

INCLUSION: CO-TEACHING VERSUS RESOURCE ROOM SUPPORT - DOES IT
MATTER

Approved: Daniel E. Leitch Date: January 16, 2013

INCLUSION: CO-TEACHING VERSUS RESOURCE ROOM SUPPORT - DOES IT
MATTER

An Educational Project
Presented to
The Graduate Faculty
University of Wisconsin-Platteville

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements of the Degree
Master of Science in Education
High School - Cross-Categorical Special Education

By
Erin E. Palzkill

2012

INCLUSION: CO-TEACHING VERSUS RESOURCE ROOM SUPPORT - DOES IT MATTER

Erin Palzkill

Under the Supervision of Daniel E. Leitch

Abstract

This educational project explored the influence special education teachers have on special education student's grades when co-teaching in a regular education classroom. Due to the reduction of staff and resources, special education departments, especially in smaller schools, are having to service more students with less time and resources. The hypothesis that this project was developed under was; when the special education teacher co-teaches with the regular education teacher, grades for the special education students will improve. After collecting data on grades, missing work, and assistance given to students outside of English class in two sections of regular education English, where the special education teacher co-taught in one and not the other, the hypothesis did not accurately account for the results. Consequently, the results may now influence how resources, scheduling, and time management will be allocated currently and in the future.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
APPROVAL PAGE	i
TITLE PAGE	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
• Introduction	
• Problem Statement	
• Purpose	
• Hypothesis	
• Research Questions	
• Significance	
• Delimitations	
• Method of Approach	
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	6
• History of Special Education	
• Resource Room and Co-Teaching Arguments	
• Co-Teaching Models	
• Other Considerations	
• Summary	
III. METHODOLOGY	17
• Procedure and Timeline	
• Participants and Environments	
• Expectations	
• Limitations	
IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS	24
V. CONCLUSIONS AND APPLICATIONS	26
REFERENCES	29

Chapter I

Introduction

Introduction

As a special education teacher in a small high school, I am faced with the challenge of supporting each student in both regular and special education classes. At this time we have 28 identified special education students in a rural high school of approximately 200 students. Of the 28 special education students, I am case manager for fourteen. On my case load students' disabilities range from learning disabled, cognitively disabled, autistic, and emotional/behavior disorders, and within those labels abilities vary greatly.

I teach four classes a day and have one supervision, so in an eight period day I am left with 3 hours (if I do not take a prep) to either go into regular education classes to support the special education population in those classes, or I can work in our special education resource room with students that may benefit from one-on-one or small group assistance.

Each semester the special education department deliberates over what is the best placement for our special education staff, in the regular education classrooms co-teaching or in the special education resource room providing individual instruction. We also have debated whether it is fair to put all the special education students in the same sections of regular education class even though there is a special education staff member in that particular section.

After completing this project, I am hoping to shed some light on the question of how much a special education teacher's physical presences in the regular education classroom effects special and regular education students' success. I will be physically attending one of the two English 10 classes with two special education students and not going into the other that will also have two special education students enrolled. All students will have access to the same materials and personal time with me during homeroom or by appointment. The only change will be my

presence in the classroom on a daily bases. I will be monitoring grades, completed work, and number of times students ask for assistance to determine outcomes.

Problem Statement

In small school districts with limited special education staff and rising special education needs, special education case managers are required to fulfill the needs of each special education student no matter if they are in a special education classes or regular education classes. Time management is always a priority to consider, but because of restrictions due to limited scheduling options, least restrictive environment, staffing, money, and only so much time the students' needs may not be met in the best way possible. Students may not have a special education staff member in their class period when another class period does have a special education staff member physically present in the class, due to these restrictions.

Purpose

The purpose of this project will be to compare the effect a special education teacher has, when physically in a classroom, on grades of special education students. The information will help determine how scheduling for students is done, the best way to schedule special education teachers and staff, improve time management within the special education department, and how resources are delegated in and out of regular education classes.

Hypothesis

When the special education teacher co-teaches with the regular education teacher, grades for the special education students will improve.

Research Questions

What is the effect of having a special education teacher team teaching in a regular education class room in the following areas:

- Grades,
- Completed work, and
- Comfort in asking for assistance?

Significance

Special education case managers have many constraints that make their job difficult when it comes to time management and deciding how best to serve the most students. Some of the constraints that they face are a set master schedule, required classes to be taught and supervisions to be fulfilled, graduation requirements for students, and limited contact time with individual students. Yet they are expected to do everything possible to help their students succeed.

As special education case managers look at what is best for the most students with the limited resources available, they determine if placing special education staff in all classes special education students attend is necessary for success. This project may also help determine if a special education department can provide the same or similar support without having a special education teacher in the class, so the teacher is free to work with more students one-on-one in a resource room environment. The information gathered can help special education resources and time be better allocated to best serve all students. It will also determine how pertinent it is to place all special education students in the same regular education class so that staff can be available to all those students' enrolled in the same class.

The results of this project possibly will shed some light on ways to better run a special education program more efficiently and effectively for both the staff and students alike.

Delimitations

The delimiting factors that were recognized before starting this project include:

- The master schedule that was set by administration for regular education classes;
- Regular education students' schedules and class size were set by administration;
- Lesson being taught and method of delivery were decided by the regular education teacher;
- Grading system and grading will be done by regular education teacher;
- Class time interruption that will diminish possible class contact time for one or both regular education English classes such as Homecoming activities, and early release days;
- Absenteeism of special education teacher due to illness or other duties to students outside of this particular class;
- Modifications, aides, and services that are specifically stated in IEP;
- Students that may have personality conflicts with the special education teacher;
- Students that will have study hall time that is not the same period as the special education teacher's perpetration time or supervision to get additional help in an immediate or timely manner; and
- Students that have had the regular education teacher in previous classes will be familiar with teaching style and expectations.

Method of Approach

During the first three months of the 2012-2013 school year, I will be attending one section of English 10 to co-teach the class. There are two sections of English 10 with two special education students in each. Students from both sections will have the same support and assistance outside of class time, the only difference will be that one section has me attending class daily. Data related to the special education students will be collected on grades, missing and late work, and number of times students initiate help from the special education staff member. The informational data collected will be compared against students in the section with the special education teacher in attendance and those without the special education teacher in attendance.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

History of Special Education

Special education is complicated. Those who work in the field not only have the task of educating those that pose a challenge to others, but also must abide by federal and state legislation, school and administration expectations, and a wide and varied curriculum. Special education departments are many times understaffed and forced to work around the rest of the school community (Jones & Hensley, 2012). These challenges can be even more exacerbated in a small school. In small schools, limited class offering makes scheduling difficult and differentiation limited. Special education students may have limited educational resources and opportunities due to the limited resources and accessibility.

The history of special education in the United States started in the 1950's. During this time in history, children with special needs did not have many opportunities for any type of quality education. This was the time of asylums and institutions for those with moderate to severe disabilities. Those with mild disabilities did not attend school or were just passed along and considered uneducable.

A parent headed movement in the 1950's and 1960's to get more educational service to their children with disabilities led to The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, allowing access to public schools (Thompkins & Deloney, 1995). This was the start of Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment that is still discussed and debated today. FAPE requires a school district to provide education to those with disabilities who live in the district no matter the severity of the disability (US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, 2012). This earliest Act resulted in resource rooms and self-contained

classrooms for students with special educational needs in public schools. Even though this Act got the students into the public school system the students were still separated from the general population (Thompkins & Deloney, 1995).

In 1986 concerns regarding the negative effects of the “pull out” programs of special education students by the then Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services was dubbed the Regular Education Initiative. This initiative’s focus was to try and have the mild to moderate special education students taught in the regular education classroom. Since this idea of “mainstreaming” was introduced support has grown. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act was revised to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1991 and included this awareness of having students with educational disabilities in the regular education classroom (Thompkins & Deloney, 1995).

Even after IDEA it was reported that only 35 percent of students with disabilities were being serviced in the regular education and 28.5 percent were still in a self-contained special education classroom or alternative setting from the regular school setting. Leaving 36.3 percent in a resource room setting, getting some portion of their education taught exclusively by a special education teacher (Thompkins & Deloney, 1995). When IDEA was reauthorized in 1997 stricter requirements to have students with special needs placed and educated with their nondisabled peers was added (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 1997), and again in 2004’s reauthorization of IDEA it became even rigorous. Now there has to be documented justification written as to why students are not placed in with nondisabled peers or not taught with the general education curriculum (Arno, 2009).

Also in 2004, No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was signed into law requiring “highly qualified” special education teachers. This means that special education teachers need to be

knowledgeable not only in special education but in core subjects that they teach. NCLB aligns with IDEA to bring challenging curriculum to special education students, and have content knowledgeable teachers team teaching in regular education classrooms (No Child Left Behind Act, 2007).

With all of this legislation pushing for placement and educating of special education students in the regular education classroom, special education teachers are faced with many decisions to make and discuss concerning each student on their case load. Each student that is determined to have a disability is required to have an Individual Education Plan (IEP), a legal document indicating placement, if and why student will receive alternate curriculum, goal for the student, and showing specific accommodations and modifications for the student's progress. The IEP is developed as a team of the student's teachers, parents, and administration to best serve the student's needs and to make significant educational progress for the IEP year (Arno, 2009). After the IEP is complete it is up to the special education teacher and administration to determine how best to carry out the IEP (Pugach & Winn, 2011).

One of those decisions that pertain to this project is how to support students in the regular education setting. If the student is going to be mainstreamed into the regular education class, how will they get the support they require to be successful? There are several implications to consider with terminology that is interchangeable or misunderstood making the decisions and even a discussion difficult for teachers, parents, and administration (Thompkins & Deloney, 1995).

Confusion within the topic of inclusion of special education students comes from the ignorant uses of related terms and the philosophy behind each. The following are some of these terms:

Mainstreaming-physical placement of students with disabilities with non-disabled peers (Thompkins & Deloney, 1995)

Integration-legal term carried over from civil rights legislation, meaning students with disabilities should be desegregated into the realm of regular classrooms, not only placed but socially and academically involved (Thompkins & Deloney, 1995).

Inclusion-is a values oriented term; all individuals with disabilities have a right to be included in naturally occurring setting and activities (Thompkins & Deloney, 1995).

Full-Inclusion-is many times used interchangeably with inclusion, but those who advocate for full-inclusion define it by stating that instructional practice and technology support are presently available to accommodate all students in the schools and classrooms, so most if not all special education students should be in the regular educational setting (Thompkins & Deloney, 1995).

Team Teaching-a term interchangeable with **Co-Teaching** and **Collaborative Teaching**-regular-education teachers and special education teachers work together in the regular education setting and both are responsible for all of the students assigned to the class (Keefe & Moore, 2004).

Resource Room-Part-time placement for special education students giving them the opportunities for differentiated instruction from special education teacher to help with one or more regular education classes (Thurlow, Ysseldyke, Garden, & Algozzine, 1983)

Self-contained-Special education students are taught core classes in special education settings at least part of the day (Arno, 2009)

For this project resource room support will be compared to team teaching support. Even given the definition from above, the resource room can vary from school to school depending on the philosophy of that particular school. For the purposes of this project the resource room is a

special education room devoted to helping students with homework, reviewing material, or have material retaught with a special education staff member. Students work one-on-one or in small groups with overall smaller class size.

Resource Room and Co-Teaching Arguments

Resource rooms have many benefits to educating special education students. Students are able to get individualized instruction that best suits their personal learning styles. Student's time engaged during instruction is higher than in team taught class (Regnier, 1998). Life skills and student interests can be connected to the curriculum to help with transition to life (Reid, 2010).

The draw backs to placing students in a resource room include making students more dependent and isolated from the general school population. Students' self-esteem can suffer when placed in a resource room due to the isolation (Jones & Hensley, 2012). Financially resource rooms are more expensive than inclusion (Savich, 2008).

Co-teaching will be compared to resource room support for this project to see to what degree the students benefit from each. Co-teaching is the preferable choice to help special education students that are placed in regular education classes, but it is not always possible (Little & Dieker, 2009). This method of instruction is in line with the goals of special education legislation (Savich, 2008).

Co-teaching has benefits for both the special education and regular education students. The social interaction between the two groups is one of the biggest positives that students, teachers, parents, and administrators see when students are taught together. All students are learning community building strategies, practicing manners, positive behaviors, cooperation, forming friendships with others different from them themselves, and overall tolerance (Savich,

2008). Individually special education students have higher self-esteem, learn self-determination skills, and are less dependent as they transition to adult life (Jones & Hensley, 2012).

With co-teaching, students are exposed to different teaching techniques and teaching styles. The curriculum tends to be more rigorous than in a special education setting leading to academic benefits (Rosario, Cole, Redmon, & Strawbridge, n.d.). Student behaviors can be better monitored and student questions can be answered more efficiently with two teachers in the class (Weiss & Lloyd, 2002). Co-teaching practices are cheaper for school districts over time (Savich, 2008).

Shortcomings of co-teaching revolve around academic success of the regular education population. Some feel that the curriculum is not rigorous enough for some of the regular education students when special education students are included in a class. With the high-stakes testing prevalent for high school students, co-teaching inclusive classrooms may not prepare students for these tests. Another argument for not having inclusive classes are that the special education students divert too much of the teacher's time from the regular education students (Savich, 2008).

The shortcomings of co-teaching that affect the special education students are not getting the intensive individualized attention they would receive in an exclusive special education setting. Depending on the severity of their disability, inclusion may not provide the appropriate educational setting for these students to succeed. Finally, regular education teachers many times do not have the training to teach special education students effectively (Thompkins & Deloney, 2012).

Co-Teaching Models

There are five co-teaching models, which were investigated for this project, that teachers can institute in the co-taught classroom. The first model is one teacher, one assist. In this model one teacher, usually the core teacher leads the lesson and the other teacher observes and assists students. The assisting teacher can roam the classroom checking for comprehension and monitor behaviors of the students. This is the easiest model to implement. Strengths of this model include limited collaboration and coordination required to carry out these types of lessons. Students that need the support get it swiftly. This model can mask the co-teachers weaknesses in the curriculum area being taught (Rosario, Cole, Redmon, & Strawbridge, n.d.).

One teacher, one assist model has some challenges that can deter from this model. The assisting teacher is not being fully utilized; a qualified teacher is being use as a paraprofessional. The overall set up can cause an authority problem for the assisting teacher, and the lead teacher can become frustrated with having most of the work load (Rosario, Cole, Redmon, & Strawbridge, n.d.).

The second model is station teaching or sometimes called rotational teaching. Station teaching allows each teacher to plan for a different part of the lesson or an entirely different lesson. Students are taught by each teacher at their station and then rotate to get both lessons, or the class can be divided into leveled groups with each teacher taking a level. Most times the class is divided in to 3 sections with the third section doing related independent work. This model allows for increased instructional diversity, more individual attention, allows teachers to use their strength, and it is a good use of both teachers. The drawbacks that are presented for this model include logistics of the classroom, requiring good time management, increased noise levels, and monitoring of the independent group can be difficult (Zelkowitz, 2008).

The third model is alternative teaching, where one teacher teaches the large group the main lesson while the other works with a smaller group on a different lesson for pre-teaching, re-teaching, enrichment, special projects, or make up work. All students can benefit from small group instruction and teachers get to alternate rolls, so equal status is maintained by each teacher. Students can get differentiation opportunities, more chances for remediation and enrichment, and behavior control. Teachers must be conscious of not pulling the same students into the small group, especially the special education students. The general curriculum exposure can be decreased when students are in the small group (Zelkowitz, 2008).

The fourth model is parallel teaching. The class is divided in half and the lesson is planned and taught by both teachers at the same time to similar groups of students. Parallel teaching offers smaller groups and more individual attention. Teachers can have more control of behaviors and monitoring of student progress. This model takes a significant amount of planning between teachers, and both teachers must be equally strong in the content area. Class time can become noisy and distracting to some students (Zelkowitz, 2008).

The final team teaching is a model that has both teachers sharing in the instruction of the entire class. One teacher may lead the discussion while the other models or demonstrates the material. They may also tag team throughout the lesson working as one and take the lead at different times. This model can allow for both teachers to show their teaching styles and strengths. Teachers are demonstrating positive collaboration, respect, and interpersonal interactions. The drawbacks are that this type of co-teaching takes a significant amount of planning time and requires a lot of trust and commitment between the teachers (Zelkowitz, 2008).

In a successful co-teaching classroom different models may be utilized depending on the educational situation being presented. Successful co-teaching partnerships are not easy. Teachers that are willing to co-teach are usually more effective than those that are made to co-teach together. If the teachers are forced into a co-teaching situation the partnership is many times doomed from the start (Pugach & Winn, 2011). There are many things that need to be considered before teachers even start planning lessons. Teachers need to discuss mutual goals, expectations, personal styles, and share accountability. Overall, both teachers must trust and respect each other and their differences and expertise (Knackendoffel, 2007).

One of the main obstacles, after teachers have agreed to co-teach, is finding the planning time that is required to have effective lessons. Common planning time of at least 60 minutes is ideal, but teachers that are dedicated to the co-teaching model can find ways to make planning work (Scruugs, 1996). School administration's support for co-teaching classroom are essential to help make common planning time possible and to make sure that proper training is available (Murawski, 2004).

Other Considerations

Other complications that need to be consistent in the classroom are a classroom management plan and discipline. Both teachers have to be on the same page when it comes to class management and discipline, so that no one teacher will be perceived as the bad cop and the other as the good cop (Keefe, Moore, & Duff, 2011). Procedures for communicating with parents needs to be worked out, along with grading system, and subtle or silent signals that can be used during class time (Murawski & Deiker, 2004).

Grading can be a source of dispute if not agreed upon ahead of time. Both teachers should have a say in how grades are given, be responsible for doing the grading of work, and have access to the grade book (Murawski & Deiker, 2004).

When two or more people work together there are bound to be problems and conflicts, these will need to be resolved as they come up to keep the classroom running smoothly throughout the school year. The problems that arise may be between the teachers, with students, with parents, or with curriculum. No matter what the cause of the problem or conflict is, solving it needs to be addressed by both teachers. Using a problem solving process can be helpful when situations like this come up (Knackendoffel, 2007).

There needs to be school wide support for inclusion and co-teaching; meaning administration, school board, other teachers, students, and parents. All involved should understand what co-teaching means and how it is being utilized in their school. With a school wide philosophy accepted by the educational community and the community, programs are more successful. After studying co-teaching environments, research indicated that most teachers, parents, students, and administration were happy with the outcomes (Pugach & Winn, 2011).

No matter how the teachers decide the class will be run, if both are dedicated and have bought into the concept of co-teaching, positive things will happen. In many cases that were researched the special education teacher was in a more subordinate position when it came to instruction, but teachers felt that was the best way to utilize their abilities and it was best for their students (Pugach & Winn, 2011).

Being a teacher in a co-teaching classroom is no small undertaking, and should not be taken lightly. There is a lot of work that goes into make a successful classroom run well. The research that is out for the benefits of co-teaching over all are adequate, but when it comes

specifically to co-teaching in the secondary grades there is much less, but many of the obstacles, strategies, and benefits still apply (Knackerdoffel, 2007). Co-teaching is helpful to both teachers and their students when key ideas of application are taken into account such as planning, continued skill development, instruction that takes into account all students' needs, support from administration and community, and progress monitoring of the class (Little & Dieker, 2009).

Summary

As the government drives special education towards inclusion, school districts and special education teachers are left with the decision on how best to service these students with limited staff, resources, and time. There are benefits to the resource room and to co-teaching, but what will work best for the most students is not easy to predict. Can students succeed with either model or is one significantly better than the other? The information from this project will hopefully help one small school district start to answer this question.

Chapter III

Methodology

Procedure and Timeline

This project explored a very specific situation that happens when special education teachers are co-teaching in a regular education classroom. Before this project even began, it was determined by IEP meetings that four students with special needs would be included in the regular education classroom for English 10, due to their progress, abilities, and least restrictive environment. The schedule the students received had them split into the two different sections of English 10, either first hour or fourth hour. This circumstance put two of these special education students in first hour, one that had never been in regular education English since being labeled special needs, and one that had always been in regular education English. This was the same situation for the two students that were scheduled to be in fourth hour English 10.

The special education staff schedule only allowed for a staff member to attend first hour English 10. The staff member was there to co-teach, using the one teacher, one assist model. The teacher would be in class to assist both the regular and special education students as needed, also to taking notes, listening to directions, and monitoring behavior. The regular education teacher had primary control of the class and determined curriculum and grading. Aside from the hour that the special education teacher was able to attend the class, the rest of the other factors stated above were planned and designed into the project to keep the classes as consistent as possible.

This project and the data collection related to it started on the first day of school and continued for fifty-five school days. Each day the special education teacher attended class,

assisted the students, and kept a journal of daily occurrences in class such as who asked for help, who was redirected, along with other interactions that happened between themselves and the special education students. A journal was also kept detailing the out of class contact that was made directly concerning the English 10 class.

On the third day of school, the four special education students that attended the regular education English 10 classes were assembled and all told that the special education teacher would be attending English 10 first hour to assist them all as needed or dictated by their IEP. The teacher's schedule was reviewed, and it was discovered that all four students had a study hall during the teacher's preparation time or study hall supervision. The students were encouraged to come to the special education teacher if they had any questions or needed help. They were also encouraged to seek help from the special education teacher during homeroom time. Students were given consent forms and assent forms to be signed, so the students could participate and data could be collected.

For the rest of the fifty-five days, daily normal school events took place for the students. The special education teacher attended the first hour English 10 class ninety-five percent of the time and kept journals of specifically English 10 related interactions with the students participating in the project. The teacher was not able to attend one-hundred percent of the classes due to other job obligations and one day of illness.

At the end of the fifty-five days, a detailed grade report was run for each of the four students involved in the project and compared. The data was evaluated individually and as groups with and without a special education teacher attending their English 10 class. The journals that were kept were also assessed for information on how many times assistance or

redirection was given in class, and how many times students sought out assistance from the special education teacher regarding English 10 outside of class. The following charts were used to compare the information.

Student Data Collection												
Student	1 st Quarter Grade	Mid. 2 nd Quarter Grade	To Date Semester Grade	Daily Work 1	Daily Work 2	Test 1	AR Points	Writing 1	Writing 2	Total # Missing Work 1	Total # Missing Work 2	# of 0
A												
B												
C												
D												
Significance Between Classes												
*Highlighted rows indicate students in class that were co-taught with the special education teacher.												

Groups	Assistance in Class	Assistance Outside of Class
Teacher in class		
Teacher not in class		
Significance Between Classes	N/A	
*Highlighted rows indicate students in class that were co-taught with the special education teacher.		

This project's data results will be gathered and reported as qualitative and descriptive results, due to the quasi-experimental method used.

Participants and Environment

Control Group (*Gender is stated uniformly to protect anonymity*)

The fourth hour regular education English 10 class contained two students that are labeled as special needs. Student C is a sophomore who has been in the regular English classes thought out his academic career. Student C has average to low average natural abilities that does not put forth effort when it comes to school work. His primary goal is just to pass. He does have minimal to average parent support when it comes to his academics.

Student D is a sophomore that has just been placed into the regular education English class. He had been in special education English since he was identified in fourth grade. After his last IEP meeting, the team determined that he was a good candidate for inclusion because of his progress and abilities. His natural abilities are low average to low. He is self-motivated and has goals when it comes to his academic achievements. Student D does have above average parent support when it comes to his academics.

Experimental Group (*Gender is stated uniformly to protect anonymity*)

First hour regular education English 10 had two students that are identified as special needs. Student A is a sophomore that is a student that has been in special education English since he was identified as special needs in fourth grade. At his last IEP meeting the team determined that his abilities and progress were such that he should be included in the regular education class. He has outside factors that motivate him to do well academically. His natural abilities are low average. His parental support is below average when it concerns academics.

Student B is a sophomore that has always been in regular education English classes. He has no internal motivation to do well at school. He has average natural abilities. Student B has an average support system when it comes to his academics. Last year he failed English 9 due to missing and incomplete work, and consequently had to take summer school.

Other Human Variables

The regular education English teacher has been teaching in the district for four years and student taught in the class she is currently teaching the year before taking her current positions. She is organized and has well developed lessons. Her classroom management is very effective, and has very few discipline issues during class times.

The regular education teacher was very welcoming and helpful regarding having the special education teacher in her classroom and allowing this educational project to be done within her classroom. Her responsibilities involving this project were limited to ranking all the students on a scale from one to five, one being low ability/skill and five being high ability/skill, for environmental variable assessment. Otherwise she was not instructed to change anything about her teaching or expectations.

Environmental Variables

First hour English 10 class consists of a total of seventeen students, eight male and nine female. There are three juniors students in the class because of deficiencies in grades or abilities. When the class was ranked by the regular education teacher, for ability/skill, the class mean was 2.7 or average. The males in the class had a mean of 2.4 and the females mean was 2.9, both within average.

Fourth hour English 10 class had a total of twenty-three sophomore students, thirteen males and ten females. The class mean for ability/skill was 3.7 high average. The males and females mean for ability/skill were high average 3.6 and 3.7, respectively.

Both classes are 45 minutes in length daily, and all classes had equivalent days either shortened or missed. Lessons and materials of each class were. The lessons were taught the same day or one day apart.

	# of Students in Class	# of Male Students in Class	# of Female Students in Class	# of Junior Students in Class	Class Mean Ability/Skill Level	Male Mean Ability/Skill Level	Female Mean Ability/Skill Level	# of Identified Students with Disabilities
1st Hour Class	17	8	9	2	2.7	2.4	2.9	2
4th Hour Class	23	13	10	0	3.7	3.6	3.7	2
Combined Classes	40	21	19	2	3.2	3.2	3.3	4

Ability/Skills Level Ranking	
1-1.6	Low
1.7-2.3	Below Average
2.4-3.6	Average
3.7-4.3	Above Average
4.4-5	High

Distribution of Individual Ability/Skill Levels in Regular Education English 10 Classes				
				X
				X
				X
	X	X	X	
	X	X	X	
	X	X	X	
	X	X	X	X
	X	X	X	X
	X	X	X	X
X	X	X	X	X
X	X	X	X	X
Low	Below Average	Average	Above Average	High Average

Expectations

The researcher expects the results to show that when the special education teacher is co-teaching in class, special education students will do better than those special education students in the class that is not co-taught. This speculation is based on teacher to student ratio, students' knowledge of teacher familiarity of subject, and the ability to monitor the students' progress in class first hand.

Limitation

Limitations to this study that may have influenced the results were:

- The uneven academic ability/skill split between the class sections; and
- Motivations and goals of individual students concerning their grades and work products.

Chapter IV

Results and Analysis

In an effort to determine the effects special education teachers have on students with special need when co-teaching in a regular education classroom, data was collected and analyzed to determine if there was a difference in the students' grades. The following is the data collected and analyzed for this project.

Student Data Collection												
Students	1 st Quarter Grade	Mid. 2 nd Quarter Grade	To Date Semester Grade	Daily Work 1	Daily Work 2	Test 1	AR Points	Writing 1	Writing 2	Total # Missing Work 1	Total # Missing Work 2	# of 0
A	75% C	74% C	74% C	69% D+	72% C-	92% A	0% F	86% B	75% C	0	0	3
B	71% C-	19% F	45% F	55% F	43% F	81% B-	92% A-	67% D	0% F	0	3	6
C	68% D+	47% F	58% F	59% F	50% F	72% C-	12% F	92% A-	45% F	2	2	7
D	83% B-	79% C+	81% B-	77% C	76% C	83% B-	64% D	94% A	82% B-	2	0	2
Significance Between Classes	no	yes-	yes-	no	no	yes+	N/A	yes-	yes-	yes+	no	no
*Highlighted rows indicate students in class that was co-taught with the special education teacher.												

Groups	Assistance in Class	Assistance Outside of Class
Teacher in Class	11	17
Teacher not in Class		8
Significance Between Classes	N/A	Yes+
*Highlighted rows indicate students in class that were co-taught with the special education teacher.		

The findings did not support the original hypothesis that; when the special education teacher co-teaches with the regular education teacher, grades for the special education students

will improve. In fact there was little difference in the grades when compared as a group, and only a slight difference in missing work. The only data collected that showed a considerable difference was in the number of times students asked for assistance outside of class. Individual students may have done better or worse in areas, but this cannot be correlated to having a special education teacher in or out of the regular education class.

Chapter V

Conclusion and Applications

After completing this project, this researcher has concluded that as long as the special education teacher is attending one section of a class, they do not need to be present in another section to help all students enrolled in the class. The special education teacher was able to help all students in both sections with similar results, as long as all students have access to the special education teacher at some time during the school day.

The results of this project will have implications when scheduling students and special education staff. When scheduling students it is not necessary to have all special education students in the same sections. Students can be more free to take classes as they want them and not limit their choices so that they fit into the same section as all the rest of the special education students. This will also help when scheduling special education staff. Staff can go into sections as their schedule allows when they have non-teaching hours, instead of try to make their schedule work to get into all sections and classes.

This project will help the special education department manage their time and resources more effectively, because they will be able to have one staff member go into one section, and yet they will be able to help all of the students in that class. This will free staff up to be in the resource room or other classes helping more individuals in more classes. When staff is able to help more students a certain amount of the stress will be alleviate. They will not feel like some students are being short changed because there is not enough time for the special education staff to work with them consistently.

The researcher still feels that because special education teachers cannot be adequately versed in all subjects and content, attending classes and co-teaching can be beneficial. First, the

special education teacher can get a refresher course on the material, and also learn the teaching style of the teacher. The special education teacher can better help students when they are familiar with the subject and expectations of the teacher teaching the class. Second, the regular education teacher can gain assistance from the special education teacher on how to differentiate their instruction, or modify their lesson and work to better accommodate not only the special education students, but other students as well. Finally, special education teachers are many times expected, by the parents and others, to know what is going on in all of their students' classes. If the teacher is in the class or has been in the class, they will be able to more accurately communicate what is happening with a particular student.

This final statement brings up one adjustment that the participating high school special education department has discussed since getting the results of this project. They have discussed making some type of rotating schedule, so that they can be in the classes once every three years or so, to keep up on the material being taught. The department has decided that this will work best with the teachers that have been in the district for a substantial period of time and have consistent lessons such as biology, U.S. history, and algebra classes. Situations that this rotating schedule may not work well for is when new staff is hired, or class curriculum is changed. A major factor that would influence a strict rotational schedule would be an IEP that would mandate that a student be assisted by a special education staff member in a particular class or classes. At these times staff may have to break the rotation and go into those classes. Another idea that the special education department has thought about is an electronically shared calendar where all teachers can record when they have tests, quizzes, projects, and beginning of units. This would help keep the special education department informed when a staff member is not able

to attend classes. This educational project has gotten the special education department really thinking outside of its norm about how to best help accommodate all students.

References

- Arno, A.K. (2009). *General Education Versus Resource Room.*(.). Online Submission.
- Demski, J. (2008). And access for all. *T.H.E.Journal*, 35(12), 30-35.
- US Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (2012). *Free Appropriate Public Education for Students with Dis abilities: Requirements Under Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/doc/edlite-FAPE504.html>
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Public Law No. 105-17. (1997). 20 U.S. Code Section 1400 et. Seq.
- Jones, J. L. 1., & Hensley, L. R. 2. (2012). Taking a closer look at the impact of classroom placement students share their perspective from inside special education classrooms. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 35(3), 33-49.
- Keefe, E. B., & Moore, V. (2004). The challenge of co-teaching in inclusive classrooms at the high school level: What the teachers told us. *American Secondary Education*, 32(3), 77-88.
- Keefe, E. B., Moore, V., & Duff, F. (2004). The four “Knows” of collaborative teaching. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 36(5), 36-42.
- Knackendoffel, E. A. (2007). Collaborative teaming in the secondary school. *Focus on Exceptional Children*, 40(4), 1-20.
- Little, M. E., & Dieker, L. (2009). Coteaching: Two are better than one. *Principal Leadership*, 9(8), 42-46.

Murawski, W. W., & Dieker, L. A. (2004). Tips and strategies for co-teaching at the secondary level. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 36*(5), 52-58.

No Child Left Behind Act (2007), *IDEA Regulations Alignment with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs

Pugach, M. C., & Winn, J. A. (2011). Research on co-teaching and teaming: An untapped resource for induction. *Journal of Special Education Leadership, 24*(1), 36-46.

Regnier, W. L. (1998). *Caution needed for inclusion of "beavis and butthead."*. ().

Reid, C. M. (2010). *The inclusive classroom: How inclusive is inclusion?* ().Online Submission.

Rosario, B., Coles, C., Redmon, P., & Strawbridge, J. *Presentation to Prince George's Country Public Schools Region IV* [Power Point slides]. Retrieved from <http://uni.edu/coe/inclusion>

Savich, C. (2008). *Inclusion: The pros and cons--A critical review.* ().Online Submission.

Scruggs, T.E., & Mastropieri, M.A. (1996). Teachers Perceptions of Mainstreaming/Inclusion, 1958-1995: a research synthesis. *Exceptional Children Publisher: Council for Exceptional Children, 63*(1), 1-7.

Thompkins, R., & Deloney, P., (1995). Inclusion: The Pros and Cons. *SEDL Advancing Research, Improving Education, 4*(3), Retrieved from <http://www.sedl.org/change/issues/43.html>

Thurlow, M.L., Ysseldyke, J.E., Garden, J.L., & Algozzine, B. (1983) *What's "Special" About the Special Education Resource Room for Learning Disabled Students?*,6(3), 283-288

Weiss, M. P., & Lloyd, J. W. (2002). Congruence between roles and actions of secondary special educators in co-taught and special education settings. *Journal of Special Education*, 36(2), 58-68. doi: 10.1177/00224669020360020101

Zelkowitz, A., (2008). Six Models for Collaborative Team Teaching, *Scholastic Inc.*, 12,
Retrieved from http://blogs/scholastic.com/special_ed/2008/12/six-models-for/html