. So it does take us some more time, but it seems to me that there has always been this dichotomy that regular kids in the classroom do one level of work and that resource kids do two grade levels or below in their

instructional level, and that is where you teach them and that is what you expect them to do. What we are finding is just the opposite. We are finding that if we have sixth grade children that are in Chapter I and in resource programs that they can function at the sixth grade level given the appropriate placement and procedure in pacing of the work. I think that goes contrary to what many teachers feel is the normal or expectation level. . . . The LD kids are working in a sixth grade curriculum. They are succeeding in that curriculum which is rigorous and stiff, but they have been given that curriculum in bites that can be chewed, and they have been doing very, very well with that.

A resource teacher felt compelled to defend the pull-out program, but perceived that the In-Class model was an improvement in the way students with disabilities were served:

They [resource students] were receiving quality instruction in both models. I think the thing that makes the In-Class model a little more preferable is the fact that they are in their curriculum, they are in the same format as the other students, the expectations are a lot higher; and because the expectations are higher, I think we are getting a little faster result. I think the kids are making growth a little bit faster, because that is where we expect them to be.

The teachers maintained that the good grades the LD students were now receiving in reading resulted from curricular adaptations, cooperative learning methods, and giving the students the time needed to master a concept. A sixth grade teacher explained how an LD student who read far below the sixth grade level was able to obtain an A in reading:

The way that we measure the kids, yes. He knows his vocabulary words, and he knows what they mean, and he can use them in a sentence. He can write them in a sentence, and he can get the capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and the complete sentence ideas down which are the four critical things that we grade for. In the comprehension he is able to do that. I gear that all because we learn the cooperative learning approach. He has so much exposure to each individual component of the story as well as the entire story

itself. So, by the time we get ready to test he can pass it, and he does.

The teacher discussed how they provide the students the time and opportunity to learn skills:

Sometimes when we hit upon a reading skill, our kids do not get it fast enough. So we are doing a re-teach here or we are just not completely comfortable with the way they are latching onto something. So we need to take some more time to make sure that we have taught them.

The Chapter I teacher explained that she takes into consideration the areas of weakness in the LD students' academic skills. However, when she evaluates their work, they meet the same quality standards by which all her students are measured:

I think that our pacing and our levels of expectation take that into account. . . . We have a standard which we want the children to meet. But we realize that standard is not probably what is going to occur in a regular classroom setting. For instance, with Charlotte, we are still working on syntax of her sentences. Now, if I think that she is going to write on all of her comprehension tests complete sentences every single time, I would go dizzy. We still need more work on that. That's a goal. That's an objective. She will have a few points taken off for it on a test; but it is not going to make a difference and it is not going to have anything to do with failing the class. It is just something else that we need to work on. . . . When you say the quality of their work is sixth grade level work, that is not entirely true. If you look at their work superficially, you will see that sentences are, for instance, incomplete, simple words may be misspelled . . . those kinds of things that become a boondoggle for resource kids. But if you were looking for the essence of their work — Do they understand? Have I made myself understood? Have they made themselves understood? — it's there. They all meet the same standard. With a few of the resource kids, we cut them slack on book reports. But essentially, I would say that 90% is the same standard, 90 to 95%. . . . No gifts were given.

Although a resource teacher believed she would have observed reading progress in the pull-out program as well as the In-Class model, she would not have seen the inner growth the LD students experienced:

Student rate and fluency would increase, but their self-esteem and self-concept would not. Academically they would have been fine, but these students have a lot to show the rest of the group, and none of that would have been displayed had they been in here [resource room].

The LD students likewise noticed an improvement in their reading skills and perceived they were learning at a faster pace. The enriched curriculum of their new reading class did not escape their attention either. Mike remarked, "This year we have to answer questions and do vocabulary words. We have to write stories and write definitions. Last year we did not do that much." Randy stated:

I remember from last year a bunch of words that I couldn't remember and I couldn't read and stuff, and this year I can. . . . I am doing like more harder words, and I am forced to work harder and stuff this year. Well, I mean it's not that they are totally making me. I just feel the need to work harder. Well, because it is harder work and all the other kids are doing it, and it is just like normally you are doing it and stuff and they are just ahead of you. It makes me want to work just as hard, and it makes me feel like I don't want to be behind them. . . . Well, it is a little tougher, and you have to challenge yourself a little bit more. . . . Well, I am probably learning more this year, because I am working with harder readings and stuff.

The parents were quite enthusiastic with the obvious progress in their children's reading, as evidenced by the following statements:

Shawnee is reading better now than she has ever been able to read. There has been more improvement in the last four months than there was in the previous two years. Something has happened. I

don't know what it is, but there is a something happening. In the last four months, she is making tremendous strides in her ability to read out loud to us.

It [Charlotte's reading] has gotten better now that she is doing this [In-Class model] with you.

Randy remembers better. He is reading, and when he does read I notice that it is a little bit more fluent and that it is coming around and getting much better. He still has a problem of being slow and comprehending what he has read afterwards. I feel real confident that this will change, too, eventually.

New-Found Interest in Reading

In order to garner parents' opinions about the program, the principal at Sunrise sent a survey home to the parents. He was encouraged by the results. Especially positive responses came from those parents of children who previously had not seen much success in school.

Those who had some knowledge of it write some really delightful comments about how their children are now interested in reading, how they are going to the library and getting books, how they are reading at home, how their interest in school has improved. A lot of the favorable comments came from the lower-achieving students, simply because those people have been so concerned about 'Why Johnny can't read,' and now they are seeing results. And they are curious and interested.

Jason's parents noticed major changes in their son's reading skills and spoke excitedly about them:

They [reading skills] have gone sky high. . . . Jason does read the paper once in awhile; and he amazes himself when he comes up with things. He has a bigger interest, and it [In-Class model] has made quite a difference. . . . I would say he is reading a book every two weeks. We have consistently gotten harder books for him to read, so he is having to read them. He is excited about books. He wants to read. He didn't want to read before. He is excited. . . .

He feels wonderful. Jason is very proud. It has made a difference in a lot of the other subjects. His social studies is beginning to move up, which it never used to be.

Adam said that he had read approximately 10 books over the school year, all of which he had selected. When asked what his favorite books were, Adam responded, "I like adventure books." Charlotte commented, "I've learned stuff that I never knew about. I love reading and I go home and read everything." She especially enjoyed reading romance novels. Jason reflected, "I like reading in there [classroom] because it's more challenging to find out what it is like to be in there." Randy bragged, "The books in the resource room that we used for reading had a whole bunch of easy words. The book that we have in our room right now has a bunch of hard words. I am starting to get them."

It was illuminating for a sixth grade teacher to find out about Charlotte's new-found interest in reading:

Charlotte's mother says Charlotte is reading all the time, just really is turned on to reading, carries her book with her all the time and reads all the time . . . and that is exciting to me, because that is the part of it I don't see and I always worried about.

Certainly the better grades the LD students achieved and their new attitudes toward reading were good measures to gauge the success they attained with the initiation of the In-Class model. However, many of the parents continued to express concern over their child's reading disability, particularly because they did not see much recreational reading at home:

I still do not see Randy doing a lot of voluntary reading like sitting down and reading a novel like his brothers would. . . . Randy is not a child who will sit down and pick up a book and read. I have two other sons who are slow readers, and they will sit down and practice, but Randy will not. We read to him and everything, but for him to sit down and read and practice is not something that he will do voluntarily.

I try to encourage Adam to read more, but he just can't find things that he likes to read; and that is kind of frustrating to me, thinking: Well, Adam, you need to read, and if you read more you will read better. And so on that point it does frustrate me. But the fact that he can't read doesn't frustrate me. He just can't find materials that interest him to read. . . . If Adam can find one that he likes, he will sit down and read it; but he has a hard time finding ones he likes. He is into football cards, and he will read the football cards and magazines and stuff, because that is what he likes. So he will read those with no problems.

Mike really does not want to do book reports, and I would like for him to do that. . . . He did not do as well with his book reports. I had asked him if he was doing his book reports. Mike said that he was, but he only turned in two. That is one thing that he does not like to do, and that is to read. I can see why he doesn't because the books that he can read are too young for him. They really do not write a lot of books on his reading level that really hold his interest. . . . If Mike goes in [to the library] and says that he is in the sixth grade, they point him to sixth grade books. He cannot handle that type of reading. He does not want to say that he cannot read. I will then look around and then say to him that you can probably handle this book, but this upsets him because he wants to be up in his reading group, and he is not. He knows that he is not, too. It is hard for him, and this has been a real thing, but I really do not know how to handle this. He does not like to go. It is always under my suggestion. . . . Mike really does not read more at home. Reading has not been a real thing where he would pick up a book and just read because this has always been such a hard thing for him.

I think Shawnee reads a little better. I do wish she would want to read more. . . . [She doesn't read much at home] unless she is forced to.

Former Grading Practices

A complaint registered by several parents was in regard to the former grades issued to their LD children. These were the grades assigned by the classroom teachers in subject areas for which the student was responsible to the classroom teacher. The dichotomy between the grades issued in the resource room where the child was placed at a point which should guarantee success, and the grades issued in the regular classroom where the child was expected to keep abreast of the entire class, was not lost on parents who could not fathom how their child could receive an A for a subject in the resource room and an F in another subject in the regular classroom. Several parents were upset by the grades their children used to get on their report cards from their general education teachers under the pull-out program.

I didn't like what I saw in Charlotte's resource grades compared to what I saw in her regular classroom grades. As far as I'm concerned, with as much as she was out of her class, she shouldn't have to accept D's and F's in the other subjects that she misses. And there wasn't enough time in the day for her to do what she had to do in the resource room and then come back and try to get this done. . . . For somebody who works as hard as they do in the resource room, knowing that they have the disability, to be doing good there, and come back and see D's and F's on their report card, then, no. I got into it with the teacher.

Randy's mother was equally irate. "Last year Randy was getting F's, and no child with a disability like his should ever get an F on his report card whether he earned it or not. He got four of them last year, and that was just so devastating to him."

Jason's parents, when asked whether Jason had received any D's or F's on his report card before the inception of the In-Class model, said, "Oh, yes. And he got a lot of those."

A resource teacher at Oakview School had a hard time explaining to the parents of one of her students why there was such a discrepancy in the classroom grades compared to the resource room grades.

The report card that went home from her classroom was very negative and the one from the resource room was just the opposite. The parents were very concerned and wanted to know why we were getting two such different reports on the same child. I explained we are in two different settings, so what I see here is not necessarily what they see there.

The significance of this category was that LD students demonstrated distinct progress in their reading skills with the In-Class model. Teachers stated LD students were able to achieve success in the sixth grade reading curriculum because the instructional pace was matched to their needs, students were happier and more confident, expectations were higher, and the students met those expectations. LD students talked about how exciting it was to be reading the same type of books as everyone else.

Parents noted more willingness in their children to read and pointed out that their children were now receiving A's in reading and that this new-found confidence was helping them get better grades in other subjects, too. It certainly appeared to bolster general student success in the classroom. Teachers, parents, and students spoke excitedly about the better grades LD students received in many subject areas.

Some parents observed dramatic gains in their child's reading ability. Shawnee's parents, for example, remarked, "Shawnee is reading better now than she has ever been able to read. There has been more improvement in the last four months than there was in the previous two years." Other parents observed more confidence in their child's reading ability and more independence, but not necessarily so major a breakthrough in their child's reading ability as did Shawnee's parents.

Some of the parents wished that their child would do more recreational reading at home. A couple of the parents remarked that their child could not find books of interest written at his or her reading level.

Many of the classroom teachers who did not modify parts of their classroom curricula graded LD students as they would any other student. Consequently, these students received D's and F's on their report cards for many curricular subjects. This infuriated parents as they felt their children were being dealt a disservice and another blow to their self-esteem.

Students who were involved with the In-Class model were able to achieve at the B and A levels in reading, much to the surprise and amazement of their parents. These higher grades were achieved, according to the teachers, as a result of more time given to the students to absorb the individual components of the story, reteaching certain components when necessary, and adapting the reading lessons to cater to student strengths.

An apparent inconsistency was Adam's mother's assertion that although she encouraged Adam to read more, he could not find appropriate reading material to his liking. Adam, on the other hand, stated that he liked reading more and was at that moment reading *Where the Red Fern Grows*. He mentioned during an interview that he had read approximately 10 books such as the above during the school year.

Co-Teaching

Teachers are the experts, administrators are a resource. (Resource Teacher, Sunrise Elementary School)

The concept of co-teaching, where the classroom teacher and the special education teacher shared in the responsibilities of presenting the reading lessons to the class, was a major element in the In-Class model. This also proved to be the most difficult component because of the time element involved in getting the two teachers together for planning purposes. Other than the time factor, co-teaching was successful as long as the two teachers had compatible personalities and philosophies.

Enhancement of Instruction

Co-teaching was an integral part of the In-Class model as practiced at Sunrise Elementary. The teaching staff saw growth in their pedagogical skills as they learned new instructional and behavior management techniques from each other. The teachers also felt a new responsibility toward their

co-teachers to be prepared to teach their part of the lesson. The days of being ill-prepared to teach or "winging" the lesson were much less likely to occur. A resource teacher felt that the students benefitted the most from co-teaching because they never got short-changed as far as quality of instruction was concerned:

I like being in the classroom with team teaching in a collective way with a regular ed teacher. . . . It has been a definite period of growth. You learn a lot about yourself and about your philosophy on teaching. You have somebody to bounce ideas off of. You have accountability to another teacher. You never can go into school in the morning and plan on winging it for the day. No matter what has happened in your personal life or professional life, you go in and you are ready to teach. You have too many people that you are accountable to. You have to keep your skills up, and you have to be prepared. . . . It is a team, and if one part of the team is not functioning it is noticeable immediately and has to be rectified. . . . If she [co-teacher] does not think something is appropriate or if I do not think something is appropriate, we tell each other immediately. There is no saying, 'The kids learn this in spite of it.' There is none of that with any teacher that I co-teach with.

The principal also noted that the quality of instruction appeared to have improved with two teachers in the room. "They [the teachers] have been tremendous about wanting to do their very best while their co-teacher is in the room." The principal also talked about what the students had to say regarding co-teaching:

I am really satisfied with the opinionnaires. The kids' opinions are fun to read, a real delight to read their answers to questions. The kids overwhelmingly are now satisfied with the new model. They like the reading program. They love to have the co-teacher come into the classroom. There is not a negative comment about the co-teaching concept.

Charlotte enjoyed having two teachers in her room. "I like having two teachers. . . . Because if you need something and one teacher is free, she can help you."

Teachers observed that co-teaching was a full and equal partnership in every way. They also felt it to be a learning experience in the science of teaching, as they saw their own skills increase as a direct result of collaborating with a fellow teacher. This blending of different teaching styles also appeared to enhance the students' learning. Some representative teacher comments follow.

A resource teacher. "The teacher I co-teach with in reading is wonderful in preparing lessons and skills, and I rely heavily on her in that area. I am maybe more aware of students' learning styles, and I don't want to say I am a more structured person, but I am a structured person. And the first thing I think of is my child over here who is an auditory learner can't hear me. What can I do for that child? Definitely, I approached her and said, 'Can I try this? This is what I see happening. Learning is not taking effect, and would you be willing to try to do this?' And she said, 'Oh, yes. Please do.' I am learning instructional methods that I have never thought of from the regular education teacher. It is a two-way street. I pick up so many things, and she in turn, I think, has picked up things from me, just different skills and techniques you can use with a child."

A sixth grade teacher. "I like the fact that I co-teach. We have a lot of enthusiasm. We have a lot of fun with these kids. They sense it. They feel it. They like it. What I am not good at she is great at. We cover each other's bases. . . . I like it a lot [working with students with the In-Class model]. I like having the resource teacher here. She and I work very well together. We click. She has skills that I have that are in the same realm that need to be brushed up. We complement each other well in that area. Together we have put together a program that I feel so good about. We are always modifying this or changing that and working to make it better. At the end of the year I do not want to stop doing this. I want to keep doing this. I know that now."

A Chapter I teacher. "I think the camaraderie of seeing two teachers working together has helped all the kids. . . . There will be days when we will split the kids up, and she will take half of the room and do one kind of a skill, and I will do something else. Then we will switch places. . . . I also think that one of the reasons why this particular model is working is because you have two fully-certified teachers working to adapt, to meet some of these individual needs. I don't think the In-Class model would work as well if it were just being done with the regular classroom teacher and no additional help."

Another sixth grade teacher. "But in the In-Class model students are able to get the group support and yet have more individualized attention with

two of us here. And I think that's a key thing to this In-Class model. Something that we need very desperately to hang onto is the fact that we have two very capable teachers working together with one group of children. . . . With my co-teacher and I both working in the room we can get to a student a lot faster than we could in a regular room. A resource student would be lost in a regular room. But this way, with two of us here, we can get to him right away and answer his questions and keep him encouraged, within the small group that we do, so he is not sitting by himself wondering what to do next."

Compatibility of Co-Teachers

It was essential that the co-teachers get along with each other. Compatibility was the first thing the principal looked for between co-teachers. "And we worked on, first of all, matching up personalities, resource and Chapter I teachers with classroom teachers, so we could get working relationships." The principal first went to the Chapter I and resource teachers and asked who they would prefer working with and then posed the same question to the classroom teachers. "This took a little time. We didn't just sit down and make out a schedule and say this is the way it is. So both sides were asked independently and then got together and did their planning." It was not necessary for the teachers to have the same styles or the same type of personality, only that they respected each other and could work together for the common goal.

A resource teacher liked teaming with someone to resolve problems:

I am really very positive about collaboration. Of course, all of the teachers that I am co-teaching with, we have almost identical philosophies in terms of all kids can learn and all kids will learn in this classroom. They also seem to see things in a problem-solving mode. If something comes up, it is not the fault of collaboration or the In-Class model. It is a problem and it needs to be solved, and how do we go about solving it. . . . So it has been a very positive experience.

The attribute that the Chapter I teacher spoke to that was a must with co-teaching was a good working relationship:

It is harder doing In-Class in the respect that you really have to have a good working relationship, a good rapport with the classroom teachers. You have to sort of know her lingo. She has to know your lingo, your vocabulary. The only way you can really establish that is by spending time together and practicing at it. You almost have to second-guess that person . . . know to what extent how they would want you to handle this aspect of the story, but yet, being a teacher you have your own ideas, too, about how you want to handle this aspect of a story or that aspect of skills, or whatever. So I guess it is cooperative teaching, cooperative learning . . . both.

In one of her reading classes, the Chapter I teacher felt that her relationship with the classroom teacher did not work as well as she would have liked.

Most of the time I feel it is [a full partnership]. I felt like my second and fifth grade classrooms did the CIRC model very, very rigorously this year and that I was given a fair amount of freedom within those classrooms and a fair amount of accountability, and a lot of faith and trust in my judgment. In my sixth grade class, I didn't quite have that feeling. The classroom teacher did not have the same level of energy or sort of the same lingo as I did. We tried to work on this together, and we are still working on it; but I don't feel that class did actually as much reading as my second and fifth grade classes did. . . . In my fifth grade classes, . . . those children were held accountable for answering in a complete sentence. They were held accountable for starting that sentence with a capital letter and

correct punctuation at the end and, certainly, spelling at a level that would be at least a fourth grade level. In sixth grade the teacher felt that these kids could not yet be held accountable for that, and it wasn't until the middle of the third quarter that she agreed to let me hold them accountable for that. . . . I think it had to do with almost an internal contradiction that she felt. While wanting to challenge kids and wanting to catch them up, all of that, at the same time I guess she couldn't bear to ding them on something that they were struggling with. It is a real fine balance.

Co-teaching was a significant component of the In-Class model and contributed much to the success enjoyed by the LD students. Teachers learned new instructional and behavior management skills from working together. As a result, students received better instruction more suited to their individual learning styles. It also proved to be a deterrent to a teacher being ill-prepared to teach a lesson. Teachers felt more accountable to provide quality lessons because their colleague was depending on them to carry their share of the instructional task. This may have been the underlying reason why more planning time was listed as being one of the main drawbacks of the In-Class model.

With two teachers in the classroom, students' individual needs were better met simply because the ratio of students-to-teachers was now smaller. This allowed the teachers more time to provide follow-up to students who were having difficulty with a concept.

The critical factor in the successful teaming of two teachers was to have a compatible match. The principal implied that if the personalities or philosophies of the teachers differed significantly, it would lead to problems

that could ultimately affect student learning, because the teachers would not enjoy a good working relationship. Indeed, this was his rationale for allowing the teachers to decide among themselves who would co-teach with whom.

Cooperative Learning

The other major element of the In-Class model was cooperative learning. This constituted a major shift away from students in orderly rows to a class formed of students in groups of four and five, seated in clusters around the room. The learning groups generally had three average readers and one low-ability reader. The members of these groups were expected to help each other out when the teacher was done with her whole-group presentation. This included reading passages from the story aloud to each other and working through the comprehension questions in a collaborative manner.

Students Enjoyed Working in Teams

The cooperative learning method proved to be immensely popular with the students. LD students actually had fun learning because they were contributing members of a team. They felt valued by their learning partners. Jason commented, "I'm getting along with more kids and getting involved with things. We are always helping each other out. . . . We get to work in partners." Charlotte remarked, "We have partners. . . . If one of us doesn't understand a word, then they will help us."

Adam believed working with a partner helped improve his reading:

This year we have partners and stuff, and you get to compare your answers with your partner instead of by yourself. . . . It is more fun because you get to work with your friends and stuff. . . . It's pretty fun because you get to see what they say or think about the story . . . it helps me get two sides of the story and not just one. . . . Well, it helps me to know the truth. Like if I don't know something, he can help me; and if he doesn't know it, I can help him. . . . I think I am a better reader now, probably because I work with somebody that can read pretty good and stuff and they help me a lot. You get help from your friends and stuff and just not always pretty much the teacher.

Mike particularly enjoyed teaming with his classmates in the learning process:

When you have two people, if one does not know the answer, the other one might. . . . If we ever have a problem with a word, then the other kids can help us out. . . . It is easier and it is fun. I like being in the classroom because you are with other people and work in groups. There are more kids. We have fun in there. . . . You learn to work with people that have the same problem. . . . We work together.

Similarly, Randy declared:

Reading in the classroom is kind of fun. . . . We get to be by our friends for our partners [best part about staying in the classroom for reading]. . . . They help me a lot, and I help them, too. . . . You get to be around more people. I am getting more help. . . . I have partners now.

More Peer Interaction

The teachers observed more than just improved academic skills as a result of the cooperative learning teams; they found a camaraderie among the students that was missing when the LD students were involved in the pull-out program. The students became a more cohesive unit and there was not as much cliquishness between the students as before the advent of the

In-Class model. LD students were exposed to positive peer interaction and appropriate role models. More on-task behavior and compliance to classroom rules were also noted by the teachers. The principal observed more engaged learning time with learning groups and not as much antagonistic type behaviors. A resource teacher saw friendships forming between students when they worked in teams. "I like the kids working in groups. I see the peer-tutoring happening. The team work is really neat. They work for team points. They work to help each other. They are forming a bond that way." The following staff comments elaborate on this theme.

A resource teacher. "I think in terms of having that assistance from a reading partner or the team in the In-Class model that this is a real benefit for our resource students, plus they enjoy the social aspect of the In-Class model and the CIRC cooperative learning model. I can see that as being a benefit for them."

A sixth grade teacher. "There is an empathy and a caring that is wonderful, and in some ways it kind of surprises me because they are not that caring about each other in a lot of instances. The kids who are really bright or who have really high-level vocabularies . . . they get more flack from the other kids than the resource kids do."

Another sixth grade teacher. "Usually, if there is a written task involved in the material, I do not give it to just one person. Each person has their own paper and they work on it as a team of four people. . . . Randy will raise his

hand or ask Josh, his partner. Josh is good at helping to figure it out. . . . They like each other a lot. They stick to their task for the most part very well, but they also have a few little social comments to throw in on the side. So I think that is a mark that they are getting along well."

A classroom teacher. "We do a lot of partner reading, especially in social studies and science because I have several kids that might qualify for Chapter I. So I give them a partner and they read to each other and work the work sheets together. I give them the work sheets ahead of time whenever we read in class so that they are watching for things when they read. . . . They need to hear it and discuss it. By answering the questions together, they discuss it and research it. . . . They decide among the partners who is going to do most of the reading, although they are all told that they must participate and answer the questions. . . . Sometimes I will read the test to them or I will give them a reader. We partner test sometimes. We have two partners who work together. . . . They will read the questions together and will have to come up with an answer between the two of them. They do not have to agree on the answer. They always can put their own answer, but they get the chance to discuss it."

A resource teacher. "The thing that I find about working with them in cooperative learning groups is that kids who have a tendency to be picked on, on the playground and so forth, now their reading buddies are coming to their aid. If they get into a situation on the playground every now and again,

the reading buddy will come up and say, 'Well, don't say that,' or 'Don't do that.' They will be helpful in a social sense."

Another resource teacher. "There was one particular child who was not very popular and had a history of social problems with the other kids. Nobody wanted him on their team. Of course, that was not allowed. Life went on, anyway, and he was placed on the team. As soon as the kids started working together toward a common goal, we saw a lot of those barriers go away. Now, when we change teams, I haven't heard complaints the last five or six times that we have changed teams, from any of the kids. So I am assuming that is acceptance. . . . I think the process of modeling is very, very important in this, because they are in a group, usually with a high student, two middle students, and then the resource student within that group. And when there is a problem to be solved, or when they are reading, they have a chance to watch how a higher student goes about solving a problem or goes about figuring out the word, or how they figure context to come up with an answer about a vocabulary word. So I just think they have far more opportunities, and they have far more time on-task and more direct instruction, be it from me or be it from a reading partner or a team member."

The principal. "Now they are working in partners and pairs and teams, and it is easy to hear that half of the kids are reading orally while the other half are following and making corrections. It is very easy to monitor. Even with one teacher monitoring 30 kids, you can see that everybody is either

on-task or off-task. So the on-task time for the kids is much greater. . . . The kids bounce their answers off of their teammates before they ever write them down, so that it is easy to see that they are working. . . . We had a number of children in our pull-out programs that had somewhat antisocial behaviors. They didn't feel very good about themselves, had low self-esteem, so they had a tendency not to get along real well with the other kids. With those children, the ones that were having the social problems, I have seen some real gains, because they have had to learn to work cooperatively with the other people on their team. In the same regard, I see a lot of kids that were not resource students who have made a lot of gains in those areas."

Academically Effective

The concept of teaming an LD student with a partner in the classroom was not an altogether new concept. Although past teachers did not use cooperative learning concepts with their entire classrooms, they discovered that teaming an LD student with a peer was educationally profitable.

Randy's resource teacher when he attended Oakview Elementary School asserted that he was able to complete fifth grade only through the assistance of a partner. "Randy had an excellent teacher who would have someone read material to him. This is how he got by. He basically needed to depend on a peer to help him read instructions in the classroom." The fifth grade teacher for Randy explained how the arrangement worked. "I had a student

who was quite intelligent work with him. He read things to Randy. He could get his work done and help Randy with his work at the same time."

Other classroom teachers reported similar occurrences when they teamed their LD students with a partner. A fifth grade teacher commented, "We had buddies, and I would check on the buddy system to see how that was working." A sixth grade teacher mentioned, "I change seats every week and Philip has a different partner every week." A fifth grade teacher remarked how her students helped Mike when he read aloud:

Mike would oral read and the kids around him would help him when he got stuck on a word. I did not have to help him because all the kids around him would just quietly say it for him. It was really nice. You could tell that they were really interested in him and wanted to be there to help.

Another teacher used cooperative learning methods to teach reading content subjects. "We do a lot of teamwork in social studies, and so Charlotte is teamed with other kids who can help with her reading. She does not grasp the concepts, like the overall general concepts, as well as other kids who are more on their grade level."

Teachers recognized that a real benefit for resource students was when they could listen and discuss concepts with their classmates. A sixth grade teacher reported, "My resource students definitely like the In-Class model. They prefer to work with other kids. The LD students learn more from listening to them [classmates] talk, and they do a lot of talking in the classroom." Another sixth grade teacher stated, "For any of the sixth

graders, the support they get from the other kids in the group, and the continual instantaneous feedback through cooperative learning has been good."

Two of the parents also noted that when their children were teamed with other students they became more attentive and could find support from their peers in the skill areas in which they were weak. Their children appeared to learn more through cooperative learning groups than they did in traditional teaching methods.

Mike's mother. "Mike's teacher explained to me that she teams them with somebody else. He may not excel where they excel, but they kind of complement each other. He feels really good about that because he knows the answers, but yet he cannot read the questions."

Randy's mother. "Randy was not able to do the work or keep up. Randy's attention span is very low. I believe this is because he does not understand half of what is going on around him, so his mind wanders to something that he can understand. . . . Something that Randy is doing that I really agree with is that they are working on a buddy system type learning situation where he will be working with someone."

Academic progress came at a faster rate, said a resource teacher, because there was more attentiveness and motivation displayed by the students which led to more productivity and eventually more time to work on other skills.

I have seen a lot of improvement in my resource students . . . I see a lot more effort going into their work. They seem to be a lot more highly motivated. We are using cooperative learning techniques, and where they are working with partners, there is a lot more on-task behavior while they are in the classroom, and I think that has got to lead to academic gains. . . . I find that with buddy-reading, they are picking up tons and tons and tons of sight vocabulary that I wouldn't have been teaching. Just by having their partner provide the word for them on a repetitive basis, they are picking up lots of sight vocabulary that I wouldn't have been teaching.

Another resource teacher was also very complimentary toward the cooperative learning techniques incorporated in the In-Class model. As she stated, when children with learning disabilities listen to a story, their learning rate accelerates as a result of the relative strength of most LD students' auditory channel. Resource children also became much more responsible in completing their lesson assignments because of the responsibility they felt as a member of their learning group. Furthermore, having an equal voice on the team contributed to a successful learning experience. The resource teacher elaborated:

The In-Class model is very beneficial to LD students. They have certain skills that will help the team out. It is an excellent model for most LD kids because they generally do not read very well, but can comprehend wonderfully. . . . We pair them with a strong reader, one who can help their rate of fluency, because their comprehension is good. LD kids have a lot of things to add as a team member. They are very willing to work, and they pull the same weight as everybody else in their group. It is whole-teaming that makes it work. . . . When they go to the treasure hunts which are the questions that go with the story, they work together as a team. They also oral read to each other. So you have a positive and negative there, and they enhance each other. . . . Accountability was only to me. Now they work in teams and they are in the classroom, and their accountability is to the rest of their team . . . whereas, if they don't do their assignment, it has immediate effects

on their points and on their grade. So accountability-wise they care more about their work. Then after that gets past that point, then they are doing it for themselves because they feel good about themselves. I think initially they are doing it for the other people, because they don't want to not have their work done and cause the team to lose points. After that gets by, you can see it is for themselves. They have had success. They are a contributing member of the team and they have great ideas.

The Chapter I teacher believed that having a partner to turn to when a student had a question was a big learning plus for LD students lacking in self-confidence. "I think realizing that she can also run something by a partner, to see if her response is going to be okay, I guess to kind of run it up the flag pole . . . I think that has helped her. I think that the closeness and the camaraderie of the In-class model has helped her." A sixth grade teacher remarked how the cooperative learning groups spilled over into other subjects as well. "The resource kids in my room have real good helpers. . . . The rest of the kids are so good with them and they are such good helpers and they work in teams a lot, like in social studies."

The principal noted how parents of some of the top performing students expressed to him their satisfaction over the cooperative learning efforts. "We have had a few good comments from top students' parents to the effect that their students are becoming more social, that they are working with other kids more; and they think it has been good for their kids to see that other kids have problems."

The principal observed that students no longer just filled out reading workbook pages. He implied in the following statement that the students are

learning more because they no longer have to do mindless "filler" work as part of their reading instruction:

Previously, it was ditto sheets and workbook pages, fill-in-the-blank sort of things; and kids might copy, they might do it, they might not. You couldn't tell if they were learning from that experience or not. Now it is answering questions, where they have to write out complete sentences, making inferences and so forth. They have to put a lot more thought into the responses and have supportive data for it and put it in writing. There is a lot more writing going on. They have to write meaningful sentences with vocabulary. So there is a lot more writing going on that is not workbook writing; it is just writing on their own.

Use of the cooperative learning method produced a number of significant results. LD students bonded socially with their learning partners. Friendships were formed more readily and carried over into other parts of the school day such as recess. Cooperative learning methods proved more beneficial for the majority of LD students. LD students were able to discuss and hear the stories resulting in more learning opportunities because of their strong reliance on the auditory channel.

An important discovery in the study was that classroom teachers in previous years had been forced into teaming successful students with their LD students if the LD students were to attain some success in the curriculum. Many of these past teachers found that without the assistance from their classmates, students with learning disabilities could not cope with the curricula, especially the reading material. However, by pairing the LD student with a peer, the student with a disability could manage much more successfully.

The cooperative learning groups provided the LD child an opportunity for appropriate modeling and positive peer interaction. This added up to more engaged learning time, better social skills, and increased self-esteem due to the success the LD students experienced.

The LD student was now a contributing member of the team and, therefore, felt much more of a responsibility to the team. The team seemed to become the predominant motivating factor for LD students' reading interest. Students talked about the good feelings of being a contributing member of a team, of being able to help their classmates and receiving help in return.

Curricular Adaptations

Curricular modifications for students with learning disabilities took place not only within the In-Class model but also in classrooms not involved with the innovation. It became increasingly clear through the interview process that both current and past classroom teachers were forced to modify and adapt their curricular materials in order for students with learning problems to achieve some semblance of success. Certainly, the parents were attuned to what worked best for their children by assisting them with homework. At home, parents recognized their children's shortcomings and helped them, usually by reading the material aloud.

Adam was asked if he had trouble doing homework assignments in reading content subjects like social studies. He responded affirmatively. "Yes, but I can get help from the rest of my family . . . my mom and my stepdad [help me at home]." Randy talked about how his mother helped him at home. "You do not get that much homework except for in science. I cannot do it . . . I always have to have my Mom's help. I try it myself, but I cannot find the questions. She would sit down with me and read the questions, and I would figure them out with her." Mike explained how he received help from his mom. "I listen to her. So I learn most of my science by ear. . . . She reads me the chapters, and then I answer all the questions. I already know the story because I can remember it by hearing it."

Most teachers of students with learning disabilities eventually discovered that their instructional practices required modifications and adjustments if LD students were to learn. In the classroom, teachers furnished more individualized help, allowed LD students to listen to the material on a tape recorder rather than reading it, adjusted the requirements of a task to provide a better opportunity for success, permitted peer tutoring, and read material aloud. In the words of one teacher:

There are some individuals who have lower reading skills, so the teacher that I co-teach with, we get together and discuss different learning styles and different ways to teach these kids . . . where we need to do a lot more auditory type activities with certain kids. One child we taped the stories for, and they listen to the story and read along with it, to help with vocabulary, to help with rate and fluency. We model-read for them quite often. And they have the partner reading within the CIRC model in the reading program where they

partner-read, and they have a peer tutor to help them. So even though their reading abilities are lower, we don't throw them out to drown. We teach them skills to cope with that and compensate. . . . With the auditory [learner] we do a lot of vocabulary naming and calling out, a lot of vocabulary, a lot of reading out loud. We do model-reading for them, plus their partners model-read for them, and they take turns reading passages. So they are getting a lot of auditory there. And then with the visual [learner] we do the word cards and the overhead projector. We do a clozed method with the vocabulary words.

Randy's mother commented how the teacher came up with an idea so that Randy could get credit for a book report:

Randy has an awful time with book reports because he will not sit down and read a novel. His teacher noticed this about Randy and a few of the other kids in her class and came up with a different type of a book report that they could do and still get credit for it. They are really working with him.

Randy's teacher explained the modification she made:

Reading an entire book and writing a cohesive written summary is beyond his ability. So we adapted the curriculum. He was given a piece of paper which he folded up into eight parts and drew eight sequential illustrations of the book that he read and explained it to me, for which we gave him complete credit for book reports.

Randy liked the way the co-teachers worked with him. "They help me read. They help me do the test, too. They read you the questions and you answer the questions and write them down."

A resource teacher at Sunrise reported how she successfully adapted the material from the grade level textbooks:

My function, going In-Class, is to adapt the reading book that they are in to their level, to pull skills that they need out of that material. Because it doesn't matter what the material is. If a child needs to learn about words, say, with an "EA" vowel combination . . . there are tons of those words in a fourth grade book as well as a first

grade book, or a reading manual or whatever . . . and you just need to pull the skills that they need and work with them through that. I think the thing that is so neat about working, especially with learning-disabled students in those classrooms, is that they can comprehend those stories. Very many times it will be the resource child that had a better insight into what the story was saying than maybe the other kids in the group. So it gives them a real chance to be the hero of the day, to be the top person in the group. . . . They know what is going on, and it gives them a chance to answer correctly, because we can adapt and do things orally with them, until their reading skill gets up to the point where they can actually read the test questions off themselves and so forth.

The teachers were very open and willing to learn new instructional techniques from each other. Advanced organizers and modeling what was to be done especially helped LD students in the learning process. A resource teacher stated:

I spoke to this co-teacher and explained to her that the kids have different learning styles, and she looked at me and said, 'I guess I have never thought of it that way, that this child needs to see the notes on the board; this child doesn't know how to take notes.' It is modeling things like this. Putting notes on the board, previewing vocabulary a week before the lesson comes up, so it's not new to them and they are not held responsible after a day. Definitely, trying to get a point across, repeating it several times. The person that I work with gives the instructions once and thinks everybody gets it, which is a traditional way of teaching. They need to be reinforced, and they need to call it back to you. Plus, if you put it on the board, you are hitting the visual learners. It is nice to talk to a teacher that will try. She has commented that if we find something that works she is willing to do what she can. She is not closed to anything in that way. When I offer suggestions, which has not been often, she is very open.

A Chapter I teacher had an illuminating insight into what should be occurring in a classroom. After describing the adaptations she had made, the

teacher implied that responsible teachers should modify the curriculum as necessary to ensure the success of the children they teach:

With the In-Class model there is some curriculum adaptation that does take place for some students. . . . For instance, reading the story to students. They read the story silently, and then the story is read to them out loud. . . . Another thing that we have done with certain students who have a very difficult time gathering their thought processes together is to take the written comprehension test at the end of the story, and have them dictate to us what they wanted to say. Then if it became very verbose, we would ask them to narrow it down. Then when they got to the point where that was the answer. Bingo, you have it; let's say that. And then we would write that for them. So there was adaptation that took place, but it depends on the individual. And some of that adaptation is adaptation that should be taking place anyway, whether you have an In-Class model or not.

A sixth grade teacher believed it was the individualized help that spelled success for the LD students rather than any outright adaptations of the curriculum:

We don't have to modify the curriculum, but what we have to do is to make sure that the resource students are with the curriculum at every step; and that wouldn't happen if we weren't actively involved. We couldn't just hand them the curriculum like we can some of the kids and say, 'Okay, here it is. Now, let's do this.' We have to give them a lot of individual help in order to be successful at it; but with that individual help they are able to do it.

Other teachers, past and present, found through their own experiences how simple modifications in their teaching methods meant successful learning experiences for LD students:

A fifth grade teacher. "I did cut some of his assignments for him. We talked about that together. I am finding out this year that I am cutting sooner, and I am picking out the students that I need to do that with so that

they will feel successful in the things that they do. I wish I had Randy back again and could start the year fresh."

Another fifth grade teacher. "Well, basically, it just becomes an oral discussion with those kids. With Charlotte, that was the way it was. Then if we took a test, she would usually take the test with us and she would pick up some things orally. I did not give her grades in those subjects, but there would be some retention just from the oral discussion."

A sixth grade teacher. "I do all the oral reading and this helps because Mike is a good listener. He has the ability to listen to an idea and relate it and link it and put it together."

A Chapter I teacher. "Orally a lot of times resource kids are more successful than doing it in written form. It comes out very, very garbled in written form. There is a kernel of correctness to the question in written form, but the syntax of the sentence is poor."

Another sixth grade teacher. "I forgot most of the time that she is a resource room student. Sometimes I have to remind myself when we get into science. Once in awhile I will say, 'read this chapter and answer the questions,' because I like to give them the chance to work on their own. I forget that this is going to be really hard for her to do. When I do, I make an adjustment. She usually ends up taking it home, but she does it. She occasionally does not turn a paper in, and that is usually when it has been too difficult."

Auditory Learners

The importance of the auditory channel in helping most students with a learning disability acquire knowledge cannot be underestimated. It was most certainly the predominant learning style of the students in this study. Tara stated that she learns best "when they tell me about it."

A classroom teacher realized from her experience that most students with learning disabilities needed to listen to the reading material. This knowledge, combined with the high readability level of her textbooks, compelled her to use an instructional strategy which emphasized the auditory channel:

The science and social studies books are written [at a reading level that is] above most of my class. Even my best readers have trouble with them. . . . They [LD students] need to hear it and discuss it. By answering the questions together, they discuss it and research it. . . . They then decide among the partners who is going to do most of the reading, although they are all told that they must participate and answer the questions.

A sixth grade teacher at Sunrise explained how she modified the instructions in social studies so that more students could be successful.

In social studies the content requires that you read the material. Because I have so many children that are in resource room, the material is usually read aloud to the class by me. That way, I know that I have some control over the consistency of the delivery, the inflection, the emphasis on key points, and I can stop and point things out as we go along. So I read to the class, and then the class reads silently.

Similarly, a fifth grade teacher had her students read aloud. "I made sure that we did a lot of oral reading. A lot of times I would have them silently

read it and then orally read after because I knew there was no way that he could have gotten it."

Adam's teacher from last year recalled that he could attain academic success if lessons were presented through the auditory channel. As explained by Adam's resource teacher:

Adam was one I was real careful with about not letting him miss science or social studies. I never pulled him during those areas, just because being in the classroom listening to the other kids read or the teacher read or discuss or doing any experiments, he had it . . . so he could learn that.

Adam's fifth grade teacher agreed with the resource teacher's assessment of Adam's learning strength:

We would read things aloud in class, like science, for instance, and Adam seemed to understand science because he enjoyed science a lot. But I think just given a chapter to read, I don't think he was to the point where he could sit and read it and get anything out of it. It had to be more of a group type thing for him. . . . He seemed to do better when it was discussed and read.

An LD student's sixth grade teacher remarked on the strength of Mike's auditory channel:

Mike knows that he can learn by listening. . . . He prefers to work with other kids. He learns more from listening to them talk, and they do a lot of talking in the classroom.

Mike's former teacher substantiated his uncanny auditory ability:

We did a lot of oral reading in social studies and science. Mike was able to follow along when we read. He was always very interested in oral reading. We would just go right through and never leave him out at all. . . . I made sure that we did a lot of oral reading. A lot of times I would have them silently read it and then orally read after because I knew that there was no way that he could have gotten it. . . . Mike is funny. He hears something once and he has got it.

You do not have to repeat it. With a lot of kids you have to repeat it several times.

Mike's mother was acutely aware of the power of his auditory channel:

Mike received an A in science. They say a lot of it is that he listens so intently. It is just like Mrs. Schmidt said. You think that he really is not listening, but he really is. She says that he will sit there and fiddle on a piece of paper, but she asks him something and he knows exactly what she has been talking about. He is tuned in all the time, and he is not like a lot of children who are in and out and missing stuff. . . . This is why I feel like he has been blessed. He just excels in them [science and health]. All he has to do is hear about it one time.

She stated that her oldest son, who was now in the Navy and also had a learning disability, was able to do fine in school as long as he could hear what he had to learn. Mike is similar to him, unlike her middle son who does not have a learning disability and yet is not as good a listener:

Mike would bring quite a bit of social studies home. I would help and read it to him. This was the subject that he always got good grades in. . . . If they listen and you tell them, they understand it. I feel that this is their way of learning and communicating. They are far better listeners than Tim, the middle one. He does not have the problems, but he does not listen. He has to read it to learn it, but they listen real keenly.

A resource teacher stated that Mike and Randy's only chance for academic success in a reading content subject is for them to hear it:

Mike can comprehend when something is read to him. When a story is read to him, he has very good comprehension. . . . So when Mrs. Smathers or I read a story aloud or if a peer is reading aloud, Mike is taking all of that in. If he were to read it silently to himself he would not have a clue to what was going on.

Randy is an auditory learner. He has trouble in oral reading. His comprehension seems to be higher than I expected it to be. He seems to be able to comprehend from what I can see while

watching him react to teachers' questions and even by working with a partner. He gets very nervous about oral reading. He knows that he does not read well, and he will tell you that.

A fifth grade teacher who had Randy in class recalled that he was successful when he was able to hear the material:

Randy took part in class discussions. It seemed as long as it could be verbal that he got along well. . . . Randy could not really work independently. If we assigned a story, I would usually read the story to him. Once he had that, he could go ahead and answer comprehension questions. As long as somebody would read it to him, his comprehension was up.

Likewise, Randy's mother was fully cognizant of her son's learning strength:

I visited with the teachers and told them Randy is an auditory person. He will learn if you read to him or listen to it on the cassette. This boy will probably go through college with a head phone. That is life. A dictionary in one pocket and a head phone in the other.

She discovered that when she read to Randy or the teacher read to him, he learned it far better than if he tried to read it himself:

I read it to him. Randy can read it, but when he reads it, it is still so choppy that by the time he gets to the end he cannot remember. To answer the questions, he needs to have it read to him. But I have found out that when the teacher reads to them in school in this reading program that they are doing, they read it again and again and again. She reads to them and then their friends read to them, and then they read to their friends. So it sticks in their minds. . . . He will remember because it was read to him.

Randy's former resource teacher also noted that his auditory channel was his strength. "Randy had an excellent teacher who would have someone

read material to him. This is how he got by. He basically needed to depend on a peer to help him read instructions in the classroom."

Charlotte's mother, too, felt that her child's strength was through the auditory channel. "If you read something to her, she can do it." Charlotte's fifth grade teacher agreed that she learned best when she heard it. "Yes, much more so than any other way."

A resource teacher asserted that the In-Class model provided the instructional methodology necessary for LD students to improve through its emphasis on the auditory channel.

I think it [In-Class model] provides a more auditory delivery of lessons for LD kids because we read the passages out loud. We will often read the story to the class or we will break up into groups and read it. I reinforce the reading program in here for written language and base the language lessons around it. Most LD students learn by listening. . . . My auditory students hear the story more than they would rather than if I was giving them direct instruction out of *Reading Mastery*. I like the extra stimulation that they get in the classroom. . . . They get the extra stimulation from the group instruction with a teacher instructing the whole class. They get it from peers, partner reading, and from team practice. They would not get team or peer practice in the resource room where it is more one-on-one.

Thus, teachers made many adaptations in the classroom, both prior to the implementation of the In-Class model and after. The most significant aspects found in this particular section are discussed below.

Parents assisted their children at home with assignments and adapted the work. The adaptation usually made was through the oral reading of the material. This appeared to be an effective means of instruction as the LD

students' strength was the auditory channel. They could learn and retain information and concepts if they had the opportunity to hear and discuss it.

Classroom teachers discovered that LD students learned best when lessons were geared to their learning strength, which is often the auditory channel. The In-Class model, with its component of cooperative learning, lent itself naturally to that endeavor, but even in classrooms not incorporating formal cooperative learning groups, teachers would make certain that their LD students shared in the learning of the concept through discussion and oral reading. Other adaptations included shortening assignments and having LD students do assignments in an alternative manner.

Missing Out on Classroom Work

One particularly bitter and rancorous issue for most of the parents and students involved in the study was the missing out on classroom work which was caused by the pull-out model. Often the resource room teachers were unable to schedule students into the resource room at the time the same subject was taught in the classroom. As a result, the student would miss out on another curricular area such as social studies, science, health, and so forth. This often led to make-up assignments for the student to complete during free-time activities such as recess and lunch times, or additional homework.

Parental Frustrations

The frustration and resentment felt by parents because their child missed out on parts of the curriculum as a result of the pull-out program emerged unmistakably in their comments. Parents were particularly upset when their child had to make up assignments as homework. Even when the teacher did not order the work to be made up, the parents were still irritated that their child missed a chunk from the classroom curriculum. Parental frustrations are articulated in the following comments:

Charlotte doesn't like to be pulled out of class because then she doesn't get the work in the class, like her social studies and her science. . . . It bothered her that she couldn't do all the work in her other classroom when she was out of those classes.

Where Jason was at in Seattle, he was being pulled out for resource for two and one-half hours every day, yet he was expected to know what was going on in class, and that is a virtual impossibility.

Adam would get pulled out of his classroom to go to resource, and then he would go back to class. And when the kids are doing like social studies, and they are almost finished, and then Adam returns there, he has got to do the work that they have already had all this time to do. Plus, he would be lost and not know what he was supposed to do. That is why I had to help him. We had to read the chapter.

That bothered us a little bit. Then Shawnee would bring it home and say, 'They did this in class. I didn't get a chance to look at it.' She would come home and say, 'I wasn't there when they talked about this.'

Mike brought things home that he missed when he left the room. He would bring quite a bit of social studies home. I would help and read it to him. . . . That would put more pressure on him at home because he would always have social studies or health. It was something that we could work on at home, but it was something that he missed.

Randy said it was just frustrating when he was pulled out all the time. He missed a lot of things and had to make those up which was frustrating to him because he had an hour to an hour and a half of homework.

When Tara is in resource, she is not expected to do the work that would be done during the time that she is in resource. . . . Most of the time when she was in resource it was like we can forget this with her because she is in resource.

[The pull-out program] didn't work real well. . . . It was like they just didn't pursue it [missed subjects]. They didn't make her do it. . . . Charlotte missed social studies and science, were the two classes, when she left [for resource]. I never saw any health book. Sometimes I would see a science book, where she would read something.

Jason's parents, on the other hand, believed that their son's self-esteem was harmed by the teachers' unreasonable expectations to make up what he missed when in the resource room. They maintained Jason was required to make up work in subjects where he missed the presentation. As a result, he did not have a good conceptual understanding of the material:

I think that was a detriment to the students because those kids felt left out. . . . Then when they would go back to the subject, of course, he wouldn't know anything about it, and then he would feel even dumber or worse. Really, he would. . . . Last year when they pulled him out, the classes changed every day. They weren't always getting the same subjects. So he would lose from all the different classes and stuff. And of course, he felt like the dumb child. . . . We went to the school and told them no, it wasn't going to continue, and they no longer held him accountable for certain subjects that he was not there for.

However, Jason's parents never felt that Jason believed he was being treated unfairly. "I don't think Jason even realized that it was unfair. He was pretty passive. I think that is something that we made the decision that it wasn't fair, and after that decision he did much better."

Parents talked about their children's frustration, the pressure they themselves felt, and the emotional harangue over homework assignments:

It was just a battle. Jason complained and whined. . . . It was to the point where, even if you tried [to help], just the fact that he didn't understand . . . it created a block in him, which he would not allow himself to learn. And that was something he had to overcome. . . . It isn't right that the kid should be responsible for something he is not there for. Jason was doing homework for like five hours plus. We had to say, 'Okay, Jason, stop. I don't care where you are. Just stop. You are done doing homework tonight.' This is too much for a child.

Tara probably accepted the help better from my husband than she did me because I would get frustrated because she could not understand. I would not give up. I would just be determined that she would just get it. I would make her sit there and try to figure ways to make her understand the problem that she was working with. I would never give her the answer. I would work around it. I would try to get her directed in the right direction for the answer. I would still get frustrated, and she could tell it by the tone of my voice.

Shawnee did miss classes at the other school. They would give her homework, and then she would come home and say, 'Gee, I wasn't there when they talked about this. How do you do this, Dad or Mom?' It really does cause us more pressure.

We made a comment to her [classroom teacher] about what Phillip had missed and to please bring it home so that he could get caught back up. So this is what she has been doing. About two to three hours [is spent on homework at night].

Even though the parents expressed dismay that their children missed part of the curriculum, they felt powerless to change the system if their children were to receive the needed help. The parents ultimately resigned themselves to the idea of their children missing out on other curricular activities if they were to receive assistance in reading. Jason's parents stated, "We did voice

our opinion. The teachers claimed that they couldn't do it any other way.

Of course, the teacher wasn't willing to work with us at all, either."

Adam's mother related a similar experience:

We have had problems with that the last two years, and I have really been pushing at the teachers . . . being pulled out and still having to do this work. . . . They just told me that he has to do it at that time or bring the book home. . . . I would try to ask the teacher if they could send him to the resource on a deal that he could do himself, but that would mess up their whole schedule. They had to do their subjects at that time, so they couldn't rework it.

Shawnee's parents remarked, "I mean, that is the way they did it, so I never talked to anybody. I don't think we did. It was like, 'If you want Shawnee to have the extra help, this is how we do it.'" Mike's mother said, "I did complain at first, but then you just kind of accept it, and you do what you can to help him at home. You hope that he has caught on enough."

Students' Frustrations

The students also complained about having to make up work missed when they went to the resource room. Randy said he did not like going to the resource room

. . . because I would have a ton of homework at night, and I would not be able to do whatever I planned. I would miss half of math and English. Sometimes I stayed in to do it. I get so mad when I cannot do it [homework]. One night I got every single math problem on my paper wrong.

Jason stated that he missed art, English, and spelling, and in order to make it up, "I took it home for homework."

Mike related his experience:

Every year the times would switch because more people would come in, and so sometimes I would miss different subjects. . . . One year I missed English. It was a hard time missing that one. A lot of kids helped me out so I made it through. Another time was math, but math is not that bad because I could get it done. . . . In third grade I think I just missed math and social studies. . . . I would usually take it home for homework or I would stay in at recess to do it.

Mike found himself missing out on lessons and, therefore, falling behind in his work:

When I first started out [going to resource], I did not like going there . . . I did not want to miss out on class because I would have homework. I usually always had homework because we always had spelling tests on Fridays. I did not want to miss out on anything because I had to study for my spelling. . . . [I did not like missing out] because I had to catch up, and sometimes it would take me a long time. . . . Sometimes if I was really behind, she would have me stay in for recess. . . . I like it the way it is right now . . . being that this turns into a regular class. It is easier for a lot of kids. You do not miss any of your work.

Adam mentioned that his teachers tried to coordinate their schedules to minimize his missing out on classroom work, but they were not always successful:

Usually they try to work it out so you are in there during the subject that you are going there for. . . . She gives me extra time to do the work because I don't have all the time that the other students do. We can do it after science. That's at 12:00 to lunch time. Or I can do it at home. . . . Sometimes I missed out on fun games or something, like we earned something like 'silent ball.' This year I [have extra homework] in social studies, and it is kind of hard because in social studies you have to go back and read social studies and have to get help in it.

Charlotte expressed frustration concerning the arrangements made by her teacher when she missed something in class:

Sometimes she would make you do it, and sometimes she wouldn't. . . . Last year I missed out on all kinds of classes. And she would make me do it, and I wouldn't understand it because she wouldn't tell me. She did not explain the instructions like she did to the other kids.

Randy found that he missed the teacher's presentation of the lesson:

I go up to my teacher and see what I have to do. Sometimes I do not go up to her and find out anyway because mostly we do dittos in social studies, and I just find the dittos on my desk, and I do them. . . . I did not like social studies much because half of the time I was gone to the resource room. . . . I was missing English and a little bit of spelling.

Shawnee explained how her teacher accommodated her in making up what she had missed. "I missed social studies . . . usually they read it in the classroom . . . and she would tell me to just read it alone. And then she would give me some questions to answer to make sure I read it."

Tara told of a successful coordination between the resource room and her classroom. "When I go to resource room and if I am doing reading and spelling, I do not have to do that in the class. They schedule it so when it is the time that I go to resource it is the time that they are doing reading."

Teachers' Frustrations

The teachers were also quite sensitive to students missing out on content areas while attending pull-out programs. Although they were dissatisfied with the arrangement, with the exception of the In-Class model

teachers, they could not think of a better solution if students were to have their special needs met.

A classroom teacher discussed the accommodations she made for an LD student who missed part of social studies when he went to the resource room:

He goes to the resource room . . . for spelling, English, written language. So, therefore, in social studies I don't expect him to do as much as the rest of the class. What he does do he maintains a C. . . . He misses some of it. He has to do it, make it up on his own, and he does it at home with his mom. If we read something together in the class, he is not too bad an oral reader. He really isn't. . . . I cut down [on assignments]. If he is gone and has missed a lot of instruction, then he possibly will do the work, but I don't use it as a grade. . . . If it is a *Weekly Reader* or something, I just let it go.

A sixth grade teacher at Saddleback explained her arrangement for students who missed a content area in her class. "I cannot actually make them accountable for something that they have missed in class, and I do not usually. I adjust my grades around that."

Parents of LD students questioned a fifth grade teacher about their children missing parts of the curriculum. The teacher responded, "I try to explain how important that it is for them to be there, and what they are missing is not as important, and they are not required to make it up on their own, but parents have been concerned." A resource teacher remarked, "Most of the time the parents talked to me about it. And they wanted to know what they could do, or they were so frustrated because they didn't know how to help them at home." A classroom teacher, in addressing what

one of her LD students missed when pulled out, said, "I do not know. It was not reading. It was math and something else. He got up during spelling towards the end of it. He missed the work of spelling and the first part of math." When asked if he had to make it up, she answered affirmatively.

A resource teacher at Sunrise told how agitated her students were over some of the curricular areas that they missed:

They will say something to the effect that, 'We miss so much.' I have a number of kids that worry about what they are missing while they are out. And many times they are pulled out of the science or the social studies which, especially in fourth grade, they are missing out on Idaho history, which they will get at no other time in their curriculum. So they are very upset. Lots of times social studies units and science units have fun experiments, hands-on kinds of things, that these kids are really good at and really enjoy. And those are the things that they are missing when they are pulled out, and they really hate it.

Another resource teacher cited how LD students missed out on writing book reports:

When they are pulled out for resource, book reports is an area that we rarely have time to work with. We are so busy teaching the reading and the comprehension that most of the time I do not even remember if they have book reports due in the regular classroom. So I think that one of two things happen. They are either required to do them and they fail or they are not required to do them, and they lost out on that whole aspect of reading.

A sixth grade teacher at Saddleback Elementary remarked that the pull-out system appeared to her to be counterproductive:

Sometimes it just seems that our system is backwards. Here he is pulled out for reading, English, and spelling. He could benefit from that in the classroom. He then has to come back and do social studies, science, and math . . . which are probably the most difficult things . . . and he is stuck. He is not getting any individual help like

he is in the resource room. It is frustrating. . . . I am helping him at recess and after school with the social studies. So he should be getting those three subjects, but it is tough.

A fellow sixth grade teacher at Saddleback explained that her one LD student did not miss any curricular area, but discussed what she would change in order to accommodate the student:

I got lucky this year. She is out during reading. So it has been really nice. I would probably rearrange my schedule to have reading while they are pulled out for reading and the same with math. The others can be worked in. If I could not make those arrangements, I would probably make adjustments in what I expected from them because I know that they really struggle with that material unless they are able to hear it and discuss it. . . . I do not like them to miss science and social studies. We do a lot of fun things, too. I do not want them to miss that, too.

A resource teacher at Sunrise spoke about how LD students would have to make up at home what they missed in class:

When they miss a content area by coming to see me, they are basically making it up on their own time, because there is no other time during the day for them to work on it, or it is usually done at home. More often than not, I have had comments from parents saying, 'I don't understand this science. He missed half of it. I can't do this science.' I have one student who stays after school with me when she needs help, and we will work on it then.

The resource teacher stated that she worked very hard in an attempt to pull students out from the same content areas for which she had them in class:

It definitely troubles me. I study the schedules right away in the fall and try to pull them out of their curriculum area that I am instructing them in. But we have seven sixth grade classrooms here and seven teachers, with the middle school type concept, where they are switching classes. So it is very difficult when they miss their area. . . . Some teachers are very willing to find an alternate time to

help that child. Other teachers are under the impression that they can come and work maybe during a recess or some other time, or they can work with me. I am probably partly to blame for that because I will work with them whenever I have time.

A sixth grade classroom teacher spoke about her experiences in past years and how the teachers at her grade level came up with a partial solution:

Well it's pretty difficult to overcome. In the sixth grade we, for the last three years, have scheduled purposely a study time, and that was the time the kids left. So at least there weren't as many repercussions as there would have been otherwise. I know in other years I have taught where they have had to miss social studies or science or things like that, and then they were put into the regular classroom for the class they couldn't handle there. It seemed pretty inconsistent to me. And it was a real problem, because they were then missing the things that they could have been successful in. And one thing piled on another. If they are not here for science, they are not going to know science, and that puts them that much further behind in their general subjects.

She understood all too well that missing out on a content area only exacerbated an already difficult situation:

There is so much lost when they are not here. In my science if the kids aren't here for half of the science every day, they are not going to learn it, because they don't learn it from the book. Number one, if they have a reading disability, they aren't going to be able to read the book and get from it what a normal child would . . . and this book is difficult enough so that even the average child needs a lot of help. So they really would miss out.

A fifth grade teacher at Washington Elementary School explained that she shortened assignments for students who missed out on something:

You normally have to meet with them individually after school or at recess and explain the assignment. I normally cut the assignment down quite a bit. Instead of doing the questions, maybe they have to read the assignment aloud to their parents and have their parents sign the note saying that they read it. I will cut out a lot of the paperwork that seems to weigh them down.

When it was noted that the student still missed the teacher's presentation of the material, she replied,

That isn't really made up, except for going over key concepts and things like that, which is very difficult for them. But I think what they are getting in the resource room is probably more beneficial, because we try to time it so that they are not missing out on a core subject, like social studies.

The teacher was then asked if her LD students missed a subject entirely whether she would continue to teach the same subject at that time throughout the year or change her schedule to prevent the pull-out students from missing out altogether on one content area.

I have tried just going strictly with a set time, and then I have tried alternating. In a way, it is kind of nice to have a set time for each subject, and then they get the whole emphasis of one subject. But in another way it is bad because they are missing out on that subject. Some teachers have the philosophy that if they don't get a social studies background, that in junior high it is covered again. But I don't know if I agree with that, either. I hate to leave too much up to the junior high teacher. . . . In the case of Adam, I felt that he enjoyed science more, so I had to time it so that he was in the room for the discussion.

Some teachers opposed pull-out programs because they disrupted instructional time. One fifth grade teacher at Oakview was very opposed to all pull-out programs, not just resource room. She stated bluntly that she did not try to accommodate LD students when they missed something in her class as a result of the pull-out program:

I don't. I have to be real honest. This year I have five kids going to resource room. I have eight kids going to Chapter I. I have six kids going to orchestra. There is no way. You just go on. I try to work my schedule around as many kids as I can, and sometimes they just

miss subjects. I hate it. I absolutely hate it. Don't get me on that subject.

This teacher responded that when the student returned to class in the middle of a particular subject:

"They just aren't responsible for that subject. . . . They get their book out. They continue to go on. They get their book out, and the kid next to them tells them what page we are on, and they will do that, and they will just go on with the discussion in class. That is what they do. . . . If they are only taken out for one subject, then I really do work my schedule around them, but if they are out for everything, then there is no way I can do that. The first kids I have to work around are the Chapter kids, because they cannot miss the same subject. So I work around them, and then you have your priority list.

She was asked to explain the "priority list." "I shouldn't say that, should I?"

Well, the Chapter kids I work around first. Then the orchestra kids I work around. We complained about that a few years ago because they are gone so much, and we got in trouble for it."

When asked how she would accommodate certain students, the teacher answered,

Well, at that time of the day I usually have study time or work on spelling. Usually, the orchestra kids are among your better kids, so you can usually go on with subjects during that time, or I can give them work time during that time. But Chapter you have to work around, because they can't really miss. And even those kids are usually missing one subject. Sometimes they will miss science or sometimes they will miss social studies. I have some kids that do well in science because they will take the initiative to take the book home. Their parents want me to send that stuff home, so I will, and their parents help them with that. Then they will take the test, and sometimes they can do pretty well, because we review sometimes throughout the day.

The teacher, with a shrug of her shoulders, finally said,

Resource room kids are just real difficult because they go at all different times of the day. If they all went at once, you could work around it. But since you have got them going at 9:00 and 9:15 and 9:45 and 10:00, there is no way. You can't work your schedule. I don't like it. I don't want any of them to go out of my room for anything. I have been very vocal about that. But I don't know a better solution. I don't know what you do with a child that doesn't know his multiplication tables, and you are on fractions or long division. And they are not going to get that extra help in the classroom.

Another fifth grade teacher discussed how some of her LD students missed certain subjects in her class, although she attempted to rank order the most important classes so that students did not miss the curricular areas she considered most important:

This year my schedule is wonderful. The things that they are missing out on are not as important. All things are important, but not as important as other things. . . . So, my resource kids are now doing social studies and health. Randy was there for social studies, but he was not there for health as he missed the very end of the day. I have one student who is gone at the end of the day, so she is not there doing social studies or health which is when I do it. I hate to have her miss it, but I cannot stop class and catch her up. If she is there for reading, math, and English, we try to rank order the more important ones. Hopefully, she is getting a good dose of that. It is very difficult. I start with schedules every year and work out what they will and will not miss in my classroom. I have reduced assignments for my kids this year, too. So if they are gone a lot during that work time, they only have to do the odd problems, or they do not have to make up something, or they just do partial assignments. I try to work with them that way.

A resource teacher at Oakview Elementary School basically stated that she does the best she can to see that LD students do not miss out on curricular areas:

Typically, we are doing the best we can to see that they are in their classroom as much as possible, and that when they are in here they

are getting as much done in as short a period of time as possible. . . . They [teachers] have been frustrated trying to work around all the schedules, too. As long as the schedule that I come up with accommodates them and their schedule, then they are happy. . . . In order to do that, 8:45 in the morning I have 12 students in here. It is very noisy. But that accommodates the teachers, so that I can get them back for rotating music, rotating P.E., and then I don't take into the instruction time later. So that is a very busy time. But they are willing to work with me. I have a couple of teachers who will make changes in their schedule to accommodate mine, if we can't work anything else out.

A fourth grade teacher at Oakview explained that she would pair the LD student with a classmate during recess or after school to make up what was missed:

If it is social studies, this is a big year for the fourth grade because of Idaho. We do try to keep them posted on what we have done. I usually do that through another student or students, especially if it is a day when we have done some work in our notebooks. They then will come back at noon or after school and get together with somebody else. They then will go through the notebook and put it together. It is not like they are missing out on everything.

Asked if she had a review session with the student when he returned to class, she answered, "If it is feasible and if time allows. . . . It just depends on the subject matter. It would be nice to have everybody in the room, but I appreciate the individual help that these kids can get, too."

Although a resource teacher at another school found that because of the blocked schedule time for CIRC reading groups, her resource students did not miss out on subjects as much as they once did, they were still occasionally missing out on classroom subjects. As a result, she tutored them twice a week in the subjects they missed:

I try real hard not to, and it is working better the last couple of years because of the CIRC reading program and because of grouping. So all the fifth graders have reading at the same time, all the sixth graders have reading at the same time. So it is just naturally easier to pull my resource kids at the same time when they are doing reading or math. . . . [Resource] English and spelling have overlapped into science and social studies. . . . What I have tried this year is that maybe two days out of the week we work on science or social studies that they have missed, and reading the chapter or answering questions together. And then the other three days are strictly for spelling and language.

This resource teacher believed that teachers were more understanding when students missed a subject because of scheduling conflicts:

My experience has been that the teachers have been real cooperative, and while they are gone half the time, so they do half the assignment, or every other question, or get with a partner, and that partner helps them with every other question or whatever. There hasn't been a lot of extra homework because they have missed from going to the resource room.

Homework Reduction as a Result of the In-Class Model

The parents noticed an appreciable reduction in the amount of homework their child brought home with the In-Class model compared to past years. The parents also found that they no longer had to spend as much time with their children on homework assignments. Shawnee's parents added that they only spent "half an hour" a night helping Shawnee with her homework.

Mostly it was in the reading content subjects like social studies and health:

Shawnee is really aggressive. You don't realize how hard she works. She works very hard. It is very important for her to do that, and I don't know exactly why. She does not have any marks on the board. She has an impeccable record. It is important for her to have her homework done that night before, before she goes to school the next day.

Comments on homework reduction were offered by other parents:

Jason can bring it home, and he can get it done, and doesn't spend more than an hour.

Charlotte doesn't really bring much work home. It's mainly just math and her reading.

Adam was getting a lot of homework in the past years, and he would do them at home, but he would forget to pass them in or he would forget them at home, or not complete them, or something. But this year here I haven't had any problems with him on his homework. . . . I had to help him a little bit, but not too much; and this year I don't really help him at all.

It is definitely not more. I see less homework in science and English subjects. Randy usually has math homework every night. . . . He is able to do his homework a lot more independently which is something that he has not done much on his own before. I am not hovering over Randy anymore. For years I did, and that was miserable for both him and I. . . . He is having more success in school and is able to complete more assignments in school.

[I do not provide help] unless Mike asks me for it. Basically the only time I really help him is when they are going to have a test, and he feels like he has to re-read the chapters. Mike does not seem to have as much homework.

A reduction in the LD students' homework was believed to have occurred for two reasons: (a) The students were not missing any content areas, and (b) they were able to complete more of their work in school because of their improved study skills.

I think that Mike is working a little more on his own, I think that is because he is not missing a class. When he went into the reading [resource] room he would always miss social studies or history or something. He is not missing those classes now. He really does not have a lot of homework.

Randy had to make up a lot of work at home. I think that fourth grade was about the worst. A lot of it had to do with school. It

may have seemed worse because he was not doing a lot of it independently. He was not the type of little boy that would come home and go downstairs and do his homework. . . . [Now] Randy is in class and is able to get his work done. Before when he was pulled out of class, and he was being pulled out so much, he was missing something. He was pulled out for speech, resource, and they wanted to pull him out for math. I do not care what these teachers try to tell me. These kids are missing something that has to be made up somewhere.

The significant aspects of missing out on classroom work are summarized in the remainder of this section. Parents, teachers, and students experienced frustration when segments of the curricula were missed when students were pulled out of the classroom. Parents felt helpless about changing the situation and eventually resigned themselves to the fact that their children would likely have to miss something in the classroom if they were to receive the academic assistance they required. Students and parents resented the additional homework assignments to make up work missed when the student was in the resource room. Often, too, students would have to stay in at recess or use other study time to make up what was missed. This was seen as unfair and was a major factor in why students were opposed to the pull-out program. Not having to make up missed work was not a satisfactory alternative either for most parents, although one student's parents felt that it was a better alternative than having him spend hours trying to make up missed work each night.

Resource teachers were fully cognizant of how parents and students felt about missing out on content areas in the classroom and attempted to

accommodate teachers' schedules whenever possible. It was, of course, impossible to match all the students and their various schedules.

Homework was appreciably reduced for LD students with the introduction of the In-Class model. LD students were no longer pulled out and consequently did not miss out on any curricular content areas; secondly, LD students' study skills and work habits apparently increased to the point where they were able to complete more of their assignments in school and, subsequently, did not have as much homework. Even when they brought homework home, the students would not need as much help from parents to complete it because they appeared to understand it better.

Parental Empathy with Their Child's Disability and School Experience

Three of the parents in the study could relate directly with the problems their children were experiencing because they had similar difficulties when they attended school. Many of these parents expressed their feelings of inadequacy that they had in school. Other parents actually felt closer to their child as a result of the trials, stress, and anxiety their son or daughter was experiencing. This very brief section helps to illuminate the feelings these parents had toward the troubles exhibited by their children.

Two of the parents discussed the frustration they felt because people did not recognize that their child's inability to read at grade level was a result of a learning disability, not because of a lack of intelligence. This presented an

interesting parallel, as Mike's mother hid the fact that her son could not read well from her friends for fear they would think Mike was "dumb." Tara's mother, on the other hand, believed that people need to become more aware of the prevalence of learning disabilities, and subsequently was not afraid to openly discuss her daughter's reading difficulties.

Parents offered the following comments about their empathetic feelings:

I get frustrated because I struggled through school, and then to watch Charlotte, because I expect her to know. And that's not fair. . . . My husband's the one who makes her read. Because, see, he couldn't read. He still can't. He can read, but he has difficulty. . . . And he explains to them, 'You don't want to be like me.' And I can read. I can't spell, but I can read, and I couldn't. My husband and I harp on them and say, 'You can do better.' Because we have been there, and you think about what your mom and dad used to tell you: 'You don't know nothing.'

I have often told Jason, 'You are like your mother. She has had to work hard all of her life for everything she has got.' Some people it seems like it comes easier, and with us, we just have to work harder. . . . I have always known that Jason has special problems. It hasn't been a problem. I think I get frustrated because I want to resolve something for him. I had learning disabilities when I was a child, and they were not diagnosed; and I feel that they are probably very similar to his. I was very frustrated as a child. I felt lost. During my high school years, I had the feeling of being absolutely lost. And I think my son had the same feelings, that he was frustrated, felt lost. I know he did.

It [learning disability] might have brought us closer together because I can understand that Adam is having those problems, because I had those problems. But I don't go and tell him, 'Well, Adam, it's okay because I had problems.' I don't do that. I just tell him he has got to work. I try to encourage him to read, because I know that helps. If they just read, that will help him.

I feel closer to Mike. I really do. Sometimes it bothers me because I feel like that he really relies on me, like when we go some place and he cannot read the menu. He will ask, 'What is this, Mom?'

He never will ask Jack. He will always ask, 'What is this?' or 'What does this mean?' Yet, he is really self-sufficient. I do not feel like that he devotes his whole life to me, but I feel like that he and I are very close because of that, and I accept this. . . . I think that this is what is really frustrating to me. People feel like if they have a reading disability that they are dumb. I even have family that make very blunt statements about these kids who cannot read, and that they are just plain dumb. I do not talk about this to other people outside the family because they do not look at it the way we do. They look at it like they are just dumb. They do not think Mike is dumb, but if I told them that he went to special reading because he has all these problems, they would be in awe. So we do not talk about it.

It was after Tara got into the resource room when we were recognizing the problem. We were not hiding the problem, but yet we were not going around telling everybody either and putting her down because she had a problem. But we did not hide that she had a problem because we felt that if other people realized that our daughter had a problem that maybe there was a possibility that their child had a problem, too, and they would not be afraid to talk about it. . . . I feel like that if my kid has a learning disability that there are a lot of other kids out there that do, too. People need to recognize that.

The significance of this section lies in the fact that a number of parents suffered through the same school-related problems as their children and, as a result, were empathetic with what their children were going through. Because of these similar experiences, several of the parents stated that it made them feel closer to their child, and that they had a clearer understanding of what the child was experiencing. Two other parents told of people who did not have a good understanding of what a learning disability was and perceived LD students as "dullards." As one parent expressed, parents of children with learning disabilities should not be afraid to openly

discuss with others their child's difficulties in order to help the general public reach a better understanding of what a learning disability truly is.

Resource Room

Although LD students were opposed in varying degrees to the pull-out program, they still had some positive comments to make about the resource room, especially the resource room teacher. Parents and teachers, too, had complimentary statements to make regarding particular aspects of the resource room program.

Students' Comments

There were some attributes of the resource room which the students enjoyed: the individual attention, rewards, treats, games, and the teachers. Randy commented on the good times. "Last year we enjoyed going to resource because we would get points and get candy or treats, and at the end of the year we had a big party. We had play money and would be able to buy stuff there. We would have parties and games at every holiday."

Tara said that after she got over her initial embarrassment it was fun, "They make things fun to do. They make it easy. . . . It does not bother me. The first time I went I was a little embarrassed, but now I am used to it." Philip pointed out the rewards he received. "After you get all your work done, you get a treat, and you get to go back and play on the computer." Similarly, Mike commented, "It was fun there [in the resource room]. . . . We

had contests and played games. . . . The teacher was always there and worked with us."

Shawnee remarked on the rewards and the teacher:

It's fun. I got to play on the computer and stuff. . . . We had nice teachers, and we would play games and stuff and earn points during the day. And then after we earned all of our points, we would get to pick out like a piece of candy or something. . . . Well, I sort of like it out of the classroom, and I like it in the room, too.

Adam stated it seemed easier and that he enjoyed the individualization.

"Well, you didn't get hard assignments to do for homework and stuff like you do in regular reading class. . . . You get one-on-one attention and stuff, and the teacher is just not talking to the whole class. She is mostly just talking to you." Jason also liked the attention he received. "The resource teachers went through every step with me, instead of the teachers just going right through it and then trying to go up to the teacher. We got more help, and I met a couple of new kids in other classes." Charlotte stated simply, "I liked the [resource] teacher."

Parents' Comments

The parents also had some favorable comments to make regarding the resource room and the improvement they observed in their children's academic skills as a result of that placement. When Tara's mother was asked if she could attribute any improvement in Tara's reading to the help she received in the resource room, she said, "In reading I would almost say 100%. It has made a big difference. We have tried to help her with her

self-confidence and letting her know that she can do it. I think that the resource room has helped her a lot in reading and spelling." Jason's parents were a bit more hesitant. "In some areas, yes; some areas, no."

Charlotte's mother felt resource room made a difference:

Well, it could have been that she wasn't distracted by the other 29 kids around her, when she was in there with the teacher on a one-to-three basis, and she got the special attention that she needed in order to get to where she is now. Because if she hadn't, she still wouldn't read.

Mike's mother also believed placement in the resource room was pivotal in his reading improvement. "Definitely. He really liked Mrs. Erickson [a resource teacher]. Sometimes I think it is personality."

Teachers' Comments

Teachers favored the pull-out program because of the individualization it afforded the students and the resultant feelings of success when students were given material at their ability levels. Teachers believed it was more embarrassing for the child to stay in a failing situation than it was to be pulled from the classroom. These teachers did not observe students opposing the pull-out program; a teacher remarked that she referred students for special education, not to be rid of them but to find out what their needs were. Teachers did not mind pull-out as long as it accommodated them. A resource teacher saw student reactions varying from pleased to unhappy when they came to the resource room.

A sixth grade teacher. "All through college we were told how awful pull-out programs are, and how awful they make kids feel, and that they were tough on self-esteem. I just do not see that with Tara. She seems to be very well adjusted. She is very happy. She gets along well with the kids. . . . I do not think that they are embarrassed by going once they get started. I think that it is more embarrassing for them to be in the classroom without that help and struggling with everyone knowing that they cannot handle the material. I think that it makes them feel better to be able to succeed somewhere, whether it is an adjustment in the classroom or to go somewhere else. I still do not like pull-out programs just because we do things that are in the room that are fun. If they are borderline like Tara is, I would like to keep her. I can also see where some kids who are really low need to get the type of attention that I cannot give them, especially where I have 33 kids. I would really have a hard time working one-to-one with Tara. It would be nice if someone could come into the classroom with her. I think that she is ready to come back to the classroom for reading if she had someone to come in the room with her to get her started with what we are doing."

A fifth grade teacher. "In having taught the Chapter classes, I think that the kids were happy to come and see us and get some work done and do some things. They did not feel bad about being pulled out. I do think that we had a good team. We tried to set it up that way so that there would not be a negative feeling. It was really a positive experience for them."

Another fifth grade teacher. "I feel like if they need the help, they need the help, so I am really not reluctant to refer them. I refer kids not to resource, but I refer kids to testing. I have a lot of kids I will refer, and I want to find out if they really have a learning disability or a mental handicap, or am I pushing them and I shouldn't be . . . so I can deal with that child, not so I can send them off to resource room. I would much rather be able to refer them to testing and have them stay here, just so I can find out what their problem is. But I am not finding that that has been very successful."

A resource room teacher. "They don't mind having the kids pulled out as long as you are not interfering with their teaching schedule. . . . They count on me to make my plans so that it does not interfere with the main thing they want to do. I have one fifth grade teacher who told me that she did not want me to take children from 10:45 to noon because that was her first time of good, solid instruction time for reading. Each one of them [the students] reacts a little differently. Some of them look forward to coming, to escape their classroom. . . . There are some that may feel stigmatized. There are some that see this as a room where they would prefer being, because they are in trouble for not getting the assignments done in their room, or because they are frustrated in their room. Typically, it is just something that they do. I have seen all kinds of different reactions from them. . . . You have those who are not real pleased about coming. I will

sometimes have a mom tell me that her child would really like to be doing well enough to be out. Then I have others who just are happy."

Thus, when talking about the resource room, students genuinely liked the resource teachers and enjoyed the individualization and caring atmosphere. Students enjoyed the attention they received, the rewards they got, and the opportunity to work on computers. Several of the parents attributed much of their child's early reading success to the resource room placement.

Classroom teachers generally thought the resource room was a proper placement for students who otherwise could not achieve success in the regular classroom. Remarks of teachers described how the resource room was able to provide more individualized support for students than could be found in a regular classroom placement.

An apparent inconsistency that came out in several of the interviews was in the statements of some parents who said they had seen major improvements in their child's reading skills when in the In-Class model and also in the resource room. However, upon further analysis, there is no reason to believe that academic gains could not have been made in both settings. The issues regarding self-esteem and missing out on parts of the curriculum were the main reasons declared by parents for opposing the pull-out program, not because of any perceived lack of academic gains.

The other inconsistency worth noting was the favorable comments of the LD students toward the resource room which seemingly contradicts their

negative statements concerning the pull-out program. However, those comments were almost always directed toward the resource teacher and the more individualized attention, rewards, and chance to play on the computer they received rather than the placement per se. Apparently, once the students were in the resource room itself, they could differentiate between the personal dislike of being pulled out of the classroom and the resource teacher who was there to help them in any way she could.

Drawbacks

As with any program, the In-Class model had its drawbacks. There were two basic drawbacks mentioned regarding the In-Class model: (a) not enough planning time was available during the work day for the co-teachers to adequately design reading lessons, and (b) the In-Class model did not fully address the needs of those students whose reading skills were dramatically below those of their classmates. When the teachers were later asked what students specifically were so low in their reading skills that the In-Class model was not meeting their needs, they stated it was the students in the mildly retarded category. In Idaho, it should be noted that this category includes students in the borderline range of intellectual ability (70-79 IQ) as well as students with IQs of 55 to 70.

Planning Time

Teachers told how they found the time to properly plan their reading lesson, although it was noted that it took much more time than the conventional teaching method. For example, one teacher explained:

Yes, there is more time planning, more time correcting, more time meeting with another person, and more time scheduling. The thing that has been successful for us is that we take the time to plan, and we take the time to meet. If you don't schedule in time to do that, it won't be successful. . . . [To make the time] you take any moments that you have. I stay in the classroom 15 minutes after the kids leave, and I use that time for paperwork. We oftentimes discuss things, groupings, what kind of groupings we want to do. We don't ever do lesson plans during that time, but we talk basically about the kids. We plan Thursdays after school. Throughout the year that has been our planning time. We meet Thursday after school, basically grabbing whatever time we can. [Finding the time is] definitely the hardest part.

A resource teacher also remarked on the higher volume of students she now served:

Well, it takes a lot of time. It takes a lot of planning time. We are making some headway with that. We have arranged for subs to come in and allow the two teachers to plan together. It seems like there is never quite enough time. And time of instruction is another element. When you have a small group of kids with you alone in the resource room for a half hour, it is very concentrated, with few interruptions. When you are working in the classroom, you are magnifying the number of students that are around you who want assistance and that sort of thing, so you are spread a little thinner, it seems. You are delivering services to more kids.

Not Academically Effective for Everyone

Teachers spoke out that the In-Class model apparently did not address the needs of students who were severely behind in their academic skills.

These children were later identified as students with mild retardation and not learning disabled.

A Chapter I teacher. "I think that it is not the kind of model that works well for resource children who are severely behind. There are a couple of children, I think, in some of the other classes that their skills, their knowledge, their global experience, any of that, doesn't even begin to approach their grade level. . . . This kind of a setting doesn't work for them. They do need specific pull-out. They do need a very clinical, specialized approach to reading and learning or whatever the subject or topic may be. They need that."

A resource teacher. "Some of my students are so far behind in rate and fluency and comprehension that I need extra time to teach them how to read. I find a large gap in their reading skills. I do not think that in second, third, or fourth that you would find such a large reading gap as in sixth grade, but by the time that they get to sixth, if they have not gotten it by then that they have such a long ways to go."

A sixth grade teacher. "There are still the one or two children that do no fit, and you cannot make them fit. . . . Usually, they don't seem to fit because their level of function is so intellectually far below the level of functioning in the classroom. You have to talk like a sixth grader, walk like a sixth grader, and act like a sixth grader. You might not be the smartest sixth grader, but you have to do those things to be accepted by them."

Before, the kids might have taunted, teased, and pecked at someone who did not walk, talk, or act like a sixth grader, but now they will allow them their presence in the room. They might not be generous or kind, but they will certainly not be rude or mean. They are tolerant at least. I like that difference as well. I do not have to preach that difference. It just kind of comes by virtue of what they are becoming, not because I have taught them some moral lesson. . . . No model fits every child. We do have a few children, less than five out of 50, that do not fit this model."

Two specific drawbacks of the model were identified: (1) Students severely behind in their skills needed a more clinical approach which the In-Class model was unable to provide, and (2) teachers conceded that more time for planning and consultation with their co-teachers was required.

What Will Happen Next Year in Junior High School?

Parents' Concerns

Since all of the primary respondents in this study were sixth graders, they would move to the junior high school next year. This natural progression led to much consternation among the parents about what the future had in store for their youngsters. Adam's mother was concerned that her son would have difficulty with the harder reading material and any writing he would be asked to do:

I have been worried about it the last two, three years, that when Adam gets up to junior high, what is he going to do? What is going

to happen to him when he has to leave his resource class? I have been talking to the resource teacher last year, about where is he going to go from here. When he gets out of the grade school, where is he going to be? And I have been really worried about that . . . like reports, essays, if he has to make an essay. Basically, that is what it is . . . taking notes and essays. Because he is not a good speller, and that worries me. Then if they have to read during school in the classroom and do the work, I am just wondering if he has enough time to do that and be able to comprehend.

Randy's mother's biggest worry was that he would not get the necessary support from the teaching staff:

I think that junior high will be a struggle for Randy. However, I feel that this year that he is having right now and this positiveness will help him. I still think it will be a struggle for him, though. I have not looked much into the junior high yet and the resource program. If he goes into his English period, he will most likely not go with the regular eighth graders. He will go to a resource room. This will be for his science class, too. These are his two hardest subjects. I just hope that there is a teacher there that will be willing to work with him.

Shawnee's parents believed that their daughter's reading ability would hamper her prospects for success. Their frustrations over her low reading skills came through loud and clear. They even spoke openly of grade retention in the hope that it would somehow improve her reading:

It is slow, the change. We always expect that a miracle would happen and that Shawnee would be able to read. But obviously, it is not going to happen that quickly. It is going to take some time and hard work for her to even be able to read, it appears to me. She is just not up to sixth grade reading right now. We are panicked over junior high. They don't get pushed back. That is the problem. They just get pushed ahead. . . . Shawnee has aspirations to be a veterinarian. Well, you will never be a veterinarian without reading, so let's get real. So we are going to read, or we are going to skip that part of our life and do something else. . . . We just can't let Shawnee get into high school without being able to read, and I don't even know if we can let her into junior high without being able

to read. . . . I am thinking that something is going to have to change, and these tests are going to have to look good, and some teacher is going to have to tell me. And somebody is going to have to tell me that this kid can handle the seventh grade. We want her to go there. If something doesn't change, one of these years she is going to have to do that [grade] again.

Charlotte's mother was most concerned over her daughter's return to the resource room. Charlotte had never hidden her displeasure about going to the resource room:

Charlotte still isn't up to her grade level. I still would like her to be in this [In-Class model]. . . . It is definitely going to bother Charlotte [that she will have to return to the resource room] . . . I am dreading it. I think it will be very upsetting for her, and I don't know how much effort she would put into it or even if she will agree to do it. And now she is into something that she likes, and it is going to be over soon, and then she is going to be back in the same situation.

Mike's mother realized her son required assistance if he was to achieve academic success. "I know that it is important that Mike has the help, and if that is the only way it is available, I wouldn't say that I wouldn't let him be in there because I do not need to feel badly about it. I feel that Mike will handle it."

Teachers' Concerns

The teachers in the In-Class model were also upset because they felt the LD students were taking a giant step backward by returning to a resource room placement instead of receiving the needed support in the general education classroom. After the success of the In-Class model, the Sunrise teachers did not want to see the LD students return to a segregated setting

when they were convinced these students could work in the more comprehensive regular curriculum. The teachers, disappointed that the In-Class model was not available to their students when they went to the junior high, were also concerned that the LD students would react negatively when they returned to a resource room placement. As expressed by one teacher:

They [students] have also commented on their concern going into the junior high. They are switching schools, and they have asked, 'Do we go to resource room for reading?' Those particular kids that we are talking about, they have asked me, 'Do we go to reading class?' And I tell them that this will be discussed at our spring meeting. They have had success, and they have made friends, and they have done very well. And they are all anticipating what is going to happen next year. Junior high is a scary age, anyway. Now this is being removed from them to a certain extent.

A Chapter I teacher wondered if the LD students might not begin insisting on full-time placement in the regular classrooms:

I wish that there were some other kind of structures available for her at Kennedy [such as the] In-Class model. It will be interesting to me to see if these kids from Sunrise, as the generations progress, if we stay with In-Class model and stay with CIRC and its components of cooperative learning, if those kids will begin sort of demanding cooperative type learning situations. . . . I think they will [do very well in the resource room], because I think there is some great personnel over there. But in a perfect world, maybe they could do it in an In-Class model.

A resource teacher felt badly that the In-Class model was not available for her students when they moved to the junior high:

Yesterday we took a tour of Kennedy [Junior High School], and we visited the resource classrooms; and English was in session, and reading was in session. The resource teacher told me, in front of the kids, 'This is the book we'll be working out of,' which, of course, is *Reading Mastery*. And she said they will have a workbook and a skill book. Of course, they will get fantastic

instruction. I do not doubt that. But part of me still feels bad that they will not have the In-Class model and work out of that curriculum, get the reading materials that the regular seventh grade students are doing. There is a lot of great material that could be adapted for them.

A sixth grade teacher was convinced that her LD students were better prepared for junior high after the In-Class model experience. "I feel that this way, they just have an entirely different exposure which will prepare them for junior high in a far more thorough fashion."

When considering the future of the children who had experienced the In-Class model, the areas of significance included parental concerns that their children would not get the same amount of support received through the In-Class model. The main areas of worry were with the general junior high curricula and how well their children would handle English, social studies, and the like. One mother openly dreaded the fact that her daughter would have to return to the resource room for reading. Additionally, the teachers were troubled with the return of the students to a more restricted placement with its limited special education curriculum and less exposure to "typical" students.

The general purpose of this study was to determine if selected students with an identified learning disability would improve their self-image and reading achievement if special education services were delivered via an In-Class model. Now that the data are in, the next chapter will focus on the answers to those and other questions that emerged from the research

pertaining to the effects of the In-Class model on students with learning disabilities.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A Comment on Generalization

Before presenting the findings of this study, a note on generalization is appropriate. Sunrise Elementary School was chosen because of its staff's willingness to grant access to the researcher and because of its pilot school status in the implementation of the In-Class model. The characteristics seen in the LD children at Sunrise may not be similar to those found, for instance, in an inner city school with minority LD students.

Pull-out programs may vary widely, too, as far as content and methodology from one locale to another. Also, the characteristics of the In-Class model described in this study may be wholly different when compared to the features of another In-Class model in a different setting.

With that note of caution, let it be said that pull-out programs in dissimilar settings may, nonetheless, have strong similarities. Separating LD students from their peers occurs in any pull-out program. In that regard, the pull-out experiences reported by the LD students in this study would be similar to those of other LD students in pull-out programs. When referencing In-Class models, the distinction that marks them as similar in any locale is

that services to LD students are delivered by the special education teacher in a general education classroom rather than a separate special education setting.

However, naturalistic inquirers should be very cautious about generalizing findings from their study to other settings. Indeed, Guba and Lincoln (1981) asserted that

. . . evaluators ought not to think in terms of generalizations that have some kind of enduring truth value. Rather, they ought to think in terms of working hypotheses and of testing the degree of fit between the context in which the working hypotheses were generated and the context in which they are to be next applied. Fittingness, rather than generalization, is the naturalist's key concept. (pp. 120-121)

It should be noted that the degree of fit between the conditions and situations described in this study and the conditions and situations of other pull-out programs may have subtle differences. The transference of the findings from this study to another setting may not have the desired results unless the new setting complies with Guba and Lincoln's "fittingness" concept.

Summary of the Study

The literature review discussed the effectiveness of the pull-out model compared to the full-time mainstream model. The two opposing camps, composed mainly of special education professionals, argued about the relevancy of continuing with the current special education system. One

group holds the view that all pull-out programs for mildly-handicapped students should be eliminated and the responsibility for educating those students should fall to general educators. This group of professionals believes that having two parallel systems of education is ineffectual and has not met the desired outcomes for students with disabilities.

The second group of professionals asserts that students in special education should be in their regular classrooms as much as possible but do not agree that pull-out programs for mildly-handicapped students should be abolished. This group contends that students with disabilities should be offered a range of services in order to choose the one best suited to meet their unique needs.

In an attempt to discover whether an in-class service delivery model for special education would be more appropriate for children with learning disabilities than the conventional pull-out model, a naturalistic inquiry was designed. This qualitative case study focused on six sixth grade students with learning disabilities. It also included as respondents the parents of these students, the students' current teachers (general and special), many of their former teachers (general and special), and two LD students who were still in a pull-out program.

The general purposes of this study were to determine if the self-image and reading achievement of selected sixth grade students with learning disabilities improved when the special education teacher provided those

services in a collaborative manner with the general education teacher in the regular classroom. As can be seen in Appendix A, under "Student Interview Questions," the LD students were asked questions pertaining to the resource room and the In-Class model, their attitude toward school, and their learning disability. I do not believe my questioning led the students to comment negatively or positively regarding either the pull-out program or the In-Class model. Furthermore, although I was hopeful that the In-Class model would prove successful, I was fully cognizant of my researcher's role of neutrality and strove to maintain it. However, as Guba and Lincoln (1981) stated when explaining their "concept of confirmability," "[No] evaluator can rid himself of subjectivity. . . . The requirement that information be confirmable rids the inquirer of this impossible constraint; it simply asks that the inquirer report his data in such a way that it can be confirmed from other sources if necessary" (p. 126).

Major Findings

The study uncovered the following findings.

Self-Image

- (1) Parents verified that their children's self-esteem had been affected by their lack of success in school.
- (2) The students' major reason for opposing pull-out was that it singled them out as different from their peers. Reports from parents, teachers,

and the LD students themselves told of the students' dislike of being pulled out of their classrooms because it made them feel "stupid," "dumb," and "embarrassed." This contributed to the LD students' feelings of low self-worth and would occasionally lead to teasing by other students.

- (3) LD students perceived they learned more in the In-Class model and, therefore, felt better about themselves. They stated that they liked being in the classroom, not appearing different from their peers.
- (4) Students mentioned that reading out of books different than those of their classmates did not make them feel as successful. These special curriculum materials contributed to the LD students' feelings of differentness.

Reading Achievement

- (1) Some parents noted marked improvement in their children's reading ability during the year they were enrolled in the In-Class model. Other parents observed their children read with more confidence, but they did not necessarily notice a major improvement in reading ability as did the aforementioned parents. LD students asserted that reading now was not only easier and "fun," but they also believed that they were progressing at a faster rate than in years past.
- (2) LD students' success in the sixth grade reading curriculum was facilitated through a number of instructional factors including cooperative

learning, co-teaching, allowing students the time necessary to absorb components from the reading story, reteaching particular concepts, and adapting the reading lessons to cater to the students' learning strengths.

Homework Reduction

A reduction in the amount of homework was demonstrated with the In-Class model as a direct result of LD students not having to make up work from a content area missed while in the pull-out program. The LD students in In-Class programs also appeared to do their work in a more independent manner and could complete more assignments in school, rather than at home.

Parents' and Teachers' Perceptions

Parents and teachers saw that the LD students demonstrated more enthusiasm, confidence, and a better attitude toward school.

Differences in Reading Instruction

(1) The differences in reading instruction were clearly delineated. The resource room employed small group, Direct Instruction techniques using reading materials completely different from those found in the regular reading curriculum. The In-Class model utilized the same reading materials for everyone. It combined cooperative learning, co-teaching, and curricular adaptations to promote and sustain the successful passage and continuity of LD students in the regular reading curriculum.

- (2) The LD students found it challenging and exciting to be reading the same books as everyone else.

Two other major issues that emerged from the study did not appear with the original proposed questions. The first issue addressed students who missed a curricular content area because of pull-out. This question was included in the interview protocol but grew in significance as a direct result of the strong emotions it provoked from the respondents and their frequent reference to this topic. The second issue concerning curricular adaptations was a theme that was raised often by the respondents. During data analysis it became apparent that it was a meaningful component in the academic lives of LD students and deserved a thorough review.

Missing Out on Classroom Work

- (1) Parents and students alike resented parts of the curriculum being missed because of the pull-out program and then the child having to make up the missed work. Parental frustration more than matched the frustration of the children who, because of their learning disability, had difficulty understanding the homework assignment and finishing it in a reasonable amount of time.
- (2) In some cases students were not expected to make up work and missed out altogether on a curriculum area.
- (3) Parents felt powerless to change the system even though they did not want their child to miss out on classroom work.

Curricular Adaptations

Instruction was modified to meet the unique needs of LD students. LD students predominantly compensated for their disability through the auditory channel. As a result of this particular learning strength, teachers made instructional accommodations for their LD students in order to take advantage of this learning style. Oral presentation and discussion of the material, pairing the LD child with another student, and waiving a limited number of assignments for LD students were commonly used strategies.

Additional Findings

The 35 respondents delved into a number of other topics surrounding special education and the In-Class model. These topics expanded and helped to illustrate the reality of what the In-Class model and the pull-out program meant to the students with learning disabilities. The following encapsulated findings are derived from some of the more important categories.

In-Class Model

- (1) Demonstrable improvement in the reading skills of the six LD students were observed.
- (2) LD students' enthusiasm and self-confidence grew as they saw they could be successful in the regular reading curriculum.
- (3) More positive interaction was observed by the school's staff between LD students and their non-disabled peers.

- (4) The LD students included in the study preferred the regular classroom because they now felt good about themselves as a result of the success experienced in that placement.
- (5) The teachers exhibited a new attitude and excitement as a result of the innovation.

Co-Teaching

- (1) Having two teachers in the classroom proved beneficial to all the students by giving them more individualized attention than they would have received without the collaborative effort.
- (2) The co-teachers felt accountability to each other which resulted in better prepared and higher quality lessons.
- (3) Teachers experienced professional growth as they, too, acquired new skills in behavior management and instruction.
- (4) Students benefitted from the blending of different teaching styles.
- (5) The teachers, not the principal, decided who would co-teach with whom.

Cooperative Learning

- (1) A tendency toward more positive social interaction and camaraderie between typical students and LD students appeared to be facilitated through cooperative learning groups.
- (2) The six LD students felt they were contributing members of the group and that learning was fun with partners.

- (3) LD students now had appropriate models to demonstrate good study habits and behavioral skills.
- (4) Cooperative learning appeared to be instructionally effective for LD students as a result of the instantaneous feedback provided by group members and through the increased opportunities for listening and discussion.
- (5) LD students appeared more attentive, motivated, and productive when working in groups.

Grading Practices

Several parents felt grading practices, as employed in general education classrooms in previous years, were patently unfair and further eroded their child's feelings of self-worth by evaluating the LD students on the same performance standard as the typical student.

Matriculation to Junior High School

- (1) Parents' concerns revolved around the general junior high school curricula and how well their children would fare especially in subjects that required much reading and writing such as science, social studies, and English.
- (2) Teachers at Sunrise generally viewed the sixth graders' return to the resource room upon enrollment at the junior high as a step backwards following their successful In-Class experience.

Drawbacks

- (1) The co-teachers found it difficult to find the planning time necessary to properly prepare for the reading lessons.
- (2) It was asserted that the instruction of a few students with severe academic deficits required a more clinical approach to reading instruction unavailable in the In-Class model.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In-Class Model

The In-Class model for the delivery of special education services to learning disabled students is preferable to the pull-out model in the area of reading and is a successful and effective method for delivering instruction to LD students. This perception was borne out by all the people interviewed including students, parents, and general and special education teachers. The In-Class model received unanimous support from the respondents in the study.

The In-Class model is not only effective for curriculum delivery but also creates a supportive environment which allows LD students to develop a positive self-concept with this approach. The LD students did not miss out on curricular content areas. They obtained a sense of accomplishment when they were able to successfully achieve at the same performance levels and in the same curriculum as their peers. The successful use of the In-Class

model may be limited to LD students. Several of the respondents noted that the In-Class model was not as beneficial to mildly retarded students. These teachers maintained that the mildly retarded students needed a clinical approach, i.e., the resource room, for their reading instruction. In Idaho, the mildly retarded category encompasses many students who are in the borderline range of intellectual ability with IQ scores between 70-79. Thus, the population of mildly retarded students referenced in this study also embraced students in this borderline classification. As mentioned in statements made by the staff at Sunrise, these mildly retarded students continued to have trouble with word attack skills and required a more individualized approach to acquiring basic reading skills.

The potential inappropriateness of the In-Class model with the mildly retarded students is not a serious limitation for the model. Students who are mildly mentally retarded make up only a very small percentage of the total school population. For example, approximately 1.25% of the school population in Four Rivers is identified as mildly retarded. Therefore, in Four Rivers and elsewhere only a relatively small number of students would be affected. It also must be remembered that this discussion does not take into account the students with moderate, severe, and profound retardation, autism, or other low-incident disabilities who are predominantly served in a self-contained special education placement rather than a pull-out program. The debate in special education grows in intensity when the issue arises of

whether students with low-incident disabilities can be successful and should be included in general education reading classes. Indeed, this is a question deserving of its own research study. Therefore, although the In-Class model proved to be an educational and social benefit for the six students with learning disabilities in this study, further research should be conducted to determine the applicability and benefit of the In-Class model for reading instruction to mildly retarded students.

Because it is a successful approach for promoting learning and personal growth in LD students, it is recommended that the In-Class model for the delivery of special education services to LD students be implemented for the subject of reading in the other elementary schools of the Four Rivers School District. Teachers in the district should be apprised of the successful teaching practices and the tremendous impact the In-Class model had on the overall academic and personal development of LD students at Sunrise Elementary School. Acting on this "best knowledge" the Four Rivers School District should begin the process of program implementation so that students with learning disabilities in the elementary grades can accrue the same benefits as did their fellow students at Sunrise.

Co-Teaching, Curricular Adaptation, and Cooperative Learning

The three strategies of co-teaching, curricular adaptations, and cooperative learning should be integrated into the In-Class model. These all contributed mightily to the successful implementation of the In-Class model.

Co-teaching enabled the teachers to provide more individualization to students during reading instruction, as well as allowing the two teachers the opportunity to discuss and learn different pedagogical methods from each other. The process of allowing the teachers to decide with whom to co-teach is critical in acquiring compatible pairings of teachers.

LD learners may have a strong preference for learning by auditory means. The auditory learning channel was the predominant learning style of the students in the study. Teachers adapted the curriculum to take advantage of this particular learning strength. Using teaching techniques that emphasized the auditory channel was a hallmark of effective instructional methods for these LD students.

Cooperative learning creates a supportive environment which fosters student success. Cooperative learning gave students the chance to assist and buttress one another in a weak skill area. LD students were able to compensate for their weak reading skills by listening and partaking in group discussions. Cooperative learning provided LD students the chance to experience greater success in the regular curriculum.

The successful implementation of the In-Class model will require the dual components of cooperative learning and co-teaching. Staff training and commitment will be necessary to learn these skills. Staff development was one of the keys to the success of the In-Class model. Without proper training

and ownership of the concept from the teaching staff, the change may have been less than successful.

The implementation of the innovation should be preceded by rigorous inservice training in the areas of co-teaching and cooperative learning for all teachers involved in the change. Teachers should have the opportunity to decide with whom they will co-teach. A series of intensive inservice training sessions should also be provided to school and district personnel to show how best to meet the needs of children with disabilities in the regular classroom. Use of pedagogical methods which stress the auditory channel should be addressed in the training sessions.

Change Philosophy

Innovation requires a cooperative effort. As demonstrated by Sunrise Elementary School, the implementation of the In-Class model achieved optimal success when the faculty collectively believed in the change and shared the same vision. Staff commitment to the change played a pivotal part in the success and speed with which the innovation was incorporated into the school system.

Getting a school's staff to commit to an innovation is a sound change strategy that should be addressed before the implementation of any innovation. Once the philosophy of the change is shared, a plan should be devised so the staff can receive on-going consultation through an external facilitator or a trained facilitator in the district who does not have classroom

responsibilities, or both. These facilitators can play a vital role in contributing to the efforts of the principal and key teachers, who act as change agents within the school itself, and by providing the knowledge and experience necessary to answer the inevitable questions or concerns that arise regarding the innovation. Although the staff at Sunrise did not have the benefit of an outside facilitator, research documented by Hall and Hord (1987) confirms the value of such facilitators.

The most crucial element in the successful implementation of the In-Class model at Sunrise Elementary School probably was the personal belief system of each staff member espoused by the words of one of the resource teachers, "I think it can work if. . . ." rather than "It won't work because. . . ." If other teaching staffs can incorporate that particular ethic into their work, then the implementation of the In-Class model will have a greater chance of success. It is recommended that the Four Rivers School District use the success of the In-Class model at Sunrise as a springboard to implement the innovation at other schools in the district. An external facilitator should be designated to provide consultation to each faculty regarding the In-Class model. Teachers should be shown the successful student outcomes as a result of the In-Class model so that each buildings' staff can be informed concerning the rationale for the change and gain a commitment to the innovation. Also, each schools' staff members should

develop their own vision and mission statements to espouse their building's educational philosophy.

Development of the In-Class Model

The successful implementation of an innovation such as the In-Class model also requires strong administrative support. An important precondition that helped to maximize the successful implementation of the In-Class model was the openness of the central office administration in allowing Sunrise free rein in the development of the innovation. The flexibility to make needed refinements to the model without having to obtain prior approval from "downtown" helped to accelerate the change process and also cemented the staff's ownership to the innovation itself. Teachers were willing to adapt and learn new instructional techniques. This occurred because the principal gave the teachers time and the information from the pertinent research to come to the realization that the In-Class model would provide an educational and social benefit to more students. The principal was not coercive and allowed the teaching staff to be creative, active decision makers in the change process. Teachers were treated as professionals. As such, they demonstrated concern about having *all* students perform at their optimal levels.

A key administrator in this process is the building principal. The obvious trust relationship between the faculty at Sunrise and the building principal played a significant role in the support the change received from the teachers.

This by no means meant that the faculty unconditionally agreed to the philosophy behind the In-Class model, but the teachers were willing to listen with open minds to what the principal had to say. This trust relationship also enabled the teachers to come to the principal with problems or concerns that they had without fear of being criticized or having a negative comment show up on their evaluations.

Innovative curricular changes can stimulate professional growth. The atmosphere at Sunrise was perceived to be one of sincere caring about the well-being of the students. The role of the principal and faculty appeared to be focused on how best to increase student achievement and accomplishment, without the accompanying backbiting that often occurs between teachers and administrators.

It is recommended that not only should the central administration of the Four Rivers School District continue its support of the change process by allowing individual schools the opportunity to develop their own version of the In-Class model as long as they keep its essential elements but also that the central office should not coerce a principal and staff to commit to the change if the relationship between the building principal and teachers is not one of mutual respect and support. Inherent in this is that building and central office administrators strive to treat teachers with the professional competence that their position dictates. Teachers should be given the time and training necessary to understand why this change should occur. Schools

should be a collegial workplace, and teachers should be involved as active participants in the instructional and curricular changes in the school.

Public Relations

Interested community members must be kept informed about curricular changes within the school if they are to be successful. Maintaining the public's confidence in the change was due in large part to the publicity efforts of the principal, Mr. Tomzak. He kept the parents apprised of the innovation through the school's monthly newsletter. At the monthly meetings of the Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO), Mr. Tomzak also updated the progress of the In-Class model and encouraged the PTO's participation and input. These steps were extremely important in keeping the parents aware of the In-Class model's implementation. By maintaining this communications link, Mr. Tomzak not only kept the parents posted on the change process but also was able to avert possible concerns parents may have had regarding the changes by providing them an avenue and focal point for their input and questions. The parents were kept informed and involved regarding the innovation. This systematic communication with the parents was critical in the successful implementation of the In-Class model.

People must have some control and responsibility for the change in order for it to be effective. The parents of children on Individualized Education Programs with reading goals were informed of the pilot In-Class program at Child Study Team meetings in the spring. At that time, the parents of

children with disabilities were asked to give their formal approval for their children to receive support services in the regular classroom. Subsequently, when the In-Class model was put into effect in the fall, all the publics involved had either given their formal approval or had been given the opportunity to voice their concern.

It is recommended that a similar system of parental communication be emulated by other schools in the district to help ensure the advancement of the innovation. Principals should publicize the change efforts at PTO meetings and in their school newsletters. Parents should be provided a forum so that their questions and concerns can be answered in a fashion that will promote parental support and understanding. Parental involvement at child study team meetings is imperative in order for parents to acquire a clear perception for the rationale behind the introduction of the In-Class model and to affirm their child's participation in it.

The Role of Research

Research projects such as this one can contribute to the success of an innovative project. This research played a significant role in this pilot program by facilitating the communication process. As the preliminary findings were made public at special education staff meetings, before the district's Parent Advisory Council, and at conferences attended by elementary principals and special education directors, the news spread that the In-Class model was a better vehicle for delivering special services to students with

learning disabilities. This played a vital role in communicating the success of the In-Class model and legitimized its viability in the eyes of the district's internal and external publics.

Informal networking among teachers concerning the In-Class model supported the innovation. By word-of-mouth, teachers throughout the district became aware of the In-Class model and were curious about how it was working. This helped ensure the status of Sunrise School as a model for other schools in the district.

It is recommended that money be appropriated to fund research on the In-Class model. This continuing research will not only facilitate the communication process but also will be instrumental in identifying areas of concern within the innovation that may require modification.

A Possible Barrier

The number of support personnel required could be a possible barrier to the successful implementation of the In-Class model. At Sunrise, three resource teachers and a Chapter I reading teacher were utilized. Each was responsible for approximately two periods of reading which they co-taught with a regular classroom teacher. However, many schools do not have the luxury of four specialists to assign to an in-class program. Without the powerful component of co-teaching, the extent of the success seen in this particular study could very well be diminished at other school sites.

Therefore, it is recommended that the In-Class model be implemented in those schools which are adequately staffed with support personnel.

Teacher Preference

While some teacher surveys regarding perceptions of the In-Class model (Gabriel & Rasp, 1986; Hayes, 1983; Semmel, Abernathy, Butera, & Lesar, 1991) have found teachers who clearly preferred a pull-out program for special education service, many teachers favor an In-Class model. A significant majority of teachers (26-3) in this study wanted to pilot the In-Class model. Even after the implementation of the program, the teachers interviewed continued to be strongly in favor of the change. In the spring of 1991, after the In-Class model had been in place for the entire school year, another vote by the teachers was held. The innovation again received overwhelming "nearly unanimous support" from the faculty.

Possible Loss of Federal Funds

Because of the success of the In-Class model, special care must be taken to avoid the loss of federal funds for LD students. As a result of the In-Class model, the number of referrals by teachers has been drastically reduced at Sunrise Elementary. Fifty-six children with disabilities were identified in the 1990-91 school year compared to 43 in the 1991-92 school year. This may be because teachers no longer feel the pressing need to refer students for special education since at-risk students are being served and interventions are

taking place in the classroom before these students reach a failure stage in the reading curriculum.

The downside to this otherwise bright prospect is that as the number of students with disabilities decreases, so does the amount of federal funding that is generated by each student identified as having a disability. In the Four Rivers School District, this amounts to approximately \$300 for each handicapped student. These federal monies are used to support the special education programs in the district by paying for the salaries of 75% of the special education aides, occupational therapy and physical therapy services, staff development, and various supplies and materials requested by the special education teachers. With a reduction in these funds, cutbacks will definitely occur which will impact the ability to serve students with special needs and to provide the staff needed for the In-Class model.

Teachers need to be made aware of this funding dilemma so they can become more cognizant of the need to refer students to special education who exhibit the characteristics of someone with a learning disability. This should be done so that the level of services the student receives will remain the same whether the student is in an in-class or pull-out program.

What Comes Next in the Research?

This study was purposely narrow. It concentrated on students with specific learning disabilities and how they responded to the In-Class model for

the subject of reading. Additional research should be conducted in the math and written language areas to determine if the In-Class model would also be as successful for students with learning disabilities. A study to determine the benefits for children with low-incident disabilities, such as students with moderate mental retardation and autism, would also be instructive. Further curricular adaptations or other teaching strategies would in all likelihood have to be incorporated into the reading lesson for students with lower academic skills to succeed. This was seen to be true even with students in the mildly retarded range, according to several teachers in this study. However, a thorough study of students with these disabilities in an In-Class model would be highly enlightening.

Finally, further research should be conducted at the junior high and high school levels to discover if results similar to those found with these selected sixth graders at the elementary level would be attained with students at the secondary level. Besides the obvious differences between elementary and secondary schools, it must be remembered that the resource room is not a pull-out situation at the secondary level. Whether students' self-esteem is eroded just by attending the resource room would be an interesting research question. A research design using the principles of qualitative research would be highly recommended in order to determine secondary students' perceptions of the resource room and their achievement levels in alternative programs emphasizing In-Class delivery.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
INTERVIEW GUIDES

Student Interview Questions

- I. The areas of interest addressed with their respective questions to students were as follows:

Student's Self-Image

1. Tell me how you felt when you left class to go to the resource room?
2. At recess time, do you play more with your friends from the resource room or those from your classroom?

Student's Attitude Toward School

1. What is it about school that you really like?
2. Name some things about school that you do not like.
3. Think back to past years and compare them to this year. Do you look forward to coming to school the same amount as you used to?
- 4a. What do you like about being home?
- 4b. How do you feel at school compared to at home?

Student's Feelings About Having a Learning Disability

1. You have been identified as having a learning disability. What does that mean to you?
2. How do you feel when you see other kids read so well?

Student's Perceptions of Parents' Feelings About the Learning Disability

1. How do your parents feel about the way you read?
 - a. Are they understanding, sympathetic?
 - b. Do they sometimes seem frustrated?
 - c. Do they think you are trying your best?

Student's Opinions Regarding Resource Room and the In-Class Model

1. How do you think you will feel if the school decides to have students return to the resource room for reading?
2. How do you feel about having the resource teacher come into your classroom to help you during the reading period?
3. When you went to the resource room last year, what did you like best about it? What didn't you like about it?
4. What do you like best about staying in class for reading instead of going to the resource room? What don't you like about it?

Student's Sense of Which Service Delivery Model Contributes Most to His Reading Improvement

1. How does the help you are getting in reading this year compare to last year and previous years? Please explain.
2. How do you feel you are doing in reading this year compared to last year?

3. Do you believe the way in which you are doing reading this year is a bigger help to you than how you did reading last year? Do you feel you are learning more?

Student's Perception of Extra Homework and Make-Up of Missed Assignments When Pulled From the Classroom in Previous Years

1. I would like you to remember back, not only to last year, but also when you were in 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade. When you left your class to go to the resource room, did you miss part or all of some subject(s) other than the subject you were pulled out for?
2. Did you ever miss out on activities that you really wanted to do?

Parent Interview Questions

- II. The general areas of interest and specific question used in the parent interviews were as follows:

Child's Self-Image

1. How would you describe your child's self-image?
2. Since your child was identified as having a learning disability and was placed in the resource room, have you noticed any difference in how he feels about himself?
3. Have you noticed any changes in his self-concept this year?

Child's Attitude Toward School

1. How does your child like school? Has his attitude changed since he first entered kindergarten?
2. Do you believe your child is considered popular in school? Does he have many friends in the neighborhood?
3. Have you noticed any changes in your child's attitude toward school this year as contrasted to last year?

Parental Concerns Regarding the Child's Learning Disability

1. When did you first suspect that your child might have a learning disability? How did it manifest itself?
2. What effect, if any, has your child's learning disability had on your relationship?

Parental Opinion Regarding Resource Room Versus the In-Class Model

1. Would you feel better if your child did not have to attend resource class and could receive the support he needed in the regular classroom?
2. Would you be willing to discuss the matter with the principal or, the child study team to see if changes could be made? How strongly do you feel about this?

Parents' Sense of Which Service Delivery Model Contributes Most to Their Child's Reading Improvement

1. In your opinion, has the pull-out program had any effect, positively or negatively, on your child's performance in school?

Parent's Perceptions of Extra Homework Given to Their Child as a Result of Missing Part of the Curriculum When Pulled-Out to the Resource Room

1. Regarding homework, have you noticed any changes in the amount of homework this year as opposed to past years? Do you believe the In-Class model is having some effect on this?
2. Has your child missed parts of other subjects while in the resource room, and if so, how is this made up?

Teacher Interview Questions

- III. The areas of interest to be addressed with their respective questions to teachers were as follows:

Student's Self-Image

1. Describe (LD student's) self-image.
2. Compare (LD student) to others in your class. Does anything stand out about him?

Student's Attitude Toward School

1. Describe (LD student's) attitude.

2. Is there any discernable difference in (LD student's) attitude toward school since the in-class model began?

Student's Feelings About Having a Learning Disability

1. How does (LD student's) learning disability affect him academically in the classroom? Socially?

Teacher's Opinion Regarding Resource Room and the In-Class Model

1. Please describe any appreciable academic and social benefits for students with an in-class model.
2. Which service delivery model do you personally prefer? Why?
3. How does the type of reading instruction the students are receiving in the In-Class model differ from what they were receiving in the resource room?
4. Please describe any ways that the quality of instruction differs when you compare the two service delivery models?

Teacher's Perception of Students Missing Segments of the Curricula When Pulled-Out of the Classroom

1. In past years, how would you accommodate students who would have to miss part or all of a class because they were in resource room? Do you believe the in-class model resolves this dilemma?

APPENDIX B
CONSENT FORM

SUBJECT CONSENT FORM
FOR
PARTICIPATION IN HUMAN RESEARCH
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

*SELF-PERCEPTION OF STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION WHO
RECEIVE SERVICES VIA AN IN-CLASS DELIVERY SYSTEM*

You are being asked to participate in a study to see if you feel better about receiving extra help in the classroom rather than having to be pulled out to the resource room.

This study will help the teachers and Mr. _____, the principal, have a better understanding of whether this arrangement is better than having students go to the resource room for help.

You were picked at the recommendation of Mrs. _____, the resource teacher. She believes you will be able to truly express your feelings to me and tell me exactly how you think things are.

If you agree to participate, I will interview you approximately every two weeks throughout the semester to see how things are going with the new way you are getting help from the resource teacher. I will also talk to your parents and teachers to see how they think you are doing in school. I will even come into your classroom to observe how things go.

I believe these interviews are very important as my talks with you will help the school district decide if the manner in which we work with students will continue in this way, or whether students should return to the resource room for help.

If you decline to participate, that is quite all right. The choice is up to you. Your identity will be treated with professional standards of confidentiality. The information obtained in the study may be published, but your identity will not be revealed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bill Feusahrens

Permission for the interviews is GIVEN ____

Permission for the interviews is DENIED ____

Student Signature

Parent Signature

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