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**Educator Knowledge and Skills Essential for Accommodating
Students With Learning Disabilities in Reading**

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**Educator Knowledge and Skills Essential for Accommodating
Students With Learning Disabilities in Reading**

by

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my daughters, Genevieve and Sarah. To them I give my greatest love and appreciation for the encouragement they offered and sacrifices they made during the nine years of my doctoral program. Their enduring support through life's joys and trials kept them close to home and by my side. What an honor and a privilege to watch you bloom and grow, my dear daughters.

We must carry forward the work of the women who came before us and ensure our daughters have no limits on their dreams, no obstacles to their achievements and no remaining ceilings to shatter.

President Barack Obama

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La Bella Vida!

There's nothing you can do that can't be done.

John Lennon

Educator Knowledge and Skills Essential for Accommodating Students With Learning Disabilities in Reading

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Teachers and administrators implement and supervise the implementation of the individualized education program (IEP) for children with disabilities. An understanding of teacher and administrator knowledge and skills associated with implementation of instructional accommodations and interventions commonly identified in the IEP, may provide insight to averting negative student effects related to failure to provide a free and appropriate public education. This study investigated the self-reported knowledge and skills that educators possess related to IEP accommodations and their self-reported comfort level and ability to implement and supervise instruction prescribed for students with disabilities in reading. To examine what is proposed (i.e., the IEP) and what is actually done throughout the implementation of the IEP and subsequent supervision of instruction, the conceptual framework of espoused theory and theory of action (Argyris & Schön, 1974) and bureaucratic theory (Puch, Hickeron, Hirings, & Turner, 1968) was applied.

Phase 1 analyzed the accommodations prescribed on the IEPs of students with learning disabilities in reading. The results were used to develop questionnaires with stimulus items designed to elicit self-reported knowledge and identify potential areas of need for professional development. In Phase 2 of the study, responses are reported from 6 unique surveys that were sent to elementary and middle school administrators and general and special education teachers who teach or supervise the instruction of students with learning disabilities in reading.

Information and results extracted from survey responses of 222 participants from a large, urban school district in Texas shed light on the ways instructional strategies and accommodations are documented on IEPs for students with disabilities. Standardization due to IEP development software that forced committees to make decisions about accommodations, from limited number of options in a dropdown menu became evident during the review of the data and the district's IEP development process. A discrepancy between the reported level of educator knowledge about specific accommodations, and needed professional development was found. Implications for pre-service teacher and administrator preparation programs and future research are informed by participants' self-reported need for deeper understanding of basic special education practices, obligations, and responsibilities. A call for administrator leadership for organizational change that would facilitate continuous improvement in service delivery to students with disabilities is made. Improved and targeted preservice and inservice professional

development relevant to the supervision and implementation of IEP interventions and accommodations is recommended.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In the mid-1800s, state compulsory school-attendance laws were first codified in Massachusetts (Simpson, 2004). Children whose behavior, socioeconomic status, or cognitive abilities deviated from that of the dominant population, however, were excluded from public education entirely (Dunn, 1968). In the 20th century, the courts upheld compulsory attendance laws, requiring schools to accept a more diverse population of students (Deno, 1970; Dunn, 1968). In response, a dual system of education emerged. According to Pazey and Yates (2012), “The separated ‘special class’ provided a protective barrier supported by perceptions and values of ‘different individuals in societies’” (p. 19), whereby “special classes and schools were expected to address the problems inherent in transforming schools to child-centered organizations” (p. 22). In effect, special education served as a response to “inefficient organizations and defective students” (Skrtic, 1991, p. 207) and a means for accommodating students viewed as difficult to teach in traditional classrooms. According to Semmel, Gerber, and MacMillan (1994), a separate system and separate classes supported economic and efficient administrative practice as “a good practical tool of management whether one separated children for ‘good’ or ‘bad’ reasons” (p. 483). The differential and separatist treatment of children with disabilities reached an unacceptable level, to the point of failure to provide an education, likened to the denial of educational opportunity addressed in civil rights cases (Yell, 2012). Early cases and legislation successfully addressed the right of students with disabilities to

receive access to public education and brought an end to their exclusion from public education. Increasing the meaningfulness and quality of education provided to students with disabilities, however, remains an elusive goal for parents and advocates who strive for accountability and equal access to educational opportunity (Yell, 2012).

This study investigated the knowledge and skills that educators have for developing accommodations and implementing and supervising instruction prescribed for students with disabilities in reading. This chapter begins by providing the history leading up to the current practices, policies, and legislation that are associated with providing students with disabilities with a free, appropriate public education (FAPE), as well as the underlying intent and purposes of these practices and mandates. The statement of the problem, its significance, and the theoretical framework used to inform the study's purpose and subsequent analysis of the data are discussed. The specific purpose of the study, research questions, and definition of terms are followed by the rationale for the study, assumptions, and significance of the study.

Context of the Problem

Brown v. Board of Education (1954), a Supreme Court decision regarding racial segregation, helped pave the way for including individuals previously excluded from the educational experiences and benefits of a public education system. The precedents set forth in the *Brown* decision “provided the legal and philosophical basis for public schools to serve all students in a less segregated system of education” and

“opened the conversation to issues related to equal opportunity and access and individual differences” (Pazey & Yates, 2012, p. 22).

During the 1950s and 1960s, the federal government, supported by parents and other organizations, advocated for funding for children with disabilities. For example, National Association for Retarded Children, now known as the ARC, supported local services and intervention programs for students with disabilities (U.S. Department of Education Special Education & Rehabilitation Services, 2007).

Federal legislation during the 1950s and 1960s (e.g., Education of the Mentally Retarded Act, 1958) was designed to fund higher education institutions to provide training for personnel working with children with specific disabilities. During this time, court decisions further defined the rights of children with disabilities. Without federal regulation, students with disabilities were at the mercy of individual states making decisions about how or whether to serve students with disabilities (Pazey & Yates, 2012). Some states provided limited special subsidies for services to students with disabilities such as deafness or blindness (Martin, Martin, & Terman, 1996).

“During the 1960s and early 1970s, no state served all its children with disabilities. Many states turned children away” (Martin, Martin, & Terman, 1996, p. 27). In 1970, only 1 in 5 children with disabilities was educated in public schools, as many states had enacted laws excluding students who were deaf, blind, emotionally disturbed, or mentally retarded (U.S. Department of Education Special Education &

Rehabilitation Services, 2007). Improvements were needed in how children with disabilities were identified and educated. An evaluation of the effectiveness of these efforts, and the provision of due process protections for children and families was needed. Dunn (1968) raised a voice advocating for desegregation of special education with student access to rigorous educational programs. Deno (1970) called for special educators to become facilitators of educational change by developing better means of meeting the learning needs of children who learn differently. This political and academic voice supported the Congressional enactment of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act ([EAHCA], 1975), which required schools to provide access to educational services for all students with disabilities.

EAHCA (1975) was reauthorized as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1990), the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA, 1997), and the Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA, 2004). The federal law underscored the imperative that public schools provide access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) to every student with a disability. The 1997 and 2004 reauthorizations included procedural requirements and safeguards to ensure accountability.

Procedurally, federal law specifies that the individual education program (IEP) of the student with a disability are to be determined by a multidisciplinary team whose membership includes the student's parents; representatives from general and

special education instruction, administration, assessment, and other discipline expertise as needed and, when appropriate, participation of the child. By law, this multidisciplinary team must consider results from the most current assessment of the student's academic achievement and behavior and the student's current levels of academic performance and functional skills when developing IEP goals for the student and determining which related services, if any, will best support the student. Consensus is to be sought regarding the type and level of support and services necessary to meet the unique needs of the child. These supports and services are to be documented in the student's IEP. Federal law designates the IEP as the official document that "delineates the specific education program needs of an individual student with disabilities" (Langford, 2010, p. 20). "The IEP supports individualized instruction based on egalitarian views of mankind with the intent of providing adequate educational opportunities for children and youth with handicapping conditions" (Smith, 1990, p. 6).

Statement of the Problem

According to IDEA (2004), the IEP is to be implemented and systematically monitored to assess the individual student's progress toward academic, behavioral, and social goals. Since 1975, the IEP has served as the conceptual, legal, and procedural cornerstone of education for individuals who qualify as students with disabilities (Yell, 2012). Knight (2010) suggested that a school district's failure to implement the IEP is a denial of FAPE and therefore makes the district vulnerable for

sanctions through due process action. Federal laws (Education for All Handicapped Children Act, 1975; IDEA, 1997, 2004) have consistently required educational programs to be specially designed to meet the unique needs of the child with disabilities; but have defined a standard by which the provision of FAPE can be measured. This ambiguous description of educational service delivery for students with disabilities is complex, may appear contradictory, and has proven difficult for educational organizations and the professionals in these organizations to appropriately respond to the mandates. Individual interpretations by professionals, litigation, and case law have attempted to clarify how FAPE can be defined. The variation in interpretation has led to inconsistent service delivery and further disagreement between schools and families. The problem remains: What do professionals know, and what skills are necessary to be effective in designing and providing appropriate services to students with disabilities?

Significance of the Problem

Loss of services or the provision of ineffective services because of difficulties with the IEP precipitates long-term negative consequences for the student, including jeopardized progress toward academic and social goals, reduced graduation rates, limited postsecondary experiences, reduced independence, and less meaningful social interaction. According to the Center on Education Policy (2009), students with disabilities lag behind their peers in all measures of school success, with significantly lower scores on state content tests in reading and mathematics in the fourth grade.

Differences of 30 to 40-percentage points in reading and math have been documented (Center on Education Policy, 2009). Although students with disabilities have improved and made progress as revealed in national and state test performance, the difference in achievement of students with and without disabilities continues to be “very large” (Center on Education Policy, 2009, p. 14). These student effects generalize to losses for society through the continuing cost of services to persons with disabilities and reduced economic contributions from loss of wages and taxes. For students with disabilities, constitutional rights such as life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness may be denied. For the educational organization, ineffective services create the potential for (a) inappropriate distribution of human and technical resources with accompanying fiscal costs; (b) increased burdens of procedure; (c) misplaced allocations of resources for professional development; (d) confusion of responsibility for instruction, assessment, and accountability; (e) parent anxiety, confusion, and conflict with schools; (f) within-school and school system conflict; and (g) due process issues and litigation.

Due process procedures and litigation represent perceived and actual evidence of ineffective service provision. The required recording on the IEP of these processes creates a potential database to examine efficacy of services to students with disabilities. For example, during the 2007–2008 school year, there were 3,969 written and signed complaints, 2,870 mediations, and 3,558 due process hearings nationally (U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs, 2009). In

Texas, in only slightly more than one year, January 2011 and April 2012, 35 due process hearing decisions were rendered. A total of 477 filed hearings and 332 complaints were mediated and settled in districts throughout Texas (Texas Education Agency, 2012b). Each of the children named in these cases represents a situation where a family or school district experienced dissatisfaction with the process or provision of services. Consequently, these difficulties represent a lack of consensus on the content or failed content or implementation of the IEP.

Ultimately, teachers and administrators implement the IEP. An understanding of teacher knowledge and skills associated with implementation of accommodations and interventions commonly identified in the IEP may provide insight into the difficulties with providing FAPE to students with disabilities. This study explored and examined teachers' and administrators' self-reported knowledge and skills associated with interventions found on IEPs. The examination is conceptualized as what is proposed (i.e., the IEP) and what was actually done in the implementation of the IEP.

Argyris and Schön (1974) proposed that organizations and behavior in organizations can be examined from the perspective of espoused theory and theory-in-use. The next section provides an explanation of the theoretical framework used to guide this study.

Theoretical Framework

Theory of Action and Theory-in-Use

In their *theory of action*, Argyris and Schön (1996) provided a description of espoused theory and theory-in-use. The *espoused theory* is the theory of action that is articulated by the organization that explains or justifies an action or pattern of activity. The *theory-in-use* is the actual performance or pattern of activity of the organization. In an ideal organization, espoused theory and theory-in-use are identical. Argyris and Schön (1974) argued that mental maps guide a person's actions and behavior as opposed to what the person says is guiding his or her actions. They argued that these mental maps, rather than what is espoused by a person, guide behavior, therefore a potential split between theory and action. The words a person uses to describe what he or she does (or what a person wants others to think he or she does) is the espoused theory. However, the theory that actually governs actions is the theory-in-use, i.e., what are the actual actions of the individual in the organization (Argyris & Schön, 1974). The incongruence between the espoused theory and the theory-in-use diminishes the effectiveness of the action on the desired outcome.

Model I and Model II Organizational Behaviors

Models for dealing with gaps or mismatch between espoused theories and theories-in-use suggest how an organization responds to the knowledge of unintended outcomes. An organization focused on continuous improvement may study the differences for future action planning. However, leaders of an organization may feel

threatened by the data and give a defensive response (Argyris, 1980).

Argyris and Schön (1974) described Model I and Model II organizational behaviors in terms of single-loop learning and double-loop learning. Model I organizational behaviors do not include outside involvement in improvement activities and suppress or avoid negative feelings when solving organizational problems or correcting errors of professional practice. In order to avoid the embarrassment or fear caused by the involvement of others in problem-solving behaviors (including cover-ups and defensive behaviors that avoid possible organization or person problems), the action is *problem avoidance*.

Model II type organizational behaviors are of a problem-solving nature that welcome input from outside entities and seek to improve the problematic process through collaboration and reflection. The practice of modifying an organization's underlying norms or policy for correcting an error is double-loop learning. Double-loop learning provides a reflective approach for improvement in professional practice (Peile, 2004).

Application of Theoretical Framework

Numerous other applications of the theory have been made, and the application of the theory has been productive to understanding organizational productivity. Kerr's (2009) research provides a potential structure for examining the IEP development and use in schools.

In an example of the application of Argyris and Schön's (1974) action theory, Kerr (2009) used it as the framework for research on professional practice in the information-literacy field. In Kerr's research, foundational beliefs and values of information literacy were studied in official policy documents and were framed as the espoused theory of the organization of academic libraries. Informational literacy, operationalized in practice through online tutorials, represented the theories-in-use. Patterns of congruence and incongruence were identified in the study of 15 exemplary academic libraries and the evaluation of their policy statements and instructional online tutorials. Analysis of the data showed various differences between the espoused theories and theories-in-use that provided information to better align the espoused academic teaching objectives with the goals and student outcomes (Kerr, 2009). The results produced an empirical basis for information-literacy practitioners to reflect upon and improve the design of products used in information-literacy education.

Understanding the Use of the IEP

The IEP articulates the supports and services, accommodations and interventions identified by the decision-making committee needed for providing FAPE to a student with disabilities. The developed IEP can be conceptualized as espoused theory. The actual use or implementation of the IEP can be described as the theory-in-use.

This study explored and examined the level of knowledge and skills possessed by teachers and administrators for implementing commonly prescribed accommodations for students with disabilities. The study further identified administrator knowledge and skills when supervising and evaluating teacher instruction and alignment with the IEP in regard to the use of these accommodations. The study applied espoused theory and theory of action (Argyris & Schön, 1974) as a framework to examine teacher and administrator knowledge and skills.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' and campus administrators' knowledge and skills needed when implementing and supervising instruction requiring implementation of the most commonly prescribed accommodations found in IEPs. Reading difficulties are the most commonly identified area of IEP accommodations or interventions. Nationally representative samples (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2001a) of over 200,000 fourth graders and over 160,000 eighth graders are identified in the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress in reading. Of the 2011 fourth-grade test takers with identified disabilities, 68% scored below basic reading proficiency, compared to 29% of their nondisabled peers. Of the eighth-grade test takers with identified disabilities, 60% scored below basic reading proficiency, compared to 20% of their nondisabled peers (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2011b).

This study examined accommodations that were prescribed and documented in the IEPs of fourth and eighth graders—with identified disabilities in reading—in a large urban school district in Texas. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What instructional interventions or accommodations are identified on the IEPs of students in the fourth and eighth grades who have been identified as having a learning disability in reading?
2. What knowledge and skills do the teachers and administrators have of the interventions or accommodations prescribed on the IEPs of the identified fourth- and eighth-grade students?
3. Are teachers using the IEP for instructional planning?
4. Are teachers implementing the IEP and administrators supervising the implementation of the IEP?

Definition of Terms

Achievement gap refers to differences between the scores of students with different backgrounds (ethnic, racial, gender, disability, and income) evident on large-scale standardized tests (National Education Association, 2012)

Espoused theory is the part of the theory of action that is articulated by the organization that explains or justifies an action or pattern of activity (Argyris & Schön, 1996).

Free and appropriate education (FAPE) refers to special education and related services that (a) are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge; (b) meet standards of the state educational agency; (c) include an appropriate preschool, elementary, or secondary school education in the state involved; and (d) are provided in conformity with the IEP (IDEA, 2004).

General education teachers must hold a bachelor's degree (or higher degree) from a college or university, hold full state teacher certification or licensure for the content area that they teach, and demonstrate competency in each subject they teach. *Content-area competency* is demonstrated by passing state-developed tests in each core subject (Yell, 2012).

The *Individualized Education Program (IEP)* is

both a process in which an IEP team develops an appropriate program and a written document delineating the special education and related services to be provided to an eligible student. The purpose of these procedures is to help ensure that teams of individuals collaborate to create an individualized and meaningful IEP that provides a FAPE. (Yell, 2012, p. 239)

Individuals with disabilities refer to children evaluated in accordance with IDEA (2004) §300.304–300.311 as having mental retardation, a hearing impairment, a speech or language impairment, a visual impairment, a serious emotional disturbance, an orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairment, a specific learning disability, deaf-blindness, or multiple disabilities and who thus needs special education and related services.

Least restrictive environment (LRE) refers to a federal mandate requiring that, when appropriate, students with disabilities are to be educated with typically developing peers, to the maximum extent possible (IDEA, 2004).

Scientifically based interventions or accommodations are “educational programs and practices that have been demonstrated to be effective by rigorous scientific research” (Yell, 2012, p. 167).

Special education provides FAPE with supports and related services designed to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living (IDEA, 2004).

Special education teachers must meet the same highly qualified standards as general education teachers. They must have a bachelor’s degree, full state certification in special education or success on the state examinations for special education teacher licensing, and hold a license to teach in the state as a special education teacher (Yell, 2012).

Specific learning disability refers to a disorder in one of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language, written or spoken, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia (IDEA, 2004).

Theory-in-use is the actual performance or pattern of activity of the organization (Argyris & Schön, 1996).

Theory of action “is a theory of deliberate human behavior which is for the agent a theory of control but which, when attributed to the agent, also serves to explain or predict his [or her] behavior” (Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. 6).

Rationale and Significance of the Study

Teacher Knowledge and Skills in Accommodation Implementation

Improving reading achievement continues to be a priority to schools nationally (Benner, Nelson, Stage, & Ralston, 2011), and fidelity of implementation of reading interventions in school is critical to achieving the outcomes. Improved student outcomes and the feasibility of closing the achievement gap are directly linked to fidelity of implementation of scientifically based reading instruction. Despite a large accumulation of evidence on scientifically based instructional practices, such practices are implemented on a “limited or haphazard basis at best” (Landrum, Cook, Tankersley, & Fitzgerald, 2007, p. 28). If the most effective instructional practices are not routinely used for students who require them, the chances of students with disabilities achieving their full potential are limited. Boardman, Aruelles, Vaughn, Hughes, and Klinger (2005) found, through observation of teachers during reading instruction, little individualization or differentiation of instruction and limited time spent monitoring progress. Despite

research supporting effective strategies for teaching students with learning disabilities, teachers still appear to underutilize prescribed instructional strategies.

Administrator Knowledge and Skills in Accommodation Implementation

The involvement of lead teachers and administrators as active coaches and members of implementation teams contributes to the successful implementation of training in scientifically based reading instruction. As stated by Benner et al. (2011), “Structured coaching and principal visits to ‘look for’ key instructional behaviors provide a measure of teacher capacity to implement evidence based approaches” (p. 87). Of critical importance is building administrator support of the teachers in implementation of literacy strategies. Administrators are “equipped to determine how to offer ongoing support to teachers on the basis of teachers’ levels of use and concerns related to literacy programs” (Gilrane, Russell, & Roberts, 2008).

Assumptions

This study examined teachers’ and administrators’ self-reported knowledge and use of instructional accommodations commonly prescribed in the IEPs of students. Nevertheless, several assumptions were inherent in the purpose of this study. First the students identified in the sample are assumed to have current and accurate evaluations that supported their identification as a student with a disability in reading and that the prescribed accommodations were based upon an educational need for that instructional service. Second, it was assumed that the verbiage used to describe needed student interventions was common and understandable by teachers

and administrators who were responsible for implementation. Finally, there was the assumption that the situations, procedures, and frequency with which the interventions and accommodations were to be used were clearly explained in the IEP.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 included historical and current practices surrounding the education of children with disabilities, the social context in which they were developed, the theoretical framework for the study, and significance and rationale for the study. Chapter 2, presents literature in the areas of (a) inception of special education legislation, (b) IEP implementation mandates, (c) effects of failure to implement prescribed interventions and accommodations, (d) teacher and administrator knowledge and skills about instructional interventions and accommodations, and (e) the theoretical framework of espoused theory and theory-in-use. Chapter 2 concludes with a summary. Chapter 3 presents descriptions of Phase 1 and Phase 2 research design and methods used to conduct the study. An explanation of the processes used to collect and analyze the data is found in Chapter 4. Discussion, conclusions, and implications of the findings compose Chapter 5.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' and campus administrators' knowledge and skills needed when implementing and supervising instruction requiring implementation of the most commonly prescribed accommodations found in IEPs. Reading difficulties are the most commonly identified area of IEP accommodations or interventions. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What instructional interventions or accommodations are identified on the IEPs of students in the fourth and eighth grades who have been identified as having a learning disability in reading?
2. What knowledge and skills do the teachers and administrators have of the interventions or accommodations prescribed on the IEPs of the identified fourth- and eighth-grade students?
3. Are teachers using the IEP for instructional planning?
4. Are teachers implementing the IEP and administrators supervising the implementation of the IEP?

Relevant Research and Related Literature

A review and synthesis of the literature was conducted: (a) general and special education teachers' level of knowledge of the contents of students' IEPs, (b) the extent to which teachers utilized varying components of the IEP to guide their practice throughout the teaching and learning process, (c) the extent to which teachers implemented the components as stipulated within the IEP, and (d) the eventual effect

that a lack of knowledge regarding the IEP or the failure to utilize or implement varying components of the IEP on the part of general or special education teachers has on procedural due process outcomes. In general, three questions of interest were examined in this review and synthesis:

1. Are general education and special education teachers familiar with or knowledgeable about the contents of their students' IEPs?
2. Does the IEP have a direct influence on planning of lessons, assessment, and provision of accommodations?
3. Is there evidence in Texas Education Agency records of due process hearing decisions indicating a failure to implement the IEP?

Selection of Relevant Studies

Study Selection Criteria

Included in the review and synthesis were studies that met the definition of scientifically based research standards in the Education Sciences Reform Act (2002). The standards stipulate that such research “(i) apply rigorous, systematic, and objective methodology to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs; and (ii) present findings and make claims that are appropriate to and supported by the methods that have been employed” (Education Sciences Reform Act, 2002, §102.18). Studies conducted since 1975, marking the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, were included in the search.

Research studies published outside of the United States and in languages other than English were excluded.

Procedure for Selection of Studies

Online, electronic database searches of EBSCO Host, ERIC, Academic Search Complete, and PsychINFO were conducted. Additionally, an ancestral search (Centre for Health Informatics, 2008) using the reference sections of relevant studies was conducted. The reference sections of the included studies were searched along with related articles found through database searches. Keywords for the search are found in Table 1. Keywords and results used for the database searches are also summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Keywords and Results

Keywords	Results	Met criteria
<i>“Individualized Education Program” + research</i>	2,533	
<i>IEP + compliance</i>	1,171	
<i>IEP + research</i>	739	1
<i>“Individualized Education Program” + use</i>	31	0
<i>IEP + utiliz* + educa*</i>	17	2
<i>IEP + compliance + teachers</i>	25	1 duplicate
<i>“Individual Education Program” + utility</i>	14	1 duplicate
<i>IEP + theory + practice</i>	41	0
<i>IEP + edu* + quantitative</i>	37	0
<i>“Individualized Education Program” + compli* + research</i>	32	1 duplicate

Deceptive Trade Practices

The importance of implementing the IEP transcends IDEA (2004) requirements and can be perceived as a contractual agreement between the school district and the parents of children with disabilities. Therefore, the literature search also examined the IEP literature from the standpoint of laws and policies of trade practice. Failure to implement the IEP may be considered a deceptive trade practice. For example, the purpose of the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act (1973) was to protect consumers against false, misleading, and deceptive business practices; unconscionable actions; and breaches of warranty. Representing that work or services have been performed on goods when the work or services were not performed is considered a deceptive practice. The Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act provided for claims as follows:

A consumer may maintain an action where any of the following constitute a producing cause of economic damages or damages for mental anguish: (1) The use or employment by any person of a false, misleading, or deceptive act or practice that is: (A) specifically enumerated in a subdivision of Subsection (b) of Section 17.46 of this subchapter; and (B) relied on by a consumer to the consumer's detriment; (2) breach of an express or implied warranty; (3) any unconscionable action or course of action by any person; or (4) the use or employment by any person of an act or practice in violation of Chapter 541, Insurance Code. (§17.50[a])

Failure to implement the IEP may evidence of a breach of practice under the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act (1973), causing mental anguish by representing services described on the IEP but not performing the work or services (supports and services). Therefore, if educators are responsible for implementing the IEP and

delivering the support and services prescribed and documented by the IEP, failure to do so could be conceptualized as a violation of the law regarding deceptive trade practices.

Search Results

Remarkably, the review and synthesis identified only four studies meeting the criteria. After more careful examination, only three studies (Lee-Tarver, 2006; Rheams, 1989; Schick, 2007) met the criteria for inclusion in the synthesis. These studies included two dissertations and one study reported in a peer-reviewed educational journal. The ancestral search did not produce any additional research that met the inclusion criteria.

Analysis of Studies

Rheams (1989) investigated teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of the IEP with questionnaires sent to randomly selected elementary and secondary special education and general education teachers from urban and rural districts. Of the general education teachers, 21%, or 30 of 139 teachers, perceived the IEP to be a useless document. Of the special education teachers, 43.5%, or 91 of 209 responders, considered the IEP to be a useless document (Rheams, 1989).

Schick (2007) researched teachers' perceptions of IEP usefulness in a study about a new IEP development process piloted in a district. The 92 special education teachers were asked if they consider the IEP to be a good instructional guide for students with special needs, and 29% ($n = 27$) disagreed or strongly disagreed. When

asked if they refer to the student's IEP when developing instructional plans, 35% of the 101 general education teacher responders indicated they did not refer to the IEP when planning. The 92 special education teachers were asked if they referred to the IEP when developing instructional plans, and 15% ($n = 14$) of the special education teachers indicated they did not refer to the IEP when developing instructional plans.

Lee-Tarver (2006) conducted a survey to investigate the perceptions of general education teachers regarding the utility of IEPs for students included in their classrooms. The 123 general education respondents gave information regarding their use of the IEP to "plan instructional activities" (Lee-Tarver, 2006, p. 266). Thirty-five respondents, 22.8%, indicated they did not use the IEP to plan instructional activities. Lee-Tarver also reported that 26.1% of general education teachers surveyed did not believe the IEP was helpful in organizing and structuring teaching.

The studies each reported results of teacher perceptions of the usefulness of the IEPs or their actual use of the IEP as an instructional tool. Table 2 shows the results of the synthesis of the data reported in the three studies. All of the studies' results indicated a significant percentage of general and special education teachers held negative perceptions about the usefulness of the IEP. In the Rheams (1989) study, which was conducted 24 years ago, general education teachers specifically described the IEP as a useless document. An alarming 43.5% of special education teachers surveyed expressed their perception of the IEP as a useless document. The

Schick (2007) study supported the Lee-Tarver (2006) data of the number of general education teachers who do not believe the IEP helps with instructional planning.

Table 2

Teacher Perceptions and Use of the Individualized Education Program (IEP)

Source	Perceptions of IEP	Use of IEP in planning instruction
Lee-Tarver, 2006		
General education teachers	26.1% did not believe the IEP is helpful in organizing and structuring teaching	22.8% did not use the IEP to plan instructional activities
Special education teachers	Not in study	Not in study
Schick, 2007		
General education	35% did not believe the IEP is a good instructional guide	35% did not refer to the IEP when developing instructional plans
Special education	29% did not believe the IEP is a good instructional guide	15% did not refer to the IEP when developing instructional plans
Rheams, 1989		
General education	21.6% perceived the IEP to be a “useless document.”	Not in study
Special education	43.5% perceived the IEP to be a “useless document.”	Not in study

Note. Sources: “Are Individualized Education Plans a Good Thing?” by A. Lee-Tarver, 2006, *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 33, 263-272; *Teachers’ Perceptions of the Effectiveness of the Individualized Education Program* (Doctoral dissertation), by A. E. Rheams, 1989, available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database (UMI No. 9023348); and *Changing the IEP Development Process* (Doctoral dissertation), by A. L. Schick, 2007, available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database (UMI No. 3253734).

All three studies reported a need for more training for teachers. Lee-Tarver (2006) commented on the need for additional training for general education teachers “on the purpose, development and implementation of the IEP” (p. 270). Schick

(2007) concluded, “General Educators also need to have more foundational information about Special Education and the role they have in the IEP development process and the implementation of an IEP for a student” (p. 190). Rheams (1989) recommended, “The development and implementation of the IEP must be improved by providing teachers with training in the process, as well as with adequate time for completing the mandated tasks” (p. 94). Rheams and Schick reported different results than Lee-Tarver as both observed special education teachers to have a more favorable perception of the usefulness and effectiveness of the IEP than their general education counterparts. Lee-Tarver’s study did not include special education teachers.

Discussion

Teachers’ Familiarity With Contents of Students’ IEPs

With regard to the first question of this literature review, whether general education and special education teachers are familiar with or knowledgeable about the contents of their students’ IEPs, none of the studies addressed this question specifically. However, both general education and special education teachers gave evidence that they were aware of the existence of the IEP but might not have been knowledgeable about the contents of the IEP (Lee-Tarver, 2006; Rheams, 1989; Schick, 2007). Since large percentages of participants responded that the IEP was not useful in developing instruction and services for students with disabilities, one could conclude that there is a conceptual difference in what the organization espouses in the IEP and the services to the student the organization actually provides, the theory-in-

use. This discrepancy in espoused theory and use may indicate a lack of concern for the federal law requirements of the IEP directing services at the level of practice.

If the discrepancy in espoused services and services provided (espoused theory and theory-in-use) were to be conceptualized and tested as evidence of deceptive trade practices, additional energy might be developed to bring a closer match of espoused to use in practice. A search did not identify case law of an application of deceptive trade practices use in schools; such an application may be made in the future.

In Texas, deceptive practices include the representation that work or services have been performed when, in reality, the work or services were not performed. Based on both general and special education teachers' reported use of the IEP in the three studies analyzed, one can translate their practice to a service unperformed, if teachers are not using the IEP for planning and instruction for individuals with disabilities in their classes. Further, due process litigation and its content indicate at least disagreement of services or their provision from requirements stated within the IEP.

IEP Influence on Planning, Assessment, and Accommodations

The second question of interest for this review sought to determine whether the IEP has a direct influence on the planning of lessons, assessment, and provision of accommodations. This question was specifically asked of teachers in all three studies (Lee-Tarver, 2006; Rheams, 1989; Schick, 2007). The results were mixed, with both

general education and special education teachers stating the IEP was not a useful planning tool, as indicated in Table 2. Further, 65–85% of the teachers in the studies did not refer to the IEP when planning instruction or activities. The original intent of exemplary compliance with the Education for All Handicapped Children Act and its IEP process (Smith, 1990) cannot be accomplished if general education and special education teachers are reporting a less than direct influence on planning and instruction. It then follows that the IEP as the espoused theory of action is incongruent with the theory-in-use reported by the populations in all three studies (Lee-Tarver, 2006; Rheams, 1989; Schick, 2007).

Due Process Hearings in Texas due to Failure to Implement the IEP

The third question of interest in this literature review was whether there was evidence in Texas Education Agency records of due process hearing decisions indicating a failure to implement the IEP. A search of formal due process hearings for approximately one year, January 1, 2011, to March 31, 2012, was conducted. This search produced 35 hearings that were decided during the specified time period (see Table 2). Selection of Relevant Due Process Hearing Decisions

Cases that listed IEP implementation or appropriateness issues were included in the synthesis. Cases that did not list IEP implementation as an allegation or cases of IEP implementation that were of a nonacademic nature, such as transportation or discipline, were excluded. Coding results are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Texas Due Process Hearings Coding Results

Docket no.	Respondent	Decision date	Hearing officer	Decision	Issue
215-SE-0511	Northside ISD	1/30/2012	Rudd	Student	FAPE, IEP+
225-SE-0511	Lewisville ISD	3/26/2012	Lockwood	ISD	FAPE, IEP+
235-SE-0611	Spring ISD	1/4/2012	Aleman	ISD	FAPE, IEP
019-SE-0910 & 289-SE- 0710	Abilene ISD	3/8/2011	Rudd	ISD	Failure to Implement+
029-SE-1010	Flour Bluff ISD	4/30/2011	Aleman	ISD	Failure to Implement+
036-SE-1010	Corpus Christi ISD	2/22/2011	Ramage	Student	FAPE, IEP+
085-SE-1210	Corpus Christi ISD	3/23/2011	Ramage	Student	FAPE, IEP
241-SE-0611	Houston ISD	10/15/2011	McElvaney	ISD	IEP, methodology

Note. ISD = Independent School District. Petitioner was student in each case. All cases were regarding failure to implement Individualized Education Program (IEP) or an appropriate IEP.

The hearing decisions reached for each case were reviewed and coded to identify specific issues relevant to development and implementation of the student's IEP. Cases that listed IEP implementation or appropriateness issues were included in the synthesis. Cases that did not list IEP implementation as an allegation or cases regarding IEP implementation issues of a nonacademic nature, such as transportation or discipline, were excluded.

Of the eight due process hearing decisions that met the criteria for inclusion, three were decided for the student in the allegations surrounding IEP implementation,

and five were decided for the districts. The allegations included failure to provide services required by the IEP such as physical therapy, speech, or occupational therapy; lack of appropriate IEP; failure to implement the goals of the IEP; failure to provide extended school-year services; failure to conduct assessments; failure to provide educational or behavioral progress; and general allegation of failure to implement the IEP. The decisions for the petitioner and for the respondent were split among allegations, but both presented concerns for IEP content implementation.

Eight of the 35 hearings, 23% included issues regarding dissatisfaction with the implementation of the IEP. A total of 809 complaints and hearings were filed during the time period researched, 774 were dismissed, mediated, or settled without going to due process hearing. If a third (258) of those complaints included claims of failure to implement the IEP, the significance of the problem increases. No official data have been collected on the claims settled on a local level, which clouds the number of cases based on a failure to provide services. Parents who brought forth their claims on the local or state level were voicing their concerns. It can be assumed that there are additional parents did not have the resources, time, knowledge, or fortitude to formally give voice to their concerns. The sum of all of these concerns in these populations is unknown; however, the nature of the problem would seem to suggest greater concern than those that result in formal actions.

The allegations and decisions in the formal due process hearings indicated that in these specific instances, the implementation of the IEP or theory-in-use was not

congruent with the IEP espoused theory represented through the goals, objectives, specialized instruction and supports, related services, and overall intents as determined by members of a multidisciplinary team. A deceptive practices claim of a service not performed would also appear to be relevant, considering the data found in the decisions of the due process hearings synthesized.

Rationale for the Study

This synthesis provided information about the scope and nature of teacher knowledge, use, and implementation of the IEP. The data revealed in the three studies (Lee-Tarver, 2006; Rheams, 1989; Schick, 2007) indicated a need for special education administrators and general education administrators to have greater concern and involvement with the ways in which general and special education teachers utilize the IEP to both (a) inform their instructional planning and practice, and (b) determine the educational services they provide students with disabilities for whom they are professionally responsible. The literature has suggested administrators should monitor and facilitate teacher access to information contained within students' IEPs, possess and articulate knowledge of the rationale for their use, and underscore the importance of using the student's IEP for planning and instruction.

The results of this literature review and synthesis indicate the need for further research to better understand the potential scope and consequences of the legally required IEP as an instructional planning tool. It may be useful to collect data from general education and special education teachers about the professional level of use of

the current IEP. Clearly, an understanding of why the IEP has not been considered useful or positive by a large percentage of practitioners (Lee-Tarver, 2006; Rheams, 1989; Schick, 2007) warrants further investigation.

Understanding from future research of the usefulness of IEP data suggests the need for further considerations or revisions regarding the IEP process and how the document is currently being developed. Drawing upon scientific evidence and data from the field and academia, researchers, policy makers, and practitioners would be well advised to combine efforts and work toward a stronger connection between espoused theory in action and theory-in-use on behalf of students with disabilities and as articulated in the student's IEP. Information about the ways in which general and special education teachers access the IEP document and obtain knowledge about its contents could be gained and translated into recommended practices for how teachers access and gain understanding of the IEP to impact student learning.

Conclusion

The sheer paucity of research about how teachers access and make use of the IEP and their level of knowledge about its contents indicates that educators are making assumptions about and defending practice that may be incongruent with their espoused beliefs. It is alarming that in the three studies synthesized (Lee-Tarver, 2006; Rheams, 1989; Schick, 2007), there was evidence of blatant disregard for federal requirements intended to protect the right to an appropriate education for individuals with disabilities. As stated by Smith (1990), "Classroom practice, by the

law's intent, should be guided by the IEP. That is, the IEP should be an essential component of instructional design and delivery that enhances and accounts for students' learning and teachers' teaching" (p. 6). Continuing to study the quality of the IEP process, the quality of the goals in the IEP, and compliance with IEP team membership requirements and decisions without asking the hard questions about practice is tantamount to ignoring the importance of the intent of nearly 40 years of federal legislation, state regulations, and local policy development on behalf of individuals with disabilities in education.

Chapter 3: Methods

Purpose of the Study

This chapter presents an overview of the research methods and design used for this study. The purpose of this study was twofold. First, the study identified the instructional interventions and accommodations in reading listed as necessary for fourth- and eighth-grade students with disabilities. Second, the study explored the level of knowledge and skills possessed by teacher and campus administrators in regard to the specified interventions or accommodations as stated in the students' IEPs and the frequency with which they apply and use their knowledge and skills, whether through teacher implementation or administrator supervision of instruction.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study were as follows:

1. What instructional interventions or accommodations are identified on the IEPs of students in the fourth and eighth grades who have been identified as having a learning disability in reading?
2. What knowledge and skills do the teachers and administrators have of the interventions or accommodations prescribed on the IEPs of the identified fourth- and eighth-grade students?
3. Are teachers using the IEP for instructional planning?
4. Are teachers implementing the IEP and administrators supervising the implementation of the IEP?

Research Method, Design, and Proposed Statistical Analysis

Phase 1 of this study collected existing descriptive data from a large urban school district in Texas, utilizing the school district software and databases. These databases included the IEPs of fourth- and eighth-grade students identified as having learning disabilities in reading. The various instructional interventions and accommodations documented on the student IEPs were extracted from the school district data.

A data request was made for frequency counts of any and all reading accommodations and interventions documented anywhere on the IEPs of children with learning disabilities in reading, in the fourth and eighth grades during the 2010–2011 school year (see Appendix A). No differentiation was made between *interventions* and *accommodations* in the data request, in order to allow for staff interpretation of the information request. After approval by the external research department (see Appendix E) and a signed agreement with the legal department of the school district (see Appendix F), the database requested was released.

After determining which IEP data were released, the most frequently prescribed results informed the construction of the questionnaire for Phase 2. Less frequently prescribed accommodations were not included in the study in an effort to control for the odds of participants' lack of experience with the accommodation, due to the small number of children requiring the accommodation in the district. More importantly, the questionnaire included commonly prescribed accommodations to

increase the odds that the respondents had experience with the accommodation. The intent of the study was to explore educator knowledge and skills, not whether they had encountered more obscure accommodations.

The request for information was made via the supervisor of special education data management for the district. At the initial face-to-face meeting, the raw data were presented to the researcher, on screen, by the data-management supervisor, and the report design was developed. The IEP development software framework was searched for elements of the IEP that would render comments or language relevant to the identification of instructional accommodations or interventions. The district's special education data-management supervisor determined that the only opportunity to record this information was within the decision-making documentation (displayed as a set of options that were contained in a drop-down menu item) that stipulated allowable statewide testing accommodations for the student in question. Except for the deliberations section, there was no opportunity to provide specific documentation of individual need and no other prompts that enabled the team to consider or recommend additional and necessary instructional accommodations or interventions.

In Phase 2, all current special education and general education teachers of fourth- and eighth-grade students with learning disabilities in reading were surveyed regarding the instructional interventions and accommodations that were identified in Phase 1 of the study. All current administrators who supervise teachers of fourth- and

eighth-grade students with learning disabilities in reading were surveyed regarding the instructional interventions and accommodations identified in Phase 1.

Data was collected from the teachers and administrators using researcher-developed educator questionnaires. Participants were asked to assess their level of knowledge about each of the most frequently identified instructional interventions or accommodations on district IEPs of students with learning disabilities in reading. Questionnaire stimulus items were formatted using either a self-rating scale or Likert scale, which sought to determine teachers' and administrators' current level of knowledge and use of the IEP-identified instructional interventions or accommodations. A qualitative, descriptive analysis was used to report the survey findings.

Educator categories and questionnaire types included (a) Elementary Campus Administrator Questionnaire, (b) Fourth-Grade General Education Teacher Questionnaire, (c) Fourth-Grade Special Education Teacher Questionnaire, (d) Middle School Campus Administrator Questionnaire, (e) Eighth-Grade General Education Teacher Questionnaire, and (f) Eighth-Grade Special Education Teacher Questionnaire.

Stimulus items were designed to control for nonresponse rates or to reduce their anxiety about providing what might be considered socially undesirable responses to sensitive questions. Tourangeau and Yan (2007) defined sensitive questions as those that are intrusive, that have a threat of disclosure, and whose

responses may be socially undesirable. Among the suggested methods for controlling for these factors are “indirect methods for eliciting sensitive information” (Tourangeau & Yan, 2007, p. 871), including “forgiving wording” of questions (p. 874). The researchers found that the largest effect of forgiving wording in question manipulation involved responses in which subjects reported what they knew about attitudinal issues rather than admission of behaviorally sensitive issues such as drug use or sexual practices.

For this study, the construction of the most sensitive questions included forgiving wording when seeking information about understanding IEPs and frequency of use of accommodations. For example, instead of wording the stimulus item “I understand the IEPs of students with disabilities,” the item was phrased “Although IEPs are sometimes complicated and lengthy, I am confident in my knowledge and understanding of student’s IEPs” (see Appendices B–G).

The Eighth-Grade General Education Teacher Questionnaire, Eighth-Grade Special Education Teacher Questionnaire, Fourth-Grade General Education Teacher Questionnaire, and Fourth-Grade Special Education Teacher Questionnaire can be found in Appendices B–E. The Elementary Campus Administrator Questionnaire and Middle School Campus Administrator Questionnaire are in Appendices F and G, respectively. The survey used Qualtrics software that is hosted by The University of Texas at Austin’s College of Education. The questionnaire was administered to the

sample population via e-mail delivery and Qualtrics. Responses were aggregated and reported for each of the six questionnaires.

Participation in the study was voluntary with no requests for personal or private information (See Appendix I for the Informed Consent Form). Responses were analyzed and reported in aggregate form, eliminating any identification of specific students, teachers, administrators, or school campuses.

Individual and aggregated data were stored on a personal computer that is accessed only by the researcher. Any hard copies generated were stored in a locked filing cabinet and maintained for 3 years. Qualtrics (n.d.) has SAS 70 Certification and meets the rigorous privacy standards imposed at the level of security required for health care records. All Qualtrics accounts are hidden behind passwords, and all data are protected with real-time data replication.

School district databases maintained in the course of daily business were needed. The supervisor of special education data management assisted in writing electronic reports necessary to extract the data on frequency of selected instructional interventions and accommodations from the electronic IEPs of students with disabilities in reading. Additional school district databases were used to generate population sample lists of teachers and administrators and their e-mail addresses. An incentive for completing the survey was offered to the sample pool via a chance to win an iPad mini16 Wi-Fi (see Appendix H).

Sample Population

Teachers made up 64% of the professionals in the study district (Texas Education Agency, 2012a). Of the teacher population, 76% were female and 23% were male, with an average of 11.2 years of experience teaching. The teacher population was 64% White, 26% Hispanic, and 7% Black. Campus administrators comprised 3.9% of the professional capital in the district (Texas Education Agency, 2012a). Demographic data for campus administrators was reported.

Procedures for the Recruitment of the Participants

Teacher participants were selected from a district database report. The sample population was able to opt out of the survey by declining to respond. Consent from the school district's internal research department was obtained prior to constructing and sending the surveys. Those educators who choose to respond to the questionnaire had a 14-day window for response with two reminders sent to unresponsive recipients on the 7th and 13th days. A thank-you e-mail and announcement of the incentive drawing winner was sent to participants who completed the survey on the 15th day. An Apple iPad mini16 was delivered to the incentive drawing winner on the same day.

The stimulus items for special education and general education teachers included requests for information regarding preservice preparation; years of experience in their identified teaching role; and their knowledge, experience, and use of the instructional interventions and accommodations that were identified on district

IEPs (see Appendices B–E). The questionnaires sent to campus administrators included items requesting some demographic information regarding their administrative preparation route, years of experience in the identified roles, and questions pertaining to administrators’ experience and knowledge of the instructional interventions and accommodations identified in Phase 1 on district IEPs (see Appendices F and G).

Delimitations

District-Level Databases

Only one district was included in the study. Due to procedural changes in the school district IEP format, resulting from a change in the statewide assessment system during the 2011–2012 school year, databases used for the study were drawn from only the 2010–2011 school year, the last complete full school year. New, current teachers perhaps had limited knowledge interventions selected in the 2010–2011 school year.

Differentiation of Survey Questions

The intent to conduct cross tabulation comparisons between responses from campus administrators and teachers was originally planned as a method of analysis. However, the wording of the item response choices for principals was different from the wording of the response choices for teachers. One was written to probe the beliefs of campus administrators regarding the teachers they supervise, whereas the matching stimulus items for teachers were worded to probe their actual implementation of

instructional accommodations. Therefore, cross tabulation analysis via chi-square testing was not possible. Future research designed to use cross tabulation could address this limitation during the questionnaire design process.

Additionally, the formatting of the survey for Eighth-Grade Special Education Teachers allowed participants to select more than one answer to several questions, rather than limiting the selection options to one single response. This resulted in skewed percentages for the three eighth-grade special education teachers who responded. For example, in the case of the stimulus item regarding spelling assistance, all three special education teachers for eighth grade reported they were experts in this accommodation, but one of the teachers also indicated being somewhat knowledgeable about the accommodation, which caused the response percentage to be 100% expert and an additional 33% somewhat knowledgeable. The eighth-grade special education panel was the only panel affected by the formatting error and occurred in the case of eight stimulus items.

Researcher Positionality

In a qualitative study, the researcher is involved as an instrument to make sense of the phenomenon under study (Merriam, 2009). Thus, recognition of one's positionality, the lens through which the researcher frames his or her study, must be acknowledged, so readers are aware of the assumptions that may have influenced how the researcher conducts, analyzes, and represents the findings of the study (Lincoln, & Guba, 1985). Lather (2003) references this lens as "reflexive subjectivity" (p. 206)

whereby the research provides an explanation of how his or her assumptions may be "affected by the logic of the data" (p. 206).

Working at the school district studied for 18 years as a special education teacher and seven years as the district's special education director, I developed strong relationships with the principals and teachers in the district. As such, I constructed my own lens to see phenomena with many filters--as reflected in personal, cultural, and professional biases--which influence how I approach each situation. The conceptualization and, ultimately, the emergent purpose of this study was birthed due to my many years of leading IEP meetings as a teacher, administrator and child advocate. Based on those experiences and the reflective practice, the intent of this study was to initiate an investigation into whether the previous and current ways in which IEPs are developed, implemented, used for instructional planning, and supervised could be altered and/or improved.

Many of the volunteer teacher and administrator participants in this study knew me when I served as the special education director for the district from 2001 to 2008, and may have perceived me to be supportive and helpful in difficult situations. Others may have viewed my role as researcher as a potential threat to their credibility in terms of their ability to fulfill the responsibilities of their current position in the district. These concerns may have influenced the participants' attitudes towards me and/or affected the number of respondents who volunteered to participate as well as the quality of the data generated.

Despite the possibility that my feelings, motives, and experiences may have biased the research process; I have attempted to present the data and perform the analysis in a reflective and reflexive manner to retain the validity of the data. Lather (2003) refers to this as "reflexive subjectivity" (p. 206) whereby the research provides an explanation of how his/her assumptions may be "affected by the logic of the data" (p. 206).

Summary

This study was conducted within a large, urban school district in Texas using two phases of survey data collection from teachers and administrators. The researcher-developed questionnaires were formatted, delivered, and collected via email and the Qualtrics system. A qualitative, descriptive design was used to analyze the responses of teacher and administrator groups.

Chapter 4: Results

Phase 1

School district data collected included the test-taking accommodations from the statewide assessment decision-making section of the district's IEP format. The district reported that this was the section of its electronic IEP management system that allowed the IEP committee to select from a menu of accommodations. In fact, the only other place in the IEP template to add specific instructional interventions and accommodations is in the deliberations section of the template. All other sections are selected from the accommodations menu. For the purposes of this study, the district's instructional *interventions and accommodations* are referred to as *accommodations*.

Research Question 1: Interventions or Accommodations on Student IEPs

What instructional interventions or accommodations are identified on the IEPs of students in the fourth and eighth grades who have been identified as having a learning disability in reading?

The data requested were collected from the 2010–2011 school year and included state allowable test-taking accommodations that, for the 2012–2013 school year, are no longer allowable on statewide assessments. The database included data for all students with disabilities in reading that were enrolled in the fourth and eighth grades during the 2010–2011 school year (See Appendix A). Prior to receiving the accommodations prescribed for the identified students, student names and any other personally identifiable information were redacted from the database. Data included

individual IEP information for 533 fourth graders and 436 eighth graders with learning disabilities in reading as their primary, secondary, or tertiary disability. The data were sorted by instructional accommodation and grade levels.

A total of 21 unique instructional accommodations were prescribed (see Table 8). Notably, *every* student was prescribed the accommodation of extended time for testing (i.e., student is allowed an extra day to complete a statewide assessment, see <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/student.assessment/accommodations/staar-telpas/>). The 11 most frequently identified accommodations were the same for both fourth and eighth graders, with slight variations in the rank order of frequency (see Table 4). The least identified accommodations, with frequency counts lower than 17 students per accommodation for eighth graders and less than 42 for the fourth graders, were manipulatives, place markers, individual administration, transcribing, amplification device, reading aloud to self, colored overlays, large print, oral or signed administration, and pointing.

Data presented in Table 4 represent data the district provided in response to the request for “frequency counts of any and all reading accommodations and interventions documented anywhere on the IEPs of children with learning disabilities in reading, in the fourth and eighth grades, during 2010–11 school year” (see Appendix A).

Table 4

2010–2011 Individualized Education Program Prescribed Accommodations for Reading

Accommodation	Grade 8		Grade 4	
	Rank	Frequency	Rank	Frequency
Extended time: Testing over 2 days	1	436	1	533
Small-group administration	2	305	2	470
Reading aloud test questions	3	274	4	382
Verbal reminders	4	219	3	395
Minimizing distractions	5	145	6	329
Multiple/frequent breaks	6	113	5	364
Blank graphic organizers	7	111	8	149
Visual reminders	8	103	7	254
Spelling assistance	9	58	10	74
Tactile reminders	10	28	9	128
Dyslexia bundle	11	21	11	70
Manipulatives	12	16	13	34
Place markers	13	15	15	24
Individual administration	14	14	14	27
Transcribing	15	6	18	9
Amplification device	16	5	19	1
Reading aloud to self	17	4	12	41
Colored overlays	18	2	17	11
Large print	19	0	19	1
Oral or signed administration	19	0	16	16
Pointing	19	0	19	1

Note. $N = 969$.

The 11 most commonly prescribed accommodations were selected for inclusion in the educator survey for Phase 2 of the study. Accommodations included in the educator surveys were those most commonly prescribed, and assumed to be less obscure and more recognizable by general education teachers of reading, special education teachers of reading, and administrators in fourth and eighth grade levels.

Phase 2

The purpose of Phase 2 of the study was to explore the level of knowledge and skills possessed by teacher and campus administrators in regard to the specified interventions or accommodations identified in the students' IEPs. The researcher contacted the respondents through e-mail addresses of individuals who were employed by the district during the 2012–2013 academic calendar year. Six specific groups were contacted: (a) elementary school principals and assistant principals, (b) middle school principals and assistant principals, (c) fourth-grade general education teachers, (d) fourth-grade special education teachers, (e) eighth-grade general education teachers, and (f) eighth-grade special education teachers.

Table 5 presents the 930 school district employees categorized by primary job title. Of the 930 employees, 69 were sixth-grade teachers and were not included in the study. Information pertaining to employees' names that were contained within their email addresses was redacted from the data.

Table 5

Primary Job Titles (N = 861)

Job title by survey group	Job title <i>n</i>	Survey group	Survey group <i>n</i>
			165
Elementary assistant principal	86	Elementary campus administrators	
Elementary principal	79		
Middle school assistant principal	46	Middle school campus administrators	65
Middle school principal	19		
Teacher Grades 7/8 English	41	Grade 8 general education teachers	127
Teacher Grades 7/8 English as a Second Language (ESL)	11		
Teacher Grades 7/8 language arts	62		
Teacher Grades 7/8 reading	7		
Teacher middle school ESL language arts	4		
Teacher middle school ESL reading	2		
Teacher elementary Grade 4	48		
Teacher elementary Grade 4 bilingual	127		
Teacher Grade 4 ESL	183		
Teacher elementary special education	128	Grade 4 special education teachers	128
Teacher middle school special education English language arts	3	Grade 8 special education teachers	18
Teacher middle school special education language arts	9		
Teacher middle school special education reading	6		
Total	861		861

Surveys (see Appendices B–G) were constructed for the six category groups using as content the 11 most commonly prescribed accommodations identified in Phase 1. Surveys were sent via e-mail using the Qualtrics survey software available to students on the College of Education website at The University of Texas at Austin

Forty-one teachers were defaulted out of the survey when they indicated they did not teach any reading or English language arts classes. A total of 222 surveys were completed out of 855 surveys sent for a return rate of 25.9%. Elementary campus administrators responded with the highest rate of completion, 41.2%. Eighth-grade general education teachers responded with the lowest rate of completion, 16.5% (see Table 6).

Table 6

Survey Completion Rates

Survey type	Survey <i>n</i>				% surveys completed
	Sent	Started	Completed	Exited default	
Eighth-grade general education teachers	121	29	20	7	16.5
Eighth-grade special education teachers	18	6	3	2	16.6
Fourth-grade general education teachers	358	94	74	12	20.6
Fourth-grade special education teachers	128	60	37	20	28.9
Elementary campus administrators	165	70	68	0	41.2
Middle school campus administrators	65	23	20	0	30.7
Total	855	282	222	41	25.9

Participant Demographics

Years of Experience

The average years of experience for teachers in Texas public schools and teachers in the district included in this study was 11.6 years (Texas Education Agency, 2012a). Thirty-nine percent of teachers reported 4 to 10 years of experience with smaller percentages in categories of less or more experience (See Table 7). Thirty-two percent of campus administrators reported 4 to 10 years experience. This indicated a critical mass of experienced professionals responding to the survey.

Teachers. Of the 20 Grade 8 general education teachers, 55% reported 4 to 10 years experience teaching reading or English language arts, 15% were in their 1st year, and 15% had more than 18 years experience (see Table 7).

Of the 74 Grade 4 general education teachers, 38% had 4 to 10 years of experience teaching reading or English language arts. However, 22% were in their 1st year and an additional 8% had 1 to 3 years experience. Ten percent had more than 18 years of experience.

Of the 37 fourth-grade special education teachers, 14% reported teaching experience ranging from one to three years, 35% had four to 10 years of experience teaching reading/English/language arts, 32% with 11 to 18 years, and 11% with more than 18 years (see Table 7). One of the 8th grade special education teachers reported 4 to 10 years experience teaching special education reading/English/language arts; one teacher had 11 to 18 year; and one teacher had more than 18 years (see Table 7).

Table 7

Teacher Respondents' Teaching Experience in Reading or English Language Arts

Teaching experience	General education				Special education			
	Grade 8		Grade 4		Grade 8		Grade 4	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
New: 1st year	3	15	16	22	0	0	3	8
1–3 years	3	15	8	11	0	0	5	14
4–10 years	11	55	28	38	1	33	13	35
11–18 years	0	0	12	16	1	33	12	32
18 + years	3	15	10	14	1	33	4	11

Administrators. Of the 68 elementary campus administrators, 40% had 11–18 years experience supervising teachers of reading/English/language arts or serving as the district representative in IEP meetings (see Table 8). Of the 20 middle school campus administrator responders, 55% had 1 to 3 years experience supervising teachers of reading or English language arts or serving as the district representative in IEP meetings (see Table 8).

Table 8

Administrator Experience Supervising Teachers of Reading or English Language Arts or Serving as a District Representative in Individualized Education Program Meetings

Experience	Elementary		Middle School	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
1–3 years	11	16	11	55
4–10 years	25	37	4	20
11–18 years	27	40	3	15
18 + years	5	7	2	10

Route to Certification

Teachers. Self-reported preservice training for certification was similar for general education and special education teachers. Noteworthy is that the answer choice of “combination of the above programs” (see Teacher Questionnaires, Appendices B–E) was selected by nine general education teachers whose certification path included a combination of all Texas certification programs and none of the special education teachers indicated a combination of programs. Fifty-two of the 134 teachers had a 4-year, traditional-college, preservice preparation program. Two teachers were certified via online certification programs. Alternative certification was the second most reported preservice route, and a master’s program was the third most common (see Table 9).

Table 9

Teacher Respondents' Preservice Preparation Program or Route to Certification

Answer	General education		Special education		Total
	Grade 4	Grade 8	Grade 4	Grade 8	
4-year traditional college with education major	34	4	13	1	52
Master's degree in education	11	4	11	1	27
Bachelor's degree in another major and deficiency plan to meet requirements for teacher certification	3	3	1	0	7
Alternative certification program	23	2	8	1	34
Online college bachelor or master's degree	0	0	0	0	0
Online teacher certification	0	1	1	0	2
A combination of the above programs	3	6	3	0	12

Administrators. Sixty-nine of the 88 administrator participants were awarded certification by traditional universities through a master's program in Educational Administration or the Principalship. Five administrator participants reported an online certification and six attended alternative certification programs. Two used a combination of the certification options (see Table 10).

Table 10

Campus Administrator Respondents' Certification Program

Response	Middle school	Elementary	Total
Master's degree including certification in Educational Administration or the Principalship awarded by a traditional university	18	51	69
Master's degree including certification in Educational Administration or the Principalship awarded by an online university	1	4	5
Alternative administration certification program	1	5	6
Master's degree through a combination of traditional and online programs	0	2	2
Master's degree through an online program	0	0	0
Certification through an online program	0	0	0
A combination of the above programs	0	6	6

Research Question 2: Teacher and Administrator Knowledge and Skills of Accommodations

Extended Time: Testing Over 2 Days

The most commonly selected accommodation for both fourth and eighth grade students' IEPs was extended time, with a selection rate of 100%. Only 37% of participants (teacher $n = 40$, administrator $n = 42$) selected the answer choice indicating, "I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach or supervise teachers using it" (see Appendices B–G). Moreover, of the 222 respondents, 21% indicated having no experience with the accommodation although

included on all IEPs; 40 teachers had “never had a student who was prescribed the accommodation of extended time” (see teacher questionnaires, Appendices B–E). Seven administrators reported, “I have no experience with supervising this accommodation” (see administrator questionnaires, Appendices F–G; see Tables 11–13). This is significantly incongruent with Phase 1 data which indicated that all 969 students with learning disabilities in reading in the fourth ($n = 533$) and eighth grades ($n = 436$), during the 2010–2011 school year, had the extended time accommodation prescribed on their IEP.

Table 11

Fourth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Extended Time: Testing Over 2 Days

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	17	23	17	46
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	16	22	15	41
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	37	50	7	19
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	4	5	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	9	12	1	3

Ninety-seven respondents (teacher $n = 56$, administrator $n = 41$) or 46% selected “I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing or supervising implementation of this accommodation in daily planning and lessons,” and eight teachers were “unsure how to implement this accommodation.” None of the administrators reported being “unsure how to supervise or coach a teacher implementing this accommodation.” Nine percent of teachers ($n = 12$) and campus administrators ($n = 9$) would like professional development regarding implementation or supervision of the extended time accommodation (see Tables 11–13).

Table 12

Eighth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Extended Time: Testing Over 2 Days

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	5	25	1	33
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	8	40	1	33
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	11	55	1	33
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	4	20	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation	2	10	0	0

Table 13

Administrator Responses for the Accommodation of Extended Time: Testing Over 2 Days

Response	Elementary		Middle school	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have no experience with this accommodation.	6	9	1	5
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it.	32	47	10	50
I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning.	32	47	9	45
I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation.	0	0	0	0
I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation.	9	13	0	0

Small-Group Administration

Small-group administration was the second most commonly prescribed accommodation for both fourth ($n = 470$) and eighth graders ($n = 305$) with learning disabilities in reading. This accommodation was reported on 80% of the student IEPs. Interestingly, 25% of the eighth grade teachers stated they had never had a student who was prescribed this accommodation. But, 95% of the fourth grade teachers had students with this accommodation prescribed. These data suggest important differences in elementary and middle school use of this accommodation. Forty-seven

percent of the participants (teacher $n = 46$, administrator $n = 59$) selected the answer choice, “I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach or supervise teachers using it” (see Tables 14–16).

Table 14

Fourth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Small-Group Administration

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	4	5	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	29	39	30	81
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	40	54	7	19
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	0	0	1	3
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	6	8	0	0

“I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons” (see Appendices B–G) was selected by 85 (teacher $n = 57$, administrator $n = 28$) or 38% of the total 222 participants. Five teachers were “unsure how to implement this accommodation.” Only 12 teachers and administrators had no students or experience with the accommodation. A total of 190 participants or

86% reported expertise or some knowledge about small-group administration. Ten teachers and five administrators, or 7% of participants, reported they would like professional development on small-group administration (see Tables 14–16).

Table 15

Eighth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Small-Group Administration

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	5	25	2	40
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	9	45	1	20
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	10	50	0	0
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	4	20	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	2	10	2	40

Table 16

Administrator Responses for the Accommodation of Small-Group Administration

Response	Elementary		Middle school	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have no experience with this accommodation.	1	1	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it.	47	69	12	60
I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning.	20	29	8	40
I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation.	0	0	0	0
I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation.	4	6	1	5

Reading Aloud Test Questions

The third most commonly prescribed accommodation on the IEPs of eighth-grade students ($n = 274$) and the fourth most commonly prescribed on the IEPs of fourth-grade students ($n = 382$) with learning disabilities in reading was reading aloud test questions. Overall, this accommodation was on 68% of students' IEPs. Fifty-nine percent of the respondents reported expertise in this accommodation, as 130 (teacher $n = 79$, administrator $n = 51$) selected the answer choice, "I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach or supervise teachers using it." Ten teachers and one administrator, or 5% of responders, reported having no

experience with the accommodation of reading aloud test questions prescribed on a student’s IEP (see Tables 17–19).

Table 17

Fourth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Reading Aloud Test Questions

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	5	7	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	33	45	32	86
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	36	49	6	16
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	0	0	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	3	4	0	0

“I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons” was selected by 52 teachers and 32 administrators or 38% of the 222 participants. Five teachers were “unsure how to implement this accommodation.” An overwhelming majority, 214 or 96% of participants, reported expertise or some knowledge about reading test questions aloud. Six teachers and

eight administrators, or 6% of the participants, reported they would like professional development on reading aloud test questions (see Tables 17–19).

Table 18

Eighth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Reading Aloud Test Questions

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	5	25	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	11	55	3	100
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	9	45	1	33
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	5	25	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	3	15	0	0

Note. A survey-formatting error allowed eighth-grade special education teachers to select more than one answer to some questions, resulting in a total percentage greater than 100%.

Table 19

Administrator Responses for the Accommodation of Reading Aloud Test Questions

Response	Elementary		Middle school	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
I have no experience with this accommodation.	1	1	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it.	41	60	10	50
I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning.	24	35	8	40
I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation.	1	1	1	5
I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation.	6	9	2	10

Verbal Reminders

The fourth most frequently prescribed accommodation on the IEPs of eighth-grade students ($n = 219$) and the third most commonly prescribed on the IEPs of fourth-grade students ($n = 395$) was verbal reminders. Overall, this accommodation was on 63% of students' IEPs. Half of teachers and administrators reported expertise in this accommodation, 68 teachers and 42 administrators. Nine teachers and two administrators, or 5% of responders, reported having no experience with the visual reminders accommodation on a student's IEP (see Tables 20–22).

Table 20

Fourth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Verbal Reminders

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	5	7	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	29	39	27	73
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	37	50	11	30
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	3	4	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	4	5	0	0

A total of 202 or 91% of participants reported expertise or some knowledge about using verbal reminders. Eight teachers and one administrator were “unsure how to implement or supervise this accommodation.” Fifteen teachers and 18 administrators, or 15% of responders, reported they would like professional development (see Tables 20–22).

Table 21

Eighth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Verbal Reminders

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	4	20	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	9	45	3	100
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	12	60	1	33
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	5	25	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	5	25	0	0

Note. A survey-formatting error allowed eighth-grade special education teachers to select more than one answer to some questions, resulting in a total percentage greater than 100%.

Table 22

Administrator Responses for the Accommodation of Verbal Reminders

Response	Elementary		Middle school	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have no experience with this accommodation.	1	1	1	5
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it.	39	57	12	60
I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning.	25	37	7	35
I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation.	2	3	0	0
I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation.	5	7	1	5

Multiple or Frequent Breaks

The fifth most commonly prescribed accommodation on the IEPs of eighth-grade students ($n = 113$) and fourth-grade students ($n = 364$) with learning disabilities in reading was multiple or frequent breaks. Overall, this accommodation was on 49.2% of students' IEPs. Fifty-nine percent of teachers and administrators reported expertise in this accommodation, (teacher $n=74$, administrator $n=56$). Nine teachers and one administrator, or 4% of responders, reported having no experience with the accommodation of multiple or frequent breaks (see Tables 23–25).

Table 23

Fourth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Multiple or Frequent Breaks

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	5	7	1	3
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	31	42	29	78
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	34	46	8	22
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	4	5	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	4	5	0	0

“I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons” (see Appendices B–G) was selected by 52 teachers and 30 administrators or 37% of participants. Eight teachers were “unsure how to implement this accommodation.” Nine teachers and four administrators, or 6% of responders, reported they “would like professional development about implementing this accommodation” (Tables 23–25).

Table 24

Eighth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Multiple or Frequent Breaks

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	3	15	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	12	60	2	67
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	8	40	2	67
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	4	20	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	5	25	0	0

Note. A survey-formatting error allowed eighth-grade special education teachers to select more than one answer to some questions, resulting in a total percentage greater than 100%.

Table 25

Administrator Responses for the Accommodation of Multiple or Frequent Breaks

Response	Elementary		Middle school	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have no experience with this accommodation.	1	1	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it.	46	68	10	50
I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning.	20	29	10	50
I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation.	0	0	0	0
I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation.	3	4	1	5

Minimizing Distractions

The sixth most commonly prescribed accommodation on the IEPs of eighth-grade ($n = 145$) and fourth-grade students ($n = 329$) with learning disabilities in reading was minimizing distractions. Overall, this accommodation was on 48.9% of students' IEPs. Fifty-five percent of teachers and administrators reported expertise in this accommodation (teacher $n = 70$, administrator $n = 53$). Seven teachers and one administrator, or 3% of responders, reported having no experience with the minimizing distractions accommodation on a student's IEP (see Tables 26–28).

Table 26

Fourth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Minimizing Distractions

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	4	5	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	30	41	28	76
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	31	42	8	22
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	6	8	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	8	11	1	3

“I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons” was selected by 53 teachers and 30 administrators or 37% of the 222 participants. Nine teachers and one administrator were “unsure how to implement this accommodation.” Thirteen teachers and nine administrators, or 10% of the participants, reported they would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (see Tables 26–28).

Table 27

Eighth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Minimizing Distractions

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	3	15	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	10	50	2	67
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	12	60	2	67
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	3	15	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	4	20	0	0

Note. A survey-formatting error allowed eighth-grade special education teachers to select more than one answer to some questions, resulting in a total percentage greater than 100%.

Table 28

Administrator Responses for the Accommodation of Minimizing Distractions

Response	Elementary		Middle school	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have no experience with this accommodation.	1	1	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it.	43	63	10	50
I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning.	22	32	8	40
I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation.	0	0	1	5
I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation.	7	10	2	10

Visual Reminders

The seventh most commonly prescribed accommodation on the IEPs of eighth-grade ($n = 103$) and fourth-grade ($n = 254$) students with learning disabilities in reading was visual reminders. Overall, this accommodation was prescribed in 37% of students' IEPs. About half of teachers and administrators (45%) reported expertise in this accommodation, 59 teachers and 42 administrators ($n = 42$) (see Appendices B–G). Nine teachers and three administrators, or 5% of responders, reported having no experience with the visual reminders accommodation (see Tables 29–31).

Table 29

Fourth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Visual Reminders

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	6	8	1	3
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	23	31	24	65
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	36	49	12	32
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	8	11	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	5	7	1	3

“I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons” was selected by 105 teachers and 43 administrators, 47% of the total participants. Eleven teachers and 2 administrators were “unsure how to implement this accommodation.” Eight teachers and 10 administrators, or 8% of respondents, reported they would like professional development about this accommodation (see Tables 29–31)

Table 30

Eighth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Visual Reminders

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	2	10	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	9	45	3	100
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	13	65	1	33
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	3	15	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	2	10	0	0

Note. A survey-formatting error allowed eighth-grade special education teachers to select more than one answer to some questions, resulting in a total percentage greater than 100%.

Table 31

Administrator Responses for the Accommodation of Visual Reminders

Response	Elementary		Middle school	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have no experience with this accommodation.	2	3	1	5
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it.	33	49	9	45
I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning.	31	46	9	45
I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation.	1	1	1	5
I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation.	9	13	1	5

Blank Graphic Organizers

The eighth most commonly prescribed accommodation on the IEPs of eighth-grade ($n = 111$) and fourth-grade ($n = 149$) students with learning disabilities in reading was blank graphic organizers. Overall, this accommodation was on 27% of students' IEPs. The blank graphic organizer section of the Middle School Administrator Questionnaire (Appendix G) was accidentally omitted. Therefore, there are no survey data for blank graphic organizers from middle school administrators.

Forty percent of teachers and elementary administrators reported expertise in this accommodation, (teacher $n = 52$, elementary administrator $n = 28$). Thirteen teachers and two elementary administrators, or 7% of responders, reported having no experience with the blank graphic organizers accommodation (see Tables 32–34).

Table 32

Fourth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Blank Graphic Organizers

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	8	11	1	3
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	19	26	17	46
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	43	58	19	51
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	4	5	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	4	5	1	3

“I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons” was selected by 71 teachers and 36 elementary administrators, 53% of the total 202 participants responding. Seven teachers, 3% of the respondents to this question, were “unsure how to implement this

accommodation.” Ten teachers and eight elementary administrators, or 9%, reported they would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (see Tables 32–34).

Table 33

Eighth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Blank Graphic Organizers

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	4	20	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	13	65	3	100
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	8	40	1	33
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	3	15	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	5	25	0	0

Note. A survey-formatting error allowed eighth-grade special education teachers to select more than one answer to some questions, resulting in a total percentage greater than 100%.

Table 34

Elementary School Administrator Responses for the Accommodation of Blank Graphic Organizers

Response	<i>n</i>	%
I have no experience with this accommodation.	2	3
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it.	28	41
I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning.	36	53
I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation.	0	0
I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation.	8	12

Tactile Reminders

The ninth most commonly prescribed accommodation on the IEPs of eighth-grade students ($n = 28$) and the 10th most commonly prescribed on the IEPs of fourth-grade students ($n = 128$) with learning disabilities in reading were tactile reminders. Overall, this accommodation was on 16% of students' IEPs. Twenty-seven percent of teachers and administrators reported expertise in this accommodation, 33 teachers and 27 administrators. (see Appendices B–G). Twenty-one teachers and five administrators, or 12% of responders, reported having no experience with the accommodation of tactile reminders (see Tables 35–37).

Table 35

Fourth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Tactile Reminders

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	16	22	3	8
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	7	9	19	51
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	39	53	14	38
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	12	16	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	6	8	2	5

“I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons” was selected by 66 teachers and 46 administrators, 50% of the total 222 participants. Nineteen teachers and five administrators selected “unsure how to implement this accommodation.” Ten teachers and 13 administrators, or 10% of responders, reported they would like professional development about tactile reminders (see Tables 35–37).

Table 36

Eighth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Tactile Reminders

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation.	2	10	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	5	25	2	67
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	11	55	2	67
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	7	35	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	2	10	0	0

Note. A survey-formatting error allowed eighth-grade special education teachers to select more than one answer to some questions, resulting in a total percentage greater than 100%.

Table 37

Administrator Responses for the Accommodation of Small-Group Administration

Response	Elementary		Middle school	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have no experience with this accommodation.	2	3	3	15
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it.	20	29	7	35
I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning.	39	57	7	35
I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation.	4	6	1	5
I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation.	10	15	3	15

Spelling Assistance

The 10th most commonly prescribed accommodation on the IEPs of eighth-grade ($n = 58$) and fourth-grade ($n = 74$) students with learning disabilities in reading was spelling assistance. Overall, this accommodation was prescribed in 14% of students' IEPs. Teachers and administrators reported limited expertise in this accommodation, as only 33 teachers and 18 administrators, 23% of the participants indicated, "I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach or supervise teachers using it." Twenty-two teachers and five administrators, or 12% of

responders, reported having no experience with the spelling assistance accommodation (see Tables 38–40).

Table 38

Fourth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Spelling Assistance

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	16	22	2	5
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	9	12	13	35
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	39	53	21	57
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	8	11	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	5	7	2	5

“I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons” was selected by 73 teachers and 54 administrators, 57% of the total 222 participants. Twenty percent of responders, were “unsure how to implement this accommodation.” Twenty teachers and 11 administrators, or 14% of responders, reported they would like professional development about implementing spelling assistance (see Tables 38–40).

Table 39

Eighth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Spelling Assistance

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	4	20	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	8	40	3	100
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	12	60	1	33
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	5	25	0	0
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	4	20	0	0

Note. A survey-formatting error allowed eighth-grade special education teachers to select more than one answer to some questions, resulting in a total percentage greater than 100%.

Table 40

Administrator Responses for the Accommodation of Spelling Assistance

Response	Elementary		Middle school	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have no experience with this accommodation.	4	6	1	5
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it.	14	21	4	20
I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning.	41	60	13	65
I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation.	7	10	0	0
I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation.	9	13	2	10

Dyslexia Bundle

The 11th most commonly prescribed accommodation on the IEPs of eighth-grade ($n = 21$) and fourth-grade ($n = 70$) students with learning disabilities in reading was the dyslexia bundle. Overall, this accommodation was on 9% of students' IEPs. A third (33%) of teachers and administrators reported having expertise in implementing and supervising dyslexia bundle, (teacher $n = 37$, administrator $n = 37$). “I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach or supervise teachers using it” (see Tables 41–43)

Table 41

Fourth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Dyslexia Bundle

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	5	7	2	5
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	14	19	14	38
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	39	53	15	41
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	14	19	6	16
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	12	16	1	3

One-hundred three respondents (teacher $n = 67$, administrator $n = 36$) or 46% indicated “I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing or supervising implementation of this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.” Four administrators and 27 teachers, or 14% of responders, were “unsure how to implement or supervise the implementation of this accommodation.” Eighteen teachers and 13 campus administrators, or 14% of responders, would like professional development regarding implementation or supervision of this accommodation. (see Tables 41–43). The remaining 10 accommodations prescribed on the IEPs were infrequently selected and were not included in the content of the survey.

Table 42

Eighth-Grade Teacher Responses for the Accommodation of Dyslexia Bundle

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have never had a student who has been prescribed this accommodation.	2	10	0	0
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it.	9	45	0	0
I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons.	11	55	2	67
I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation.	6	30	1	33
I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation.	5	25	0	0

Table 43

Administrator Responses for the Accommodation of Dyslexia Bundle

Response	Elementary		Middle school	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
I have no experience with this accommodation.	1	1	4	20
I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it.	33	49	4	20
I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning.	30	44	6	30
I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher who should be implementing this accommodation.	1	1	3	15
I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation.	10	15	3	15

Skill Distribution Across Accommodations

Educators participating in the survey indicated confidence in implementing or supervising the implementation of accommodations that were most commonly prescribed, fewer participants self-reported expertise in the implementation of the more obscure accommodations and requested professional development for the accommodations appearing in the lower two thirds of the frequency list (see Table 44).

Table 44

Percentage Distribution of Educator Expertise and Request for Professional Development (PD)

Accommodation	Student <i>n</i>	% Expert	% Somewhat knowledgeable	% Not sure how	Request PD
Extended time	960	37	46	17	9
Small-group administration	775	47	38	15	7
Reading aloud test questions	656	59	38	3	6
Verbal reminders	614	50	44	6	15
Multiple or frequent breaks	477	59	37	4	6
Minimizing distractions	474	55	37	8	10
Visual reminders	357	45	47	8	8
Blank graphic organizers	260	40	53	7	9
Tactile reminders	156	27	50	23	10
Spelling assistance	132	23	57	20	14
Dyslexia bundle	91	33	46	21	14

Understanding the IEP

Two-hundred nine (teacher $n = 122$, administrator $n = 87$), 90% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they are confident in their knowledge and understanding of student IEPs. Twelve teachers and one administrator, or 6% of responders, disagreed that they were confident in their knowledge and understanding of student IEPs (see Table 45).

Table 45

Participant Responses: Although Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) Are Sometimes Complicated and Lengthy, I Am Confident in my Knowledge and Understanding of Student IEPs

Group	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Grade 8 general education teachers	10	50	8	10	2	10
Grade 8 special education teachers	2	67	1	33	0	0
Grade 4 general education teachers	22	30	43	58	9	12
Grade 4 special education teachers	24	65	12	32	1	3
Elementary administrators	42	62	25	37	1	1
Middle school administrators	14	70	6	30	0	0

Note. There were no responses of *strongly disagree*.

Research Question 3: Teachers' Use of the IEP for Instructional Planning

Tables 46 and 47 show teachers' responses regarding using IEP information for planning. In addition, both middle school and elementary school administrators expressed a high level of confidence in their teachers' use of the IEP for planning and implementing instruction.

Table 46

Fourth-Grade Teacher Responses: I Use the Information in my Students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for Planning Lessons

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Daily	26	35	15	41
Weekly	32	43	19	51
2–3 times per semester	5	7	3	8
Not usually	6	8	0	0
In my teaching role, it is not necessary to use IEPs for planning lessons.	5	7	0	0

Table 47

Eighth-Grade Teacher Responses: I Use the Information in my Students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for Planning Lessons

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Daily	5	25	0	0
Weekly	10	50	2	67
2–3 times per semester	1	5	1	33
Not usually	1	5	0	0
In my teaching role, it is not necessary to use IEPs for planning lessons.	3	15	0	0

Forty-three percent of elementary school administrators reported that the IEPs are always used in planning and instruction, and 54% reported the IEP is frequently

used to plan and implement instruction. Only 3% reported the IEPs are not often used (see Table 48). Seventy percent of the middle school administrators reported teachers used IEPs frequently in planning and implementing instruction. A discrepancy existed between the perceptions of middle school administrators' and eighth grade teachers' self-reported use of the IEP for planning and implementation of instruction. One-hundred percent of the middle school administrators indicated their belief that teachers “always” or “frequently” use the IEP. On the other hand, one-fourth (25%) of the teachers reported using the IEP to plan and implement instruction—limiting their use to two to three times per semester or less, as indicated by their response of “not usually,” or “in my teaching role, it is not necessary to use IEPs for planning lessons” (see Tables 47 and 48).

Table 48

Campus Administrator Responses: Although it Is Difficult to Know for Sure, I Believe the Teachers I Supervise Use Individualized Education Program Information to Plan and Implement Instruction

Response	Elementary		Middle school	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Always	29	43	6	30
Frequently	37	54	14	70
Not often	2	3	0	0
Never	0	0	0	0
Not sure	0	0	0	0

Research Question 4: Implementing the IEP

Most (85%) eighth-grade general education teachers reported implementing accommodations daily or weekly ($n = 17$). Two (10%) reported not usually implementing accommodations. One participant reported that it is not necessary to implement IEP accommodations in his or her teaching role (see Table 49). Of the three eighth-grade special education teacher participants, two (67%) reported implementing the accommodations weekly, and one participant reported not usually implementing the accommodations. None selected daily as their rate of implementation (see Table 49).

Table 49

Eighth-Grade Teacher Responses: Although it Is Difficult for Teachers to Meet all Expectations, I Implement the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Prescribed Accommodations

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Daily	9	45	0	0
Weekly	8	40	2	67
2–3 times per semester	0	0	1	33
Not usually	2	10	0	0
In my teaching role, it is not necessary to use IEPs for planning lessons.	1	5	0	0

The fourth-grade teacher respondents reported more frequent implementation, with 51% ($n = 38$) of the general education teachers indicating daily use and 36% (n

= 27) weekly use (see Table 50). Correspondingly, 81% of the fourth-grade special education teachers reported accommodation implementation daily, and 19% reported a weekly rate of use (see Table 50). However, 10% of the general education teachers responded they did not usually implement accommodations or that it was not necessary to implement IEPs in their teaching role.

Table 50

Fourth-Grade Teacher Responses: Although it Is Difficult for Teachers to Meet all Expectations, I Implement the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Prescribed Accommodations

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Daily	38	51	30	81
Weekly	27	36	7	19
2–3 times per semester	2	3	0	0
Not usually	2	3	0	0
In my teaching role, it is not necessary to use IEPs for planning lessons.	5	7	0	0

Elementary and middle school administrators were in close agreement with the teachers they supervise on the rates of implementation of accommodations. Half of elementary principals reported that teachers always implement accommodations (see Table 51). Sixty percent of middle school principals reported frequent implementation by their teachers. One elementary administrator believed the

accommodations were not often implemented. Neither elementary or middle school administrators believed they were never implemented (see Table 51).

Table 51

Campus Administrator Responses: Teachers I Supervise Implement Accommodations Prescribed on Their Students' Individualized Education Programs

Response	Elementary		Middle school	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Always	34	50	8	40
Frequently	32	47	12	60
Not often	1	1	0	0
Never	0	0	0	0
Not sure	1	1	0	0

Fifty percent ($n = 10$) of eighth-grade general education teachers and 67% ($n = 2$) of the special education teachers reported collecting data frequently. Eighth-grade general education (35%) and special education teachers (33%) reported infrequently collecting data on the effectiveness of the accommodations. Two eighth-grade general education teachers (10%) indicated they believed it is not necessary to collect data on accommodation effectiveness in their teaching role (see Table 52).

Table 52

Eighth-Grade Teacher Responses: I Collect Data on the Effectiveness of the Instructional Accommodations I Implement

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Every time I implement the accommodation	1	5	0	0
Frequently when I implement the accommodation	10	50	2	67
Not often	7	35	1	33
In my teaching role, it is not necessary to collect data on accommodation effectiveness.	2	10	0	0

Similar to their eighth-grade teacher peers, 66% fourth-grade general education teachers and 22% of fourth-grade special education teachers reported not often collecting data on the effectiveness of the IEP-prescribed accommodations. Forty-six percent of fourth-grade general education teachers and 70% of special education teachers reported frequently collecting data. Eight percent of general and special education teachers reported collecting data every time they implement the accommodation. Seven of the fourth-grade general education teachers (9%) reported believing it is not necessary to collect data on the effectiveness of the accommodations in their teaching role (see Table 53).

Table 53

Fourth-Grade Teacher Responses: I Collect Data on the Effectiveness of the Instructional Accommodations I Implement

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Every time I implement the accommodation	6	8	3	8
Frequently when I implement the accommodation	34	46	26	70
Not often	27	36	8	22
In my teaching role, it is not necessary to collect data on accommodation effectiveness.	7	9	0	0

Campus administrators at the middle school and elementary levels (see Table 54) estimated data collection rates coinciding with the rates reported by their teachers. Most middle school administrators (60%) and elementary administrators (75%) believed data were collected frequently, compared to 54% ($n = 72$) of teachers collectively. Twelve percent ($n = 11$) of administrators assessed data collection was conducted every time the accommodation was implemented. Seven elementary administrators, or 10%, and four, or 20%, of middle school administrators believed data were not often collected. One elementary and one middle school administrator (see Table 54) reported teachers do not collect data; one middle school administrator was unsure.

Table 54

Campus Administrator Responses: Teachers I Supervise Collect Data on the Effectiveness of the Instructional Interventions or Accommodations Prescribed on the Individualized Education Programs of the Students in Their Classes

Response	Elementary		Middle school	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Every time they implement the intervention or accommodation	9	13	2	10
Frequently when implementing the intervention or accommodation	51	75	12	60
Not often	7	10	4	20
They do not collect data on interventions or accommodations.	1	1	1	5
Not sure	0	0	1	5

Professional Development

Most participants reported the need for professional development (see Table 55). Tables 56 and 57 show teacher responses. Table 58 shows administrator responses regarding professional development. Overall, 11% of respondents reported they “would not benefit from professional development” on any of the topics suggested (see Appendices B–G). However, 65% of the respondents indicated they would benefit from the suggested professional development topic of collecting data on the effectiveness of accommodations, with 100% of the eighth-grade special education teachers and 70% of the middle school administrators selecting this topic. The second most frequently selected topic (52% of all respondents) was using the

IEPs to plan instruction. The least selected topics were their need to understand information recorded on IEPs (26%) and how to increase the effectiveness of their role at admission, review, and dismissal (ARD) meetings (39%).

Table 55

Professional Development Summary: Percentages of Respondents

Professional development	% Grade 8 teachers		% Grade 4 teachers		% Administrators	
	General	Special	General	Special	Elementary	Middle school
Understanding the information on IEPs	25	33	39	14	18	25
Using the IEPs to plan instruction	65	33	61	32	56	65
Collecting data on the effects of accommodations for each student	50	100	53	57	57	70
Using the data on the effects of accommodations to inform my recommendations at ARD meetings	30	67	47	46	54	60
Increasing the effectiveness of my role at ARD meetings	40	33	39	41	40	40
Implementation of specific accommodations	55	33	59	27	40	50
I would not benefit from professional development on these topics	35	0	5	11	6	10

Note. IEP = Individualized Education Program; ARD = admission, review, & dismissal.

Table 56

Eighth-Grade Teacher Responses: I Would Participate in the Following Topics of Professional Development

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Understanding the information on IEPs	5	25	1	33
Using the IEPs to plan instruction	13	65	1	33
Collecting data on the effects of accommodations for each student	10	50	3	100
Using the data on the effects of accommodations to inform my recommendations at ARD meetings	6	30	2	67
Increasing the effectiveness of my role at ARD meetings	8	40	1	33
Implementation of specific accommodations	11	55	1	33
I would not benefit from professional development on these topics	7	35	0	0

Note. IEP = Individualized Educational Plan; ARD = admission, review, & dismissal. Teachers were told to select all that apply, so percentages total greater than 100%.

Table 57

Fourth-Grade Teacher Responses: I Would Participate in the Following Topics of Professional Development

Response	General education		Special education	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Understanding the information on IEPs	29	39	5	14
Using the IEPs to plan instruction	45	61	12	32
Collecting data on the effects of accommodations for each student	39	53	21	57
Using the data on the effects of accommodations to inform my recommendations at ARD meetings	35	47	17	46
Increasing the effectiveness of my role at ARD meetings	29	39	15	41
Implementation of specific accommodations	44	59	10	27
I would not benefit from professional development on these topics	4	5	4	11

Note. IEP = Individualized Educational Plan; ARD = admission, review, & dismissal. Teachers were told to select all that apply, so percentages total greater than 100%.

Table 58

Campus Administrator Responses: I Would Participate in the Following Topics of Professional Development

Response	Elementary		Middle school	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Understanding the information on IEPs	12	18	5	25
Using the IEPs to plan instruction	38	56	13	65
Collecting data on the effects of accommodations for each student	39	57	14	70
Using the data on the effects of accommodations to inform my recommendations at ARD meetings	37	54	12	60
Increasing the effectiveness of my role at ARD meetings	27	40	8	40
Implementation of specific accommodations	27	40	10	50
I would not benefit from professional development on these topics	4	6	2	10

Note. IEP = Individualized Educational Plan; ARD = admission, review, & dismissal. Teachers were told to select all that apply, so percentages total greater than 100%.

The next chapter discusses implications of the results for future practice and further research. Conclusions drawn from the study results as they relate to the theory of action of Argyris and Schön (1974) and the provisions of the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act (1973).

Chapter 5: Discussion

Review of Study

The purpose of this study was two fold. First, the study identified the instructional interventions and accommodations in reading selected as necessary for fourth- and eighth-grade students with disabilities. Second, the study explored the self-reported level of knowledge and skills possessed by teacher and campus administrators in regard to the specified interventions or accommodations as stated in students' IEPs.

As discussed in Chapter 3, models for dealing with gaps or mismatches between espoused theories and theories-in-use can elucidate our understanding of the choices made by individuals within an organization in response to unintended outcomes which may have taken place. For example, leaders within the organization may feel threatened by data-driven performance reviews and react defensively (Argyris, 1980). When determining the methods for data collection and construction of the survey questions, it was anticipated that participants may have a propensity toward fear motivation, compounded by their held perceptions of external or internal threats commonly associated with procedural protections contained within special education law and regulations.

Most of the respondents were positive in terms of their level of compliance to instructional adaptations and accommodations contained within students' IEPs. For example, many of the respondents reported they possessed expertise in specific

accommodations; however, they also indicated a desire to receive additional professional development training that pertained to some of the same accommodations. Additionally, teachers and administrators expressed confidence regarding both their understanding of the various components and stipulations of the IEP (i.e., the student's annual goals and objectives and specific special education and related service requirements) and (b) their ability to fully implement the procedural and substantive mandates of the IEP. Nevertheless, they indicated a need for additional professional development training that would facilitate a better understanding of the IEP.

Research Questions

The research questions were the following:

1. What instructional interventions or accommodations are identified on the IEPs of students in the fourth and eighth grades who have been identified as having a learning disability in reading?
2. What knowledge and skills do the teachers and administrators have of the interventions or accommodations prescribed on the IEPs of the identified fourth- and eighth-grade students?
3. Are teachers using the IEP for instructional planning?
4. Are teachers implementing the IEP and administrators supervising the implementation of the IEP?

Phase 1

Accommodations included on student IEPs informed the development of surveys that were administered to the six educator categories. A data request was made to a large urban school district soliciting specific information pertinent to “all instructional interventions and accommodations prescribed on the IEPs of students with learning disabilities in reading, in the fourth and eighth grade during the 2010–11 school year” (see Appendix A). Individuals within the district’s special education data-management and technology departments designed the format, process, and data collection procedures used to extrapolate the IEP data. Language of the original data request made no differentiation between *interventions* and *accommodations*.

Research Question 1

What instructional interventions or accommodations are identified on the IEPs of students in the fourth and eighth grades who have been identified as having a learning disability in reading?

Bureaucratic Theory

The bureaucratic nature of special education and the organization’s natural response to the logistical and procedural requirements contained within special education legislation has been noted by a number of scholars (Christensen & Dorn, 1997; Marshall & Patterson, 2002; Skrtic, 1991; Weatherly & Lipsky, 1977). As bureaucracies, the six primary dimensions of organizational structures are (a) specialization, (b) standardization, (c) formalization, (d) centralization, (e)

configuration, and (f) flexibility (Pugh, Hickerson, Hinings, & Turner, 1968).

Formalization is the extent to which rules, procedures, instructions, and communications are written. Standardization involves the definition of procedures and specification of which procedures are to be used throughout each part of the organization (Pugh et al, 1968). Formalization and standardization of bureaucratic procedures may have had unintended and negative consequences on the development and implementation of the IEP in public schools. The procedures used to develop a student's IEP is fraught with written documentation and specific procedures that are designed to maintain compliance with federal laws, state rules, and local policies. Inspection of IEP documents--made by regulating agencies, for compliance purposes--has been the bane of all school districts. These documents are the primary evidence by which compliance, accountability, and rating systems are determined.

Regrettably, the bureaucratic structures of standardization and formalization were developed by schools to ensure compliance with the mandates of law and policy, while seeking to avoid sanctions for non-compliance codified in NCLB (2002) and IDEA (2004). Interestingly, "Individualized Educational Program," i.e., specific for one student is conceptually incongruent standardization, i.e., "the same for all." Compliance with procedures that are standardized may be at the expense of student outcomes for students with disabilities.

Discrepancy Between Interventions and Accommodations

In the glossary section of the What Works Clearinghouse website (U.S. Department of Education, 2013) an intervention is defined as “[a]n educational program, product, practice, or policy aimed at improving student outcomes” (see <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/glossary.aspx#letterI>). Test accommodations, on the other hand, are defined as

changes in standardized test conditions introduced to remove sources of measurement error created by disabilities. Valid accommodations produce scores for students with disabilities that measure the same constructs as standard assessments measure in nondisabled students. The purpose of identifying appropriate accommodations is to achieve valid, not optimal scores. (Fuchs, Fuchs, Eaton, Hamlett, Binkely, & Crouch, 2000, p. 68)

Shriner and DeStefano (2003) define instructional and assessment accommodations as having the same components as those that are made for scheduling, presentation, setting, and response, with separate decisions for each type of accommodation.

Results from the data request for interventions and accommodations prescribed within a student’s IEP revealed some discrepant findings. Essentially, the data produced by the district equated the meaning of “interventions or accommodations” and as a result, they identified test accommodations only.

Although test accommodations and interventions are clearly defined in the literature as uniquely different practices, the bureaucratic functions of standardization and formalization within the school district appear to have blurred the two practices together. By limiting the options to a drop-down menu, the district was able to increase the likelihood that teachers would prescribe standard, vetted practices and

reduce the chance that teachers would prescribe practices that did not meet policy or regulations (District Assistant Director of Special Education, personal communication, February 22, 2013).

Identified accommodations or interventions produced by the district were compared against the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) allowable accommodations for statewide assessments in 2010–2011. The allowable accommodation options provided by the district were an exact match to those deemed appropriate on statewide assessments.

The most prominent section within the district's framework for specifying instructional interventions and accommodations for each student omitted any mention of instructional interventions per se. As a result, the accommodations released to the researcher to answer Research Question 1 were identical to the allowable accommodations for statewide testing situations. Instructional interventions, which espouse the intent to support the student's efforts toward achieving his or her goals and objectives--normally considered through collaborative and collegial discussion among members of the IEP team--were not listed. In action, the absence of or elimination of a list of interventions on the IEP planning document served as a sabotaging event, effectually contradicting the intended purpose of the collaborative problem-solving nature of the IEP committee. Ideally, team meetings are designed to facilitate (a) two-way communication between parents and school personnel, (b) the development of an appropriate IEP, (c) the development of procedures to be used to

monitor the implementation of the IEP and student's progress over time, and (d) the established criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of the IEP (Ysseldyke, Algozzine, & Mitchell, 1982). In reality, by equating instructional interventions with testing accommodations, the actions of the district were diametrically opposed with the espoused intent to utilize a team-based effort for developing a student's IEP. This act may be attributable to pressures brought on by bureaucratic expectations to include more students with disabilities in statewide assessment programs to and to ensure allowable testing accommodations were prescribed.

Standardization of the District's Electronically Derived IEP

As stated by Donovan (2006), "A uniform IEP writing process, generated on a computer, is a vehicle to make sure that all teachers and support providers speak the same language and follow the same steps" (para. 8). By standardizing the development of a student's IEP through electronic means, the software effectively guides teachers through "a systematic set of procedures for the entire IEP process, from planning the meeting to reporting the IEP" (Donovan, 2006, para. 10). Nevertheless, the only allotted space for documenting the IEP team's discussion concerning individualized accommodations or interventions was a selected list of forced-choice accommodations contained within a drop-down menu. This structure forced the IEP team to limit the number of choices for accommodations to a standardized list allowable by the state education agency for statewide assessments.

According to IDEA (2004), the purported efforts of the IEP team involves a collaborative effort among team members to determine which accommodations or interventions are most appropriate for a particular student with a learning disability in reading so she or he will be able to make reasonable academic progress within a designated academic calendar year. The individual responsible for inputting the information into the computer throughout the IEP development process may, in the process, become so preoccupied with making sure the computer program functions correctly that a barrier is created between the school staff and parents (Donovan, 2006), hindering the ability to facilitate open dialogue and collegial decision making (More & Hart, 2013).

The decision to provide a list of forced-choice accommodations within a drop-down menu may be attributed, in part, to the district's special education leadership team's perceived judgment that such a procedure will ease the IEP team's capability for developing students' IEPs through electronic means. The deliberations and goal statements sections, placed in separate sections of the IEP, were the only other spaces available to the IEP team for advancing any further discussion about whether additional accommodations or interventions should be prescribed. The district's 2011 format appears to contradict More and Hart's (2013) admonition: "Any item selected from a drop-down box on the electronic IEP document must reflect the student's educational needs" (p. 28). For team members to adhere to the primary purpose of individualization, the IEP must be developed on an individual basis, free from the

limitations that exist within a standardized, computer-based IEP writer.

The successive nature and order of onscreen prompts as well as the multiple, forced-choice options approach for making decisions about testing accommodations both standardized and simplified the IEP-development process. Nevertheless, the absence of direct prompts pertaining to instructional interventions and supports is troubling. The elimination of the “intervention” term within the text of the IEP narrows the potential for a rich dialogue and interchange of ideas and recommendations to take place among multiple stakeholders on the IEP team. Unless the person facilitating the IEP meeting (or another member of the IEP team) is savvy enough to prompt the discussion away from the flow of the direct prompts *and* document the decisions in the deliberations section of the IEP, the full benefit and intent of the IDEA (2004) is not likely to be realized.

Differences Between Testing and Instructional Accommodations

Findings from this study suggest that teacher and administrator professionals in the school district were acting on the presumption that the accommodations used for statewide testing were synonymous with the types of instructional accommodations that one might use in the classroom. To ensure the IEP team fully considers a wide array of accommodations that can be used to differentiate instruction and provide appropriate, individualized learning experiences for a student with a learning disability in reading, however, the number of options provided should amount to more than a limited list of accommodations typically used for statewide

testing purposes. Nevertheless, the IEP format used by the district offered a restrictive list of accommodations--made available for consideration and selection through an electronic drop-down menu--that are designated primarily as appropriate accommodations to be used in testing situations. Although seasoned educators may be savvy enough to be able to transfer these testing accommodations for use as instructional interventions in the classroom, they are not expressly meant for that purpose. For example, one might reinterpret the “small group administration” drop-down menu accommodation that stipulates the conditions under which a student will be tested to mean “small-group instruction.” However, “small group administration” serves as an accommodation while “small group instruction” represents a specific instructional strategy that takes place in the day-to-day activity of the student’s learning environment. In practice, the two are uniquely different.

The descriptive nature of this study limited the reporting of data to that which was defined and released by the district. Nevertheless, the nature of the data--accommodations selected from a drop-down menu--begs for clarity and highlights the need to further investigate the following concerns: (a) the protocol, format and procedures used for IEP development, (b) the IEP’s content related to accommodations and interventions in connection with the student’s individualized goals and objectives, (c) the ways in which the IEPs are used by general and special education personnel in the day-to-day practice of the student’s instructional environment, and (d) the manner in which administrators monitor the development

and use of the IEP for instructional planning and supervise the ways in which both general and special education teachers provide individualized and specialized instruction for students with disabilities within their schools.

Standardization Versus Individualization

Pressures imposed by NCLB (2002) to standardize curriculum, assessment, and progress rates may have contributed to the logic behind the district's decision to create a limited list of forced choice accommodations for use by IEP committees when developing the contents of the IEP. The district reduced the selection of accommodations to a drop-down menu of 21 standard testing accommodations, sanctioned by the state education agency. One might surmise that the drop-down menu provided a standardized list of options that (a) facilitated a more efficient method for discussing evidence-based practices and their application or potential interventions; (b) served as a tool for conducting efficient IEP meetings; and (c) addressed individual student needs. However, the district's list of forced-choice predetermined options--aligned with statewide testing accommodations--may have unintentionally squelched any potential discussion about instructional accommodations and interventions that would be in the best interest of the individual student.

The espoused theory behind IDEA (2004) requires IEP teams to use assessment data derived from an array of sources collected over time to address the individual needs of students with disabilities. The theory of action, however, appears

to have ignored the principles of individualization due to bureaucratic principles of standardization and formalization. In effect, these actions may deny IDEA's principled intent of appropriateness that, without question, is to be provided in one's educational experience (i.e., FAPE).

Standard operating procedures. An analysis of the frequency counts for each accommodation disclosed a unique finding. Every fourth- and eighth-grade student with learning disabilities in reading during the 2010–2011 school year ($N = 969$) was prescribed the accommodation of extended time, which allows for testing to occur over 2 days. This finding that 100% of the IEP teams reached consensus on the need to prescribe this accommodation raises questions about the individualization of committee decision-making. By selecting extended time for every student, one might conclude that teachers and administrators equated the rule of this accommodation to the bureaucratic function of a *standard operating procedure* (SOP).

Despite the espoused theory (Argyris & Schön, 1974) inherent within a district or school's mission statement and vision, a SOP, by interpretation, represents the school or district's theory-in action (Argyris & Schön, 1974). Characteristically, SOPs are a common component of organizational bureaucracies and organizational behavior, to “ensure efficient, effective, and rational practices” (Marshall & Patterson, 2002, p. 354) and “standardized treatment and equity” (p. 358). Applied to special education, Frankl (2005) referenced SOPs as “the bureaucratic aspects of maintaining IEPs” (p. 82).

To reduce the possibility of litigation for prescribing less efficient or non-research-based practices and control the number of citations received during IEP audits performed by a state or federal regulating agency (i.e., TEA or the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation), districts may elect to use SOPs. The standardization of IEP development protocols may also be viewed as a way to increase the likelihood that an agency's findings and results from accountability inspections adhere to their requirements, ensure the development of legally defensible IEPs, and reduce the district's potential exposure to procedural non-compliance issues in the event of litigation.

Computer software error. Another plausible explanation for 100% recommendation of extended time may be related to an error in the computer software. An electronic flaw in the IEP development software may have selected this accommodation for every student without any intent on the part of the IEP teams to prescribe an extended-time accommodation for every student in fourth and eighth grade with a learning disability in reading. Regardless of the cause for this remarkable and illogical finding, it would be prudent to conduct an in-depth investigation of the IEP decision-making process and electronic IEP development software used in the district.

Educator Preparation and Professional Development Programs

The highly qualified teacher (HQT) provisions set forth in IDEA (2004) and NCLB (2002) stipulate that educators who graduate from a state-accredited educator

preparation and licensing program exit their programs, fully capable of performing the professional duties and requirements set forth in the position to which they have been assigned (Yell, 2006). Preparation programs for teachers and administrators are expected to incorporate curriculum content and training opportunities that fully prepare general and special education teacher candidates and school leaders and arm them with the knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill their professional responsibilities. These programs should ensure that their graduates understand IDEA's (2004) legal requirements for individualizing the education program for each student with a disability. Graduates should be knowledgeable and skillful at applying scientifically based methods and should possess the collaboration skills necessary for engaging in decision-making efforts that are based on assessment data.

Filling the gap between knowledge and experience. Data pertaining to accommodations and interventions listed on students' IEPs raise serious questions regarding the participants' reported need for a more comprehensive professional preparation program and additional professional development and training to fill the gap between knowledge and experience. For example, 100% of the students were prescribed the accommodation of extended time. Nevertheless, 21% of the teachers and administrators indicated they had either never worked with a student using this accommodation or had no experience with providing an extended time accommodation. This discrepancy highlights the possibility that some participants' reviews of the accommodations listed may not have been thoroughly considered due

to their potential oversight of an essential component of the IEP or, more importantly, an error in how they actually implemented the IEP. Similarly, the verbal reminder accommodation--one of the four most commonly prescribed accommodations--was selected for 64% ($n = 614$) of the 960 students. Ninety-four percent of the educators indicated they were experts or somewhat knowledgeable, yet 15% indicated they would benefit from additional professional development and training regarding the use and implementation of this accommodation.

Such findings related to a lack of knowledge and skills seem to indicate that professional preparation programs may need to rethink the overall focus of their current course offerings and internships. Nearly one third or 32% of the teacher respondents were either 1st-year teachers or had 3 years or less of teaching experience, and one fourth or 25% of the administrators' experience level ranged from 1–3 years. This raises questions concerning whether the curriculum content offered within their preparation programs are sufficient. Preparation programs and district-level administration may need to find ways to ensure their preservice and inservice teachers and administrators have had the opportunity to acquire an experiential knowledge base through field experiences, internships, and mentoring programs. In doing so, teachers and administrators will be more likely to demonstrate professional competence and follow the legal and procedural requirements and professional duties inherent in serving the individual needs of students with disabilities.

Varying levels of expertise. The respondents in this study reportedly possessed high levels of knowledge and expertise with implementing accommodations that were more frequently prescribed on their students' IEPs. For example, the accommodation, small-group administration, was prescribed for 80% of the students. Nearly half or 47% of the educators named themselves as experts; only 7% stated a need for professional development. This indicates a closer alignment with the espoused theory and theory of action for some of the more frequently prescribed accommodations.

Conversely, respondents reported they possessed lower level of expertise with accommodations that were less frequently prescribed or newly recommended by the TEA and indicated a greater level of need for professional development. For the spelling-assistance accommodation--prescribed for only 14% of the students--23% of the educators rated themselves as experts, and 14% indicated a need for professional development. When respondents reported familiarity with a particular accommodation, one might surmise that they were more likely to implement that accommodation more consistently, at higher levels. If, on the other hand, they reported they possessed less expertise, it is less likely that they implemented the accommodation with fidelity

Knowledge of statewide testing accommodations versus instructional accommodations and interventions. In 2011, the electronic IEP documentation system used by the school district did not prompt discussion about instructional

accommodations or interventions. The system offers only one opportunity to select accommodations necessary for the student through the format of a drop-down menu. Accommodations listed within the menu are synonymous with the 21 allowable accommodations for the statewide testing assessment.

In terms of instructional interventions, the only option available to the IEP team for them to select the types of instructional strategies that will enable classroom teachers to meet the individualized needs of the student exists in the deliberations section of the IEP. This option is kept separate from the electronically induced documentation system. To individualize the student's IEP, an additional area in the IEP software that offers an opportunity for members of the IEP team to input classroom and instructional accommodations other than those appropriate for statewide testing would be helpful. In addition, a text box for describing those instructional accommodations or interventions necessary for the student to access daily instruction and to scaffold concepts would enhance the software format (More & Hart, 2013).

According to the Texas Education Agency (2013), "Accommodations are changes to materials or procedures that enable students with disabilities or English language learners (ELLs) to participate meaningfully in learning and testing. It is important to keep in mind that while some accommodations may be appropriate for instructional use, they may not be appropriate or allowable on a statewide assessment" (para. 1). The level of knowledge and skills required for implementing

testing accommodations are minimal when compared to the knowledge and skills necessary for implementing instructional accommodations and interventions that may be required for the provision of effective reading instruction.

Inconsistencies between reported knowledge and additional training

needs. Participants' self-reporting comes into question when responses pertaining to their level of knowledge about accommodations are incongruent with the actual data. When this occurs, the espoused theory (i.e., the accommodations listed for implementation and use on IEP documents) is not congruent with the actions that teachers and administrators have reportedly taken. Low numbers of requests for professional development seems to indicate a possible inflation of self-confidence as they reported knowledge of the following: (a) the accommodations, (b) understanding of the IEP, (c) ability to collect and use data regarding the effectiveness of prescribed accommodations, and (d) use of the IEP for planning instruction and implementation of accommodations.

The knowledge and skills needed for implementing testing accommodations do not appear to be as significant as the knowledge and skills needed for instructional accommodations. Not only is the strength of self-reporting questioned here, but also the strength of the IEP development system and the subsequent processes and procedures that are followed by members of the IEP team as they work collaboratively to individualize each IEP in ways that keep the best interest of each student at the forefront of their efforts.

Self-Disclosure and Fear Avoidance

Educational professionals who are responsible for developing, implementing, and overseeing the student's IEP may experience significant organizational and bureaucratic pressures. Practitioners tend to associate fear with an admission of wrongdoing. In the highly litigious, special education environment that exists today, there is an even stronger likelihood that a level of apprehension exists concerning their ability to fulfill their professional duties when working with students with disabilities. Without "meaningful and sustained inservice training in new research-based practices and other developments in special education" (Yell, 2006. p.24), professionals may be threatened and less likely to self-disclose a lack of expertise or training in areas they believe socially or professionally important (Tourangeau & Yan (2007). Bureaucratic structures in the school district may be a means of political control (West, 1997), perpetuating a practice of limiting the number of instructional accommodations and interventions i.e., testing accommodations allowable on statewide testing days.

In Search of Research-Based Instructional Interventions and Accommodations

Remarkably, the data (all IEP identified accommodations of a large urban district) did not include research-based instructional accommodations such as phonics, word reading, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension improvement. For students with learning disabilities in reading, examples of research-based accommodations, strategies, pacing, or materials that were omitted but *could* have

been recommended include: (a) previewing passages; (b) making predictions; (c) focusing on essential vocabulary; (d) using semantic feature analysis; (e) self-monitoring; (f) repairing comprehension at sentence level; (g) varying narrative and expository text; and (h) providing explicit, intensive, multisensory word study programs (Vaughn et al., 2012). Other evidence-based instructional strategies such as (1) explicit vocabulary instruction, (2) opportunities for extended discussion of text meaning and interpretation, (3) repeated exposure to vocabulary in a variety of contexts, (4) discussion of text with high interest level content, and (5) semantic mapping and semantic feature analysis (Kamil et al., 2008) were not included in the IEP accommodations and interventions identified in this study.

Research Question 3

Are teachers using the IEP to plan instruction? Teachers and administrators expressed high levels of use and high levels of belief that teachers are using the IEPs to plan instruction. Seventy-eight percent of all teacher participants reported using the IEP either daily (25%) or weekly (52%) to plan instruction.

The self-reporting method used to gather data concerning this question, however, might not have led to factual data. In particular, education professionals were asked to assess their compliance with federal law (IDEA, 2004). Without question, the stakes are high when admitting noncompliance with a law that is frequently litigated for noncompliance (Yell, 2012). Although forgiving wording of survey questions (Tourangeau & Yan, 2007) was used in an attempt to control for

false answers to this sensitive question, it would be less likely that educators would indicate noncompliance with the law.

Reported Use Versus Actual Use

At face value, the data confirm that teachers are generally using the IEP to plan instruction. However, when examining the self-reported responses of general education teachers of reading/English/language arts, they seemed to indicate a belief that it is not necessary to use IEPs when planning lessons. Such responses raise doubts about whether or not, in practice, these teachers implement the instructional requirements delineated in the IEPs of students with disabilities. The espoused theory-- using IEPs to plan instruction--was not congruent with the theory of action. The data revealed they did not necessarily view the IEP and listed accommodations as an integral or necessary tool for planning lessons or organizing for differentiated instruction.

Administrators reported a high level of confidence that their teachers drew upon the contents of the IEP to assist them when planning for instruction.

Administrators indicated the belief that 99% of their teachers *always* or *frequently* used the IEP for planning instruction. Teachers, on the other hand, reported they *always* or *frequently* used the IEP for planning instruction at a lesser rate of 78%.

Use of the IEP as the espoused theory was confirmed; however, the incongruence between teachers' and principals' reported use of the IEPs raises additional issues concerning compatibility with their theory of action. The

supervisory techniques used by administrators may explain or account for differences in this area. A clear understanding of how administrators supervise the implementation of IEPs and the use of the IEP as intended for planning instruction would be important in understanding and eliminating this discrepancy in the perceived level of importance teachers and administrators assigned to this practice.

Unintended Consequences of Standardized IEPs

The electronic IEP development system used by the district appears to have limited the opportunity for IEP committee members to document instructional interventions and/or accommodations (except for the section that documents statewide assessment accommodations on testing days). While teachers indicated they were using the IEP to plan lessons, the IEPs themselves did not provide instructional guidance for lesson-planning purposes. Use of a standardized procedure for IEP development seems to produce a less-than-useful IEP document and fails to provide general and special education teachers and school administrators with specific, evidence-based instruction and interventions--based on scientifically based research—that work for students with disabilities. Standardized IEPs—rather than individualized education programs—appear to have occurred as a result of using an electronically derived format for developing IEPs. The automatic features of this standardized format do not appear to be fulfilling the purpose for which they were intended (More & Hart, 2013).

Research Question 4

Are teachers implementing the IEP and are administrators supervising the implementation of the IEP?

To control for “false-good” responses (Tourangeau & Yan (2007), empathetic wording was used to construct survey questions related to this research question. For example, for teachers, the survey question stated, “Although it is difficult for teachers to meet all expectations, I implement the IEP prescribed accommodations” (see Appendices B–E); and, for administrators, “Although it is difficult for teachers to meet all expectations, the teachers I supervise implement interventions and accommodations prescribed on their students’ IEPs” (see Appendices F and G). Responses to these and other questions correlated with socially acceptable answers and high rates of self-reported compliance. Survey respondents seemed to select what they perceived to be socially acceptable answers, particularly to sensitive questions (Tourangeau & Yan, 2007) related to whether they implemented the accommodations or interventions listed in their students’ IEPs. In reality, however, if teachers and administrators had reported *less regular* or *no implementation* of the IEP accommodation, they would, in effect, have been admitting to their participation in illegal or deceptive practices.

Single-Loop Versus Double-Loop Learning

In a single-loop learning culture (Argyris & Schön, 1974) professionals in the organization may fear the potential of personal, campus, or district liability.

Therefore, it would not be in their best interest to report they were involved in any practices other than those that conform to legal mandates or procedural compliance. On the other hand, in a double-loop learning community, professionals might seek opportunities to bring about positive change and improvement to the current systems in which they are employed. Based on the findings of this study regarding the teachers' and administrators' reported compliance with the law, the district appears to be operating as a single loop organization.

Noncompliance With the Legal Requirements of IDEA (2004)

Families or parents who utilize the Texas Education Agency's dispute resolution system to file a complaint, pursue mediation, or pursue a due process hearing may not agree with the stellar, self-reported performance ratings that teachers and administrators assigned themselves. Principal and teacher knowledge and understanding of the IEP and skill level in using the IEP, implementing the IEP accommodations, and supervising and overseeing each of these areas may warrant their decision to pursue such action. The allegations of failure to provide FAPE-- which have been substantiated by formal complaint systems and upheld in higher courts (see Chapter 2)--are indicative of exponentially higher numbers of informal or unreported complaints. The number and patterns of complaints filed appear to be incongruent with the self-reported behavior of the responding educators.

If the IEP is conceptualized as a contractual agreement between the school and student/parents, the findings from this study raise additional questions in terms of

deceptive trade practices (see the Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act, 1973). The Act specifies provisions for when a consumer can develop a claim against an organization with which s/he formed a contractual agreement. If the consumer can prove that s/he was victim to representation, work or services performed or the work or services were not performed, a complaint can be filed. There appears to be discrepancy between the espoused theory and theory of action due to the discrepancy between what teachers and administrators *said they did* and the level of additional preparation and professional training they *said they needed*. Yet, when applied to whether teachers fully implemented the IEP and used the IEP for planning and instructional purposes, and whether administrators fulfilled their role in regard to IEP supervision and oversight, the data indicates that neither group has engaged in deceptive trade practices.

Application to Educator Preparation Programs

If teachers and administrators do not view the contents of the IEPs as important or useful for instructional planning, one must consider whether professional preparation and professional development programs can address this finding. To help correct this value and action that conflicts with the need to use the IEP to plan for and implement instruction, professional preparation programs should ensure that the following topics are included in their core content and methods courses: (a) knowledge and use of research-based instructional techniques, (b) data-based decision making to determine effectiveness of instructional methods and evaluate student

progress, and (c) simulated and field-based experiences that address how to write and develop IEPs that confer a meaningful educational benefit to students, and (d) intensive instruction on the principles of IDEA (2004), particularly when writing and developing an IEP that serves the individual needs of each student (Yell, 2006).

Some teacher education and leadership preparation programs have been criticized, however, for their failure to adequately prepare their graduates for the realities they will face in the classroom or school (Levine, 2005, 2006). Teacher alumni and principals rated their teacher preparation programs low in regard to working with diverse student populations. They also spoke about the “price they paid later for their limited practical experience” (Levine, 2006, p. 41). Administration alumni criticized the lack of opportunity to gain real-life experiences through administrative internships and work with experienced mentors (Levine, 2005).

The bureaucratic systems and principles that support and defend certain principal and teacher preparation programs--referenced as “case cows” by Levine (2005, p. 24; 2006, p. 22)--can also be seen as a means of political control (West, 1997). For example, these types of behaviors that perpetuate the negative outcomes that can be experienced by students with disabilities if they are due to preparation programs that fail to provide clinical experiences and training related to the instructional and supervisory requirements set forth in IDEA (2004).

Three to four years later, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan (2009a) nearly repeated Levine’s finding, arguing that most veteran and novice teachers are

not satisfied with their preservice preparation programs and reportedly believe they were not sufficiently prepared to manage a classroom of diverse learners. In a speech at Teachers College–Columbia University, Duncan (2009b) stated, “By almost any standard, many if not most of the nation’s 1,450 schools, colleges, and departments of education are doing a mediocre job of preparing teachers for the realities of the 21st century classroom” (para. 3).

Based upon the results of this study, some teacher preparation programs may not have adequately fulfilled their contractual obligation to prepare educators to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities, particularly when charged with providing each student with a FAPE. In exchange for the payment of tuition and fees, they have the right to expect that when they complete their educator preparation program, they will be ready and able to enter their profession and perform the duties to which they have been assigned. Anything less would be in danger of corresponding with the definition of deceptive trade practices (Texas Deceptive Trade Practices Act, 1973) whereby the program from which they graduated violated its stated purpose to protect consumers against false, misleading, and deceptive business practices; unconscionable actions; and breaches of warranty.

More than one third or 38% of the teachers and approximately one fourth or 25% of the administrators who were surveyed had attained less than 3 years of experience in their respective positions. Some of these teachers and administrator graduates may have incurred financial debt after graduation due to loans they

acquired to pay for their educational training. According to Kopkowski (2008), college graduates leave school with demands for them to pay more than what they earn when based on a starting teacher's salary.

Having spent the first few years in their position, many lament they do not possess the knowledge and skills they need to serve the needs of students with disabilities (Pazey & Cole, 2013). Sadly, they may be ill prepared to fulfill the inherent demands of their profession due to the gaps in the training they have received pertaining to special education and special education law (Pazey & Cole, 2013). As a worst-case scenario, their lack of knowledge and skills may impact their ability to maintain the sustainable earning power necessary to repay their acquired loans--loans they were willing to acquire based on the assumption that their educational training institution would fulfill the contractual services they promised to provide in return for their monetary payment over time.

In the event that the participants in this study as well as other new teachers and administrators were graduated without being fully prepared to meet the realities of the classroom (Levine, 2005, 2006), such teacher and leadership preparation programs have been negligent in fulfilling their contractual obligation to the student which clearly points to deceptive trade practices. These programs are defined and approved on the basis of claims made by accreditation and assessment officials within education colleges and departments. Essentially, these officials certify that the curriculum content and field-based experiences they offer within each of their teacher

and administrator preparation programs fully align with the professional standards of their respective specialized professional associations and that candidates who are graduated from their program will emerge with the knowledge and skills necessary for them to perform the requirements of their profession.

Based on the findings from Research Questions 2–4, some education colleges and departments appear to have shifted the burden of fulfilling their purported role--to provide school districts with teachers and administrators who are highly qualified--to their customers which, in this case, include the teachers and administrators they graduate as well as the school districts who hire their graduates. That is to say, the expectation that teachers and administrators be knowledgeable about developing and writing a student's IEP, prescribing the most appropriate interventions and accommodations, skillful in implementing the IEP and using the IEP for planning and instruction, and/or supervision of the same has, for some, been unfulfilled. Even worse, the obligation and financial burden in fulfilling that obligation has transferred to the school districts. To protect against the potential loss or damages they may incur due to their employee's mistakes, districts have been forced to provide compensatory services and training which, in effect, indemnifies the institution's seemingly deceptive trade practice toward them as a *professed* partner in education.

Recommendations for Future Research

Research that explores the positive and negative effects that electronic IEP development software may have on the ability for IEP team members, particularly,

parents, to participate in the development of an individualized education program for each student identified as having a learning disability in reading is needed. In regard to the knowledge and skill level that general and special education teachers and school administrators need in order to identify and recommend the most appropriate choice of instructional accommodations and intervention for each individual student, further investigation is warranted.

The district's current practice appears to have limited the IEP team's ability to document unique and specialized instructional accommodations and interventions necessary for students with disabilities. If drop-down menus provided through IEP software programs are the only options available to IEP teams for initiating discussions that pertain to the selection of the most appropriate accommodations or interventions for a particular student, such an alternative would appear certain to restrict the team's ability to individualize a student's educational program. Research comparing computer software developed IEPs to non-software developed IEPs could shed light on the efficacy of using electronic IEPs that are currently in use. Additional research designed to determine how software developers or central office administrators¹ define and document the IEP team accommodations for instruction, accommodations for statewide assessment, and interventions would be useful.

Additional research could examine actual artifacts that general and special education teachers who are responsible for implementing IEPs use in their classrooms. Data could be obtained through a series of interviews, analyses of artifacts (e.g., lesson plans, IEPs, and so forth), and classroom observations. Results obtained from such studies could identify the different levels of knowledge and skills teachers and administrators must possess to make sure the strategies, tools, and methods that are used are able to provide the recommended IEP interventions and accommodations that are contained within the student's IEP. To understand the nature of how the IEP is developed and used, it may best if the researcher represents an insider who does not possess an authoritative/administrative role within the school or district. The observer would not be perceived as a threat to individuals who are participating in the study. Extensive assurances and dissolution of fear-based inspection from all levels of leadership could function as a path for transitioning toward Model II or double-loop learning (Argyris & Schön, 1974), particularly for an organization that desires to change behaviorally from inspection and problem avoidance to a problem-solving culture. Examining actual lesson-plan documents, student work, and classroom materials and conducting one-on-one interviews could produce data that depict the relationship or gaps between the IEP as espoused theory and the artifacts as theory in action.

Research is needed to discover the relationship between the individual evaluation data and the instructional accommodations and interventions found on the

IEPs of students with disabilities. Use of the electronic pull-down menu underscores the need for such an investigation. A more thorough examination that compares evaluation and assessment data obtained for each student to the IEP team's recommended instructional accommodations and interventions for each student could be used to test the espoused theory and theory in action with regard to evaluation-driven IEPs. Patterns of use of certain commonly prescribed accommodations may be indicative of a more random selection process than evaluation-driven, data-based decision-making. Research that examines the types of accommodations found in students' IEP--based upon a full and individual evaluation that was conducted six or nine years prior to the student's current IEP--raise questions. Are the IEPs' accommodations effective and developmentally appropriate for the child?

Further research could improve our understanding of whether the IEP amendment procedures that allow certain decision changes to be made to instructional accommodations via brief meetings between parents and teachers--with little or no written documentation of changes (IDEA, 2004)--have actually impacted the intended procedures for making decisions that effectively address student needs. A question of interest is whether the information shared from these brief exchanges to modify the IEPs has been disseminated to the individuals who are responsible for implementing the modified IEPs. That is to say, do changes in the found IEPs of this study get communicated to teachers and administrators? Do components of the IEP during

less-than-duly-constituted but allowable informal meetings between teachers and parents get communicated?

A study of the communication procedures within a district's schools and across districts could be informative. Such a study could help determine whether the espoused theory of the IEP and its amendments are congruent with the action. That is, do the IEP accommodations "follow" the child?

Recommendations for Practice

District-level staff members are responsible for completing a thorough analysis of the professional development needs of teachers and administrators within their schools. Are the needs identified or suggested that have emerged from this study's findings study identified professional development needs and options? For example, 61% of the 4th grade general education teachers indicated they would like professional development about using the IEP to plan instruction. Is this need or interest reflected in district-level professional development offerings?

The gaps in data extrapolated from this study that pertain to self-reported knowledge and skills in IEP development, implementation, and oversight should be disseminated to inform individuals responsible for monitoring the curriculum content and field-based experiences of preservice teacher and administrator preparation programs. Programs relative to specific curricula needed to adequately prepare educational professionals who are responsible for addressing the content related to

IEP processes and evaluation must be alerted of these gaps and the consequential damages to students that may be caused by inadequate preparation and training.

Educational administrators should be explicitly taught the components of instructional leadership for teachers of children with disabilities, not through trial and error, on-the-job experiences at the expense of student outcomes. As Pazey and Cole (2013) explained,

Researchers have made it clear that to include students with disabilities, leaders must possess an understanding of not just what must be done but how to do it. They must be engaged in more than just placement decisions but also services and instruction. This is where the idea that a school leader is also an instructional leader takes real shape. To be an instructional leader, a school administrator must be knowledgeable about evidence-based practices within the field of both general and special education. (p. 258)

In addition to curriculum content, teacher and administrator preparation programs need to provide more hands-on opportunities so preservice candidates can apply their acquired knowledge and skills to the practical aspects of special education service provision. Examples include (a) simulating IEP committee meetings; (b) involving candidates in mediation and consensus-building activities; and (c) exposing students to the specific instructional techniques such as data collection for goal and progress monitoring, differentiated instruction, and directed oversight and supervision of each of these functions.

Educationally necessary accommodations could be prescribed more effectively and implemented when developed for an individual. Data from this study indicate a lack of implementation. This was evidenced by the accommodation of

extended time, which was prescribed for 100% of the fourth- and eighth-grade students with learning disabilities in reading. Supervision of instruction, as defined by Argyris & Schön (1996), is what school administrators “do with *adults* and *things* to maintain or change the school operation in ways that *directly* influence the teaching processes employed to promote pupil learning” (p. 10). Supervision that directly influences the instruction of students with disabilities would include ensuring compliance with minimal IEP development requirements, and insisting on the design of meaningful IEPs that inform instruction and indicate clear language of effective strategies to be implemented.

Conclusion

This study identifies a larger question that transcends the IEP, the use of the IEP, the definition of accommodation versus intervention, and other tested and self-reported issues of knowledge and skills. School districts as organizations should be constantly trying to improve systems within its jurisdiction. If organizational problems or correcting errors of professional practice exist, the vicious cycle of Model I organizational behaviors (Argyris & Schön, 1974) will persist. If IEPs are standardized by software or organizational bureaucratic behavior there is not likely to be success in meeting the conceptual and legal goals of individualization of education for students with disabilities.

If, educational organizations endeavor to shift from Model I type behaviors to Model II type behaviors, it is more likely that individuals within the organization will

be able to function within a problem-solving format that welcomes input from outside entities and seeks to improve the problematic process through collaboration and reflection. The practice of modifying an organization's underlying norms or policy for correcting an error can fulfill the efficacy of double-loop learning (Argyris & Schön, 1974). Student data should be framed according to research-based procedures that encourage innovative and effective organizational change.

Framing feedback regarding an organization and the presentation of data collected to address organizational needs could include four features considered important to an effective feedback process (Argyris & Schön, 1996):

1. The material should be organized to describe the variables that cause the functional and dysfunctional activities of the group being studied. The basic criterion for separating functional from dysfunctional activities is the degree to which each activity facilitates or inhibits the detection and correction of important errors or the production of innovations within the group.
2. The variables should be organized into a pattern that shows explicitly how the variables evolved and how their mutual reinforcement leads to the persevering of the pattern. The description of the pattern should enable the prediction of its consequences.
3. The pattern should make explicit the likely personal responsibility of each director in causing and maintaining the pattern.
4. The pattern should be presented in the form of an action map, and that map should present the data in ways that allow the participants to derive the inferences that permit comprehensive understanding as well as those that illuminate each unique, individual case. The data must also be conducive to generalizing about the present and future. In addition to providing the information for all these analyses, the map out to be generalizable (by reflective transfer) beyond the group to include other parts of the organization as well as to other individuals in other organizations. (p. 154)

Despite self-reported knowledge and compliance with special education law and special education rules, regulations, and policy, problems persist within the special education delivery system as evidenced by student outcomes, formal and informal complaints, and litigation through due process safeguards. Maintaining current practices that standardize IEP development process perpetuates a system that does not meet the ethical or moral intent of the law. These practices are not excused by bureaucratic regulatory pressures. Preservice trainers and school administrator practitioners hold the keys to future improvement of services to students with disabilities and can unlock the problems of individualization when minds and hearts are open to change.

Appendix A: E-Mail Delineating Data Request

RE: External Research Project R13.85: Accommodations for Students with Learning Disabilities and Teacher/Administrator Knowledge and Skills for Implementation and Supervision of Instruction

Hello Mr. Y.,

Below is a list of the data I am requesting from the District:

1. **Frequency counts** of any and all reading accommodations and interventions documented anywhere on the IEPs of children with learning disabilities in reading, in the fourth and eighth grades, during 2010-11 school year
2. **Group #1** - Email address of all current middle school assistant principals and principals (no names, no campus)
3. **Group #2** - Email address of all current elementary school principals (no names, no campus)
4. **Group #3** - Email address of all current general education teachers of 4th grade language arts (no names, no campus)
5. **Group #4** - Email address of all current elementary school special education teachers (no names, no campus)
6. **Group #5** - Email address of all current middle school special education teachers (no names, no campus)
7. **Group #6** - Email address of all current middle school general education teachers of English/language arts/reading (no names, no campus)

The survey will go out via the Qualtrics service at UT, so the district email system will not have to mail the surveys unless there would be a spam issue that would filter out the emails. I will need an opinion on that issue.

Thank you, in advance, for your help!

Kindest regards,

Joan Altobelli

Doctoral Candidate, The University of Texas at Austin



Appendix B: Eighth-Grade General Education Teacher Questionnaire

Q1 Questionnaire Part I

**Select the one answer item that best describes your professional history and
experience**

Q2 Which item best describes your general education teaching duties in
Reading/English/ Language Arts?

- General Education Reading/English/Language Arts, Grade 8 (1)
- General Education Bilingual/ESL English/Language Arts, Grade 8 (2)
- I teach a combination of the above (3)
- I do not teach any 8th grade general education Reading/English/Language
Arts classes (4)

**Survey Logic: If I do not teach any 8th grad... Is Selected, Then Skip To End
of Survey**

Q3 How many years have you been teaching Reading/English/Language Arts?

- I am new to teaching Reading/English/Language Arts, this is my first year (1)
- 1 – 3 years (2)
- 4 – 10 years (3)
- 11 – 18 years (4)
- More than 18 years (5)

Q4 Which item best describes your pre-service teacher preparation program?

- 4-year traditional college with education major (1)
- Master's degree in education (2)
- Bachelor's degree in another major and deficiency plan to meet requirements for teacher certification (3)
- Alternative certification program (4)
- On-line college bachelor or master's degree (5)
- On-line teacher certification (6)
- A combination of the above programs (7)

Q5 How are you notified that you will be teaching students with learning disabilities in reading?

- Before the school year begins, I receive information about the students with disabilities that will be in my class (1)
- After the school year begins, I receive information about the students with disabilities that will be in my class (2)
- I ask for information from the special education department, if I suspect a student in my class has disabilities (3)
- I don't typically receive information about students with disabilities that are in my class (4)

Q6 Do any of your students with learning disabilities in reading have instructional accommodations prescribed on their IEP?

- Yes (1)
- Not sure (2)
- None that I am aware of (3)

Q7 Which answer best describes the information you receive about students in your classes with learning disabilities?

- I receive a hard copy of the IEPs of students in my class (1)
- I receive a hard copy of the IEPs and the special education teacher reviews it with me (2)
- I receive a list of students and access to their on-line IEPs (3)
- The special education teacher visits with me about students with learning disabilities in my classes (4)
- I independently access IEP information on-line (5)
- None of the above (6)

Q8 Although IEPs are sometimes complicated and lengthy, I am confident in my knowledge and understanding of student's IEPs.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Strongly Disagree (4)

Q9 The IEP provides useful information to me for instructional planning for my class

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q10 Questionnaire Part II

Below are eleven frequently prescribed accommodations for students with learning disabilities in reading. According to the Texas Education Agency, a student may use these accommodations, if he or she routinely and effectively uses it during classroom instruction and testing. Please indicate your understanding/experience with each accommodation.

Select all answers that apply

Q11 Extended Time - Testing Over Two Days

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q12 Small Group Administration

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q13 Reading Aloud Test Questions

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q14 Verbal Reminders

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q15 Minimizing Distractions

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q16 Multiple or Frequent Breaks

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q17 Blank Graphic Organizers

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q18 Visual Reminders

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q19 Spelling Assistance

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q20 Tactile Reminders

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q21 Dyslexia Bundle

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q22 Questionnaire Part III

Select the item that best describes the frequency with which you implement accommodations and use IEP content.

Q23 I use the information on my student's IEP(s) for planning lessons

- Daily (1)
- Weekly (2)
- 2 -3 times per semester (3)
- Not usually (4)
- In my teaching role, it is not necessary to use IEPs for planning lessons (5)

Q24 Although it is difficult for teachers to meet all expectations, I implement the IEP prescribed accommodations

- Daily (1)
- Weekly (2)
- 2 - 3 times per semester (3)
- Not usually (4)
- In my teaching role, it is not necessary to implement accommodations (5)

Q25 I collect data on the effectiveness of the IEP instructional accommodations I implement

- Every time I implement the accommodation (1)
- Frequently when I implement the accommodation (2)
- Not often (3)
- In my teaching role, it is not necessary to collect data on accommodation effectiveness (4)

Q26 I would participate in the following topics of professional development (select all that apply)

- Understanding the information on IEPs (1)
- Using the IEPs to plan instruction (2)
- Collecting data on the effects of accommodations for each student (3)
- Using the data on the effects of accommodations to inform my recommendations at ARD (Annual, Review, Dismissal) meetings (4)
- Increasing the effectiveness of my role at ARD meetings (5)
- Implementation of specific accommodations (6)
- I would not benefit from professional development on these topics (7)

Q27 When Congress reauthorizes The Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, I would suggest the following, regarding redesign and usefulness of the IEP:

Appendix C: Eighth-Grade Special Education Teacher Questionnaire

Q1 Questionnaire Part I

Select the item(s) that best describes your professional history and experience

Q2 Which item best, describes your special education teaching duties in English/
Language Arts/Reading? Select all that apply.

- Special Education (pullout/resource) English/Language Arts/Reading, Grade 8
(1)
- Special Education (inclusion setting) /English/Language Arts/Reading, Grade
8 (2)
- Special Education Bilingual/ESL English/Language Arts/Reading (resource),
Grade 8 (3)
- Special Education Bilingual/ESL English/Language Arts/Reading (inclusion),
Grade 8 (4)
- None of the Above (5)

If None of the Above Is Selected, Then Skip to End of Survey

Q3 How many years have you been teaching Special Education

Reading/English/Language Arts?

- I am new to teaching special education Reading/English/Language Arts, this is my first year (1)
- 1 – 3 years (2)
- 4 – 10 years (3)
- 11 – 18 years (4)
- More than 18 years (5)

Q4 Which item best describes your pre-service teacher preparation program?

- 4-year traditional college with special education major (1)
- Master's degree in special education (2)
- Bachelor's degree in another major and deficiency plan to meet requirements for special education teacher certification (3)
- Alternative certification program (4)
- On-line college bachelor or master's degree (5)
- On-line teacher certification (6)
- A combination of the above programs (7)

Q5 Do any of your students with learning disabilities in reading have instructional accommodations prescribed on their IEP?

1) Yes (1)

2) Not sure (2)

None that I am aware of (3)

Q6 Do you communicate with general education teachers regarding teaching students with learning disabilities in reading?

Special Education staff gives general ed teachers a hard copy of the IEPs of students that will be included in their classes (1)

Special Education staff gives general ed teachers a hard copy of the IEPs of students that will be included in their classes and also reviews the IEP with them (2)

Special Education staff provides a list of students with disabilities for general education teachers to access the student IEPs on-line (3)

Special Education staff does not usually give general education teachers IEPs or links to on-line IEPs (4)

Q7 Although IEPs are sometimes complicated and lengthy, I am confident in my knowledge and understanding of student's IEPs.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Strongly Disagree (4)

Q8 I am usually able to implement the IEPs for my students.

- Yes, without assistance (1)
- Yes, with assistance (2)
- No, I'm confused by IEPs or parts of IEPs (3)

Q9 The IEP provides useful information for my instructional planning

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Strongly Disagree (4)

Q10 Questionnaire Part II

Below are eleven frequently prescribed accommodations for students with learning disabilities in reading. According to the Texas Education Agency, a student may use these accommodations, if he or she routinely and effectively

uses it during classroom instruction and testing. Please indicate your understanding/experience with each accommodation.

Select all answers that apply

Q11 Extended Time - Testing Over Two Days

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
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- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q12 Small Group Administration

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- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q13 Reading Aloud Test Questions

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
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- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q14 Verbal Reminders

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- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q15 Minimizing Distractions

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q16 Multiple or Frequent Breaks

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- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q17 Blank Graphic Organizers

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- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q18 Visual Reminders

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- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q19 Spelling Assistance

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
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- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q20 Tactile Reminders

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q21 Dyslexia Bundle

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q22 Questionnaire Part III Select the item that best describes the frequency with which you implement accommodations and use IEP content.

Q23 I use the information on my student's IEP(s) for planning lessons

- Daily (1)
- Weekly (2)
- 2 -3 times per semester (3)
- Not usually (4)
- In my teaching role, it is not necessary to use IEPs for planning lessons (5)

Q24 Although it is difficult for teachers to meet all expectations, I implement the IEP prescribed accommodations

- Daily (1)
- Weekly (2)
- 2 - 3 times per semester (3)
- Not usually (4)
- In my teaching role, it is not necessary to implement accommodations (5)

Q25 I collect data on the effectiveness of the IEP instructional accommodations I implement

- Every time I implement the accommodation (1)
- Frequently when I implement the accommodation (2)
- Not often (3)
- In my teaching role, it is not necessary to collect data on accommodation effectiveness (4)

Q26 I would participate in the following topics of professional development (select all that apply)

- Understanding the information on IEPs (1)
- Using the IEPs to plan instruction (2)
- Collecting data on the effects of accommodations for each student (3)
- Using the data on the effects of accommodations to inform my recommendations at ARD (Annual, Review, Dismissal) meetings (4)
- Increasing the effectiveness of my role at ARD meetings (5)
- Implementation of specific accommodations (6)
- I would not benefit from professional development on these topics (7)

Q27 When Congress reauthorizes The Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, I would suggest the following, regarding the usefulness and redesign of the IEP:

Appendix D: Fourth-Grade General Education Teacher Questionnaire

Q1 Questionnaire Part I

Select the one answer item that best describes your professional history and experience.

Q2 Which item best describes your general education teaching duties in Reading/English/ Language Arts?

- General Education Reading/English/Language Arts, Grade 4 (1)
- General Education Bilingual/ESL English/Language Arts, Grade 4 (2)
- I teach a combination of the above (3)
- I do not teach any 4th grade general education Reading/English/Language Arts classes (4)

Survey Question Logic: If I do not teach any 4th grade... Is Selected, Then Skip to End of Survey

Q3 How many years have you been teaching Reading/English/Language Arts?

- I am new to teaching Reading/English/Language Arts, this is my first year (1)
- 1 – 3 years (2)
- 4 – 10 years (3)
- 11 – 18 years (4)
- More than 18 years (5)

Q4 Which item best describes your pre-service teacher preparation program?

- 4-year traditional college with education major (1)
- Master's degree in education (2)
- Bachelor's degree in another major and deficiency plan to meet requirements for teacher certification (3)
- Alternative certification program (4)
- On-line college bachelor or master's degree (5)
- On-line teacher certification (6)
- A combination of the above programs (7)

Q5 How are you notified that you will be teaching students with learning disabilities in reading?

- Before the school year begins, I receive information about the students with disabilities that will be in my class (1)
- After the school year begins, I receive information about the students with disabilities that will be in my class (2)
- I ask for information from the special education department, if I suspect a student in my class has disabilities (3)
- I don't typically receive information about students with disabilities that are in my class (4)

Q6 Do any of your students with learning disabilities in reading have instructional accommodations prescribed on their IEP?

- Yes (1)
- Not sure (2)
- None that I am aware of (3)

Q7 Which answer best describes the information you receive about students in your classes with learning disabilities?

- I receive a hard copy of the IEPs of students in my class (1)
- I receive a hard copy of the IEPs and the special education teacher reviews it with me (2)
- I receive a list of students and access to their on-line IEPs (3)
- The special education teacher visits with me about students with learning disabilities in my classes (4)
- I independently access IEP information on-line (5)
- None of the above (6)

Q8 Although IEPs are sometimes complicated and lengthy, I am confident in my knowledge and understanding of student's IEPs.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Strongly Disagree (4)

Q9 The IEP provides useful information to me for instructional planning for my class

Yes (1)

No (2)

Q10 Questionnaire Part II

Below are eleven frequently prescribed accommodations for students with learning disabilities in reading. According to the Texas Education Agency, a student may use these accommodations, if he or she routinely and effectively uses it during classroom instruction and testing. Please indicate your understanding/experience with each accommodation.

Select all answers that apply

Q11 Extended Time - Testing Over Two Days

I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)

I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)

I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)

I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)

I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q12 Small Group Administration

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q13 Verbal Reminders

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q14 Reading Aloud Test Questions

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q15 Multiple or Frequent Breaks

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q16 Minimizing Distractions

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q17 Visual Reminders

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q18 Blank Graphic Organizers

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q19 Tactile Reminders

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q20 Spelling Assistance

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q21 Dyslexia Bundle

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q22 Questionnaire Part III

Select the item that best describes the frequency with which you implement accommodations and use IEP content.

Q23 I use the information on my student's IEP(s) for planning lessons

- Daily (1)
- Weekly (2)
- 2 -3 times per semester (3)
- Not usually (4)
- In my teaching role, it is not necessary to use IEPs for planning lessons (5)

Q24 Although it is difficult for teachers to meet all expectations, I implement the IEP prescribed accommodations

- Daily (1)
- Weekly (2)
- 2 - 3 times per semester (3)
- Not usually (4)
- In my teaching role, it is not necessary to implement accommodations (5)

Q25 I collect data on the effectiveness of the IEP instructional accommodations I implement

- Every time I implement the accommodation (1)
- Frequently when I implement the accommodation (2)
- Not often (3)
- In my teaching role, it is not necessary to collect data on accommodation effectiveness (4)

Q26 When Congress reauthorizes The Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, I would suggest the following, regarding redesign and usefulness of the IEP:

Q27 I would participate in the following topics of professional development (select all that apply)

- Understanding the information on IEPs (1)
- Using the IEPs to plan instruction (2)
- Collecting data on the effects of accommodations for each student (3)
- Using the data on the effects of accommodations to inform my recommendations at ARD (Annual, Review, Dismissal) meetings (4)
- Increasing the effectiveness of my role at ARD meetings (5)
- Implementation of specific accommodations (6)
- I would not benefit from professional development on these topics (7)

Q27 When Congress reauthorizes The Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act,

I would suggest the following, regarding the usefulness and redesign of the IEP:

Appendix E: Fourth-Grade Special Education Teacher Questionnaire

Q1 Questionnaire Part I

Select the item(s) that best describes your professional history and experience.

Q2 Which item best describes your special education teaching duties in English/
Language Arts/Reading? Select all that apply.

- Special Education (pullout/resource) English/Language Arts/Reading, Grade 4
(1)
- Special Education (inclusion setting) /English/Language Arts/Reading, Grade
4 (2)
- Special Education Bilingual/ESL English/Language Arts/Reading (resource),
Grade 4 (3)
- Special Education Bilingual/ESL English/Language Arts/Reading (inclusion),
Grade 4 (4)
- None of the Above (5)

If None of the Above Is Selected, Then Skip to End of Survey

Q3 How many years have you been teaching Special Education

Reading/English/Language Arts?

- I am new to teaching special education Reading/English/Language Arts, this is my first year (1)
- 1 – 3 years (2)
- 4 – 10 years (3)
- 11 – 18 years (4)
- More than 18 years (5)

Q4 Which item best describes your pre-service teacher preparation program?

- 4-year traditional college with special education major (1)
- Master's degree in special education (2)
- Bachelor's degree in another major and deficiency plan to meet requirements for special education teacher certification (3)
- Alternative certification program (4)
- On-line college bachelor or master's degree (5)
- On-line teacher certification (6)
- A combination of the above programs (7)

Q5 Do any of your students with learning disabilities in reading have instructional accommodations prescribed on their IEP?

- Yes (1)
- Not sure (2)
- None that I am aware of (3)

Q6 Do you communicate with general education teachers regarding teaching students with learning disabilities in reading?

- Special Education staff gives general ed teachers a hard copy of the IEPs of students that will be included in their classes (1)
- Special Education staff gives general ed teachers a hard copy of the IEPs of students that will be included in their classes and also reviews the IEP with them (2)
- Special Education staff provides a list of students with disabilities for general education teachers to access the student IEPs on-line (3)
- Special Education staff does not usually give general education teachers IEPs or links to on-line IEPs (4)

Q7 The general education staff that have students with learning disabilities in reading, can implement the student's IEPs and the reading interventions prescribed on the IEPs.

- Yes, without assistance (1)
- Yes, with assistance (2)
- No, they are usually confused by IEPs or parts of the IEP (3)
- Not sure (4)

Q8 Although IEPs are sometimes complicated and lengthy, I am confident in my knowledge and understanding of student's IEPs.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Strongly Disagree (4)

Q9 The IEP provides useful information for my instructional planning

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Strongly Disagree (4)

Q10 Questionnaire Part II

Below are eleven frequently prescribed accommodations for students with learning disabilities in reading. According to the Texas Education Agency, a student may use these accommodations, if he or she routinely and effectively uses it during classroom instruction and testing. Please indicate your understanding/experience with each accommodation.

Select all answers that apply

Q11 Extended Time - Testing Over Two Days

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q12 Small Group Administration

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q13 Verbal Reminders

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q14 Reading Aloud Test Questions

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q15 Multiple or Frequent Breaks

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q16 Minimizing Distractions

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q17 Visual Reminders

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q18 Blank Graphic Organizers

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q19 Tactile Reminders

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q20 Spelling Assistance

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q21 Dyslexia Bundle

- I have never had a student that has been prescribed this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach other teachers about using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about implementing this accommodation in daily planning and lessons (3)
- I am not sure about how to implement this accommodation (4)
- I would like professional development about implementing this accommodation (5)

Q22 Questionnaire Part III

Select the item that best describes the frequency with which you implement accommodations and use IEP content.

Q23 I use the information on my student's IEP(s) for planning lessons

- Daily (1)
- Weekly (2)
- 2 -3 times per semester (3)
- Not usually (4)
- In my teaching role, it is not necessary to use IEPs for planning lessons (5)

Q24 Although it is difficult for teachers to meet all expectations, I implement the IEP prescribed accommodations

- Daily (1)
- Weekly (2)
- 2 - 3 times per semester (3)
- Not usually (4)
- In my teaching role, it is not necessary to implement accommodations (5)

Q25 I collect data on the effectiveness of the IEP instructional accommodations I implement

- Every time I implement the accommodation (1)
- Frequently when I implement the accommodation (2)
- Not often (3)
- In my teaching role, it is not necessary to collect data on accommodation effectiveness (4)

Q26 I would participate in the following topics of professional development (select all that apply)

- Understanding the information on IEPs (1)
- Using the IEPs to plan instruction (2)
- Collecting data on the effects of accommodations for each student (3)
- Using the data on the effects of accommodations to inform my recommendations at ARD (Annual, Review, Dismissal) meetings (4)
- Increasing the effectiveness of my role at ARD meetings (5)
- Implementation of specific accommodations (6)
- I would not benefit from professional development on these topics (7)

Q27 When Congress reauthorizes The Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, I would suggest the following, regarding redesign and usefulness of the IEP:

Appendix F: Elementary Campus Administrator Questionnaire

Questionnaire Part I

Select the one answer item that best describes your professional history and experience

Q1 Do any of the teachers you supervise, have students with learning disabilities in reading?

- Yes (1)
- None, that I am aware of (2)
- Not sure (3)

Q2 Which best describes your administrative duties in supervising instruction in General Education Reading/English/Language Arts?

- I supervise at least one teacher of general education
Reading/English/Language Arts (and/or bilingual/ESL general education
Reading/English/Language Arts), Grade 4 (1)
- This supervision duty is assigned to other staff (2)
- None of the above (3)

Q3 Which best describes your administrative duties in supervising instruction of Special Education Reading/ English/Language Arts?

- I supervise at least one special education teacher that teaches Reading/English/Language Arts (and/or special education bilingual/ESL Reading/English/Language Arts), Grade 4 (1)
- I don't supervise any of the above, but, I function as the district representative/administrator at ARD (Admission, Review, Dismissal) meetings for at least one student who has learning disabilities in reading (2)
- None of the above, this supervision and ARD meeting duty is assigned to other staff (3)

Q4 How many years have you supervised teachers of Reading/English/Language Arts?

- 1 – 3 years (1)
- 4 – 10 years (2)
- 11 – 18 years (3)
- More than 18 years (4)
- I do not supervise teachers of Reading/English/Language Arts (5)

Q5 How many years have you functioned as the district representative at ARD meetings?

- 1 -3 years (1)
- 4 - 10 years (2)
- 11 - 18 years (3)
- More than 18 years (4)
- I do not function as the district representative at ARD meetings (5)

Q6 Which best describes your pre-service administrative preparation program?

- Masters Degree including certification in Educational Administration or The Principalship awarded by a traditional university (1)
- Masters Degree including certification in Educational Administration or The Principalship awarded by an on-line university (2)
- Alternative Administration Certification Program (3)
- Masters Degree through a combination of traditional and on-line programs (4)
- Masters Degree through an on-line program (5)
- Certification through an on-line program (6)
- A combination of the above programs (7)

Q7 Prior to becoming an administrator, which answer choice best describes your primary teaching duties?

- General Education Teacher (1)
- Special Education Teacher (2)
- Elective or Special Area Teacher (3)
- Never taught (4)

Q8 Which best describes the information you receive about students with disabilities at your school?

- I request a list of students with disabilities in my school (1)
- The Special Education staff gives me a list of students with disabilities (2)
- The Special Education staff gives me a copy of the IEPs of students with disabilities (3)
- The Special Education staff gives me a list of students and access to their on-line IEPs (4)
- I access special education information on-line independently (5)
- As an administrator, it is not necessary to access IEP information (6)
- None of the above (7)

Q9 Although IEPs are sometimes complicated and lengthy, I am confident in my knowledge and understanding of student IEPs.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Strongly Disagree (4)

Q10 How do general education teachers at your school receive information about students with learning disabilities in their classes?

- Before the school year begins, teachers receive information from the special education department (1)
- After the school year begins, teachers receive information from the special education department (2)
- General education teachers ask for information from the special education department, if they need it (3)
- General Education teachers independently access information from on-line sources (4)
- General Education teachers do not receive information about students with disabilities (5)
- Not sure (6)

Q11 The general education and/or special education teachers I supervise, use the IEPs for instructional planning.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Strongly Disagree (4)

Questionnaire Part II

Below are eleven frequently prescribed accommodations for students with learning disabilities in reading. According to the Texas Education Agency, a student may use these accommodations, if he or she routinely and effectively uses it during classroom instruction and testing. Please indicate your understanding/experience with each accommodation.

Select all answers that apply

Q12 Using Extended Time - Testing Over Two Days

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q13 Small Group Administration - A student may use this accommodation if he or she routinely and effectively uses this accommodation during classroom instruction and testing (TEA)

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q14 Verbal Reminders

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q15 Reading Aloud Test Questions

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q16 Multiple or Frequent Breaks

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q17 Minimizing Distractions

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q18 Visual Reminders

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q19 Blank Graphic Organizers

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q20 Tactile Reminders

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q21 Spelling Assistance

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q22 Dyslexia Bundle

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Questionnaire Part III

Select the item that best describes your supervision experiences

Q23 Although it is difficult to know for sure, I believe the teachers I supervise use IEP information to plan and implement instruction

- Always (1)
- Frequently (2)
- Not often (3)
- Never (4)
- Not sure (5)

Q24 Teachers I supervise implement accommodations prescribed on their students'

IEPs

- Always (1)
- Frequently (2)
- Not often (3)
- Never (4)
- Not sure (5)

Q25 The teachers I supervise, collect data on the effectiveness of the instructional interventions/accommodations prescribed on the IEPs of the students in their classes

- Every time they implement the intervention/accommodation (1)
- Frequently when implementing the intervention/accommodation (2)
- Not often (3)
- They do not collect data on interventions/accommodations (4)
- Not sure (5)

Q26 As an administrator, I find IEPs useful to assist with: (select all that apply)

- discipline decisions, (1)
- statewide assessment planning (2)
- professional development planning (3)
- teacher supervision (4)
- participation in ARD meetings (5)
- None of the above (6)

Q27 I would participate in the following topics of professional development (select all that apply)

- Understanding the information on IEPs (1)
- Using the IEPs to plan instruction (2)
- Collecting data on the effects of accommodations for each student (3)
- Using the data on the effects of accommodations to inform my recommendations at ARD (Annual, Review, Dismissal) meetings (4)
- Increasing the effectiveness of my role at ARD meetings (5)
- Implementation of specific accommodations (6)
- I would not benefit from professional development on these topics (7)

Q28 When Congress reauthorizes The Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, I would suggest the following, regarding redesign and usefulness of the IEP:

Appendix G: Middle School Campus Administrator Questionnaire

Q1 Questionnaire Part I

Select the one answer item that best describes your professional history and experience.

Q2 Do any of the teachers you supervise, have students with learning disabilities in reading?

- 1) Yes (1)
- 2) None, that I am aware of (2)
- 3) Not sure (3)

Q3 Which best describes your administrative duties in supervising instruction in General Education Reading/English/Language Arts?

- I supervise at least one teacher of general education
Reading/English/Language Arts (and/or bilingual/ESL general education
Reading/English/Language Arts), Grade 8 (1)
- This supervision duty is assigned to other staff (2)
- None of the above (3)

Q4 Which best describes your administrative duties in supervising instruction of Special Education Reading/ English/Language Arts?

- I supervise at least one special education teacher that teaches Reading/English/Language Arts (and/or special education bilingual/ESL Reading/English/Language Arts), Grade 8 (1)
- I don't supervise any of the above, but, I function as the district representative/administrator at ARD (Admission, Review, Dismissal) meetings for at least one student who has learning disabilities in reading (2)
- None of the above, this supervision and ARD meeting duty is assigned to other staff (3)

Q5 How many years have you supervised teachers of Reading/English/Language Arts?

- 1 – 3 years (1)
- 4 – 10 years (2)
- 11 – 18 years (3)
- More than 18 years (4)
- I do not supervise teachers of Reading/English/Language Arts (5)

Q6 How many years have you functioned as the district representative at ARD meetings?

- 1 -3 years (1)
- 4 - 10 years (2)
- 11 - 18 years (3)
- More than 18 years (4)
- I do not function as the district representative at ARD meetings (5)

Q7 Which best describes your pre-service administrative preparation program?

- Masters Degree including certification in Educational Administration or The Principalship awarded by a traditional university (1)
- Masters Degree including certification in Educational Administration or The Principalship awarded by an on-line university (2)
- Alternative Administration Certification Program (3)
- Masters Degree through a combination of traditional and on-line programs (4)
- Masters Degree through an on-line program (5)
- Certification through an on-line program (6)

Q8 Prior to becoming an administrator, which answer choice best describes your primary teaching duties

- General Education Teacher (1)
- Special Education Teacher (2)
- Elective or Special Area Teacher (3)
- Never taught (4)

Q9 Which best describes the information you receive about students with disabilities at your school?

- I request a list of students with disabilities in my school (1)
- The Special Education staff gives me a list of students with disabilities (2)
- The Special Education staff gives me a copy of the IEPs of students with disabilities (3)
- The Special Education staff gives me a list of students and access to their on-line IEPs (4)
- I access special education information on-line independently (5)
- As an administrator, it is not necessary to access IEP information (6)
- None of the above (7)

Q10 Although IEPs are sometimes complicated and lengthy, I am confident in my knowledge and understanding of student's IEPs.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Strongly Disagree (4)

Q11 How do general education teachers at your school receive information about students with learning disabilities in their classes?

- Before the school year begins, teachers receive information from the special education department (1)
- After the school year begins, teachers receive information from the special education department (2)
- General education teachers ask for information from the special education department, if they need it (3)
- General Education teachers independently access information from on-line sources (4)
- General Education teachers do not receive information about students with disabilities (5)
- Not sure (6)

Q12 The teachers I supervise, use the IEPs for instructional planning.

- Strongly Agree (1)
- Agree (2)
- Disagree (3)
- Strongly Disagree (4)

Q13 Questionnaire Part II

Below are eleven frequently prescribed accommodations for students with learning disabilities in reading. According to the Texas Education Agency, a student may use these accommodations, if he or she routinely and effectively uses it during classroom instruction and testing. Please indicate your understanding/experience with each accommodation. Select all answers that apply

Q14 Using Extended Time - Testing Over Two Days

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q15 Small Group Administration

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q16 Reading Aloud Test Questions

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q17 Verbal Reminders

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q18 Minimizing Distractions

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q19 Multiple or Frequent Breaks

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q20 Visual Reminders

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q21 Spelling Assistance

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q22 Tactile Reminders

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q23 Questionnaire Part III Select the item that best describes your supervision experiences

Q24 Dyslexia Bundle

- I have no experience with this accommodation (1)
- I am an expert in implementing this accommodation and could coach/evaluate teachers using it (2)
- I am somewhat knowledgeable about coaching or supervising a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation in daily instructional planning (3)
- I am not sure about how to coach or supervise a teacher that should be implementing this accommodation (4)
- I would find it helpful to have professional development about coaching and supervising a teacher implementing this accommodation (5)

Q25 Teachers I supervise implement accommodations prescribed on their students'

IEPs

- Always (1)
- Frequently (2)
- Not often (3)
- Never (4)
- Not sure (5)

Q26 Although it is difficult for teachers to meet all expectations, the teachers I supervise implement interventions/accommodations prescribed on their students' IEPs

- Always (1)
- Frequently (2)
- Not often (3)
- Never (4)

Q27 The teachers I supervise, collect data on the effectiveness of the instructional interventions/accommodations prescribed on the IEPs of the students in their classes

- Every time they implement the intervention/accommodation (1)
- Frequently when implementing the intervention/accommodation (2)
- Not often (3)
- They do not collect data on interventions/accommodations (4)
- Not sure (5)

Q28 As an administrator, I find IEPs useful to assist with: (select all that apply)

- discipline decisions, (1)
- statewide assessment planning (2)
- professional development planning (3)
- teacher supervision (4)
- participation in ARD meetings (5)
- None of the above (6)

Q30 I would participate in the following topics of professional development (select all that apply)

- Understanding the information on IEPs (1)
- Using the IEPs to plan instruction (2)
- Collecting data on the effects of accommodations for each student (3)
- Using the data on the effects of accommodations to inform my recommendations at ARD (Annual, Review, Dismissal) meetings (4)
- Increasing the effectiveness of my role at ARD meetings (5)
- Implementation of specific accommodations (6)
- I would not benefit from professional development on these topics (7)

Q29 When Congress reauthorizes The Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, I would suggest the following, regarding redesign and usefulness of the IEP:

Appendix H: Cover Letter

Subject: Thank you and Chance to Win iPad Mini

March 2013

Hello _ISD Educator,

As you know, General Education Teachers, Special Education Teachers and Campus Administrators are typically involved in the Admission Review Dismissal (ARD) Committee and the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP). However, there is limited research about the IEP after its development.

You are invited to participate in a survey regarding the Individualized Education Program (IEP) developed for 4th and 8th grade students with learning disabilities in reading. Better information on the development and use of the IEP has the potential to help professionals and schools better serve students with disabilities. Your responses and your school will be confidential and responses will be aggregated and reported only as group data. Your information is very important to our understanding of the IEP and we sincerely hope you will respond to the survey. The survey should take no more than 10 minutes of your time. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

This study has been approved by the _ISD Department of External Research and the Legal Department.

All participants completing the survey will automatically be included in a drawing for an iPad mini with Wi-Fi 16GB. You will be notified by email if you were selected in the random drawing.

Those who decline the survey, but wish to be included in the drawing may email jaltobelli@utexas.edu

Again, thank you for your participation.

Follow this link to the Survey:

[Take the Survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your Internet browser:

https://utaustined.qualtrics.com/WRQualtricsSurveyEngine/?SID=SV_0Hbt9CpDGxwsLOZ&Preview=Survey&_ =1

If you have any questions regarding the survey feel free to contact:

Joan Altobelli,
Doctoral Candidate
Special Education Administration
The University of Texas at Austin
jaltobelli@utexas.edu

Or

Dr. Barbara Pazey
Assistant Professor
Department of Special Education
The University of Texas at Austin
bpazey@utexas.edu

Note: This study is not related to Extend-A-Care for Kids

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[Click here to unsubscribe](#)

STUDY NUMBER: 2012-12-0047 Approval Date: 12/18/2012 Expires:
12/17/2013

Consent to Participate in Internet Research

Identification of Investigator and Purpose of Study

You are invited to participate in a research study, entitled “Educator Knowledge and Skills Essential for Accommodating Students with Learning Disabilities in Reading.” The study is being conducted by Joan Altobelli, Special Education Administration Department, of The University of Texas at Austin at jaltobelli@utexas.edu.

The purpose of this research study is to twofold: (a) to identify the instructional interventions and/or accommodations in reading, listed as necessary for students with disabilities in 4th and 8th grades; and (b) to explore the level of knowledge and skills possessed by teacher and campus administrators in regard to the specified interventions and/or accommodations as stated in the students’ IEPs and the frequency whereby they apply and use their knowledge and skills, whether through teacher implementation or administrator supervision of instruction.

Your participation in the study will contribute to a better understanding of professional development needs of teachers and administration. You are free to contact the investigator at the above address and phone number to discuss the study. You must be at least 18 years old to participate.

If you agree to participate:

The questionnaire will take approximately 10 - 15 minutes of your time.

You will complete an activity about reading interventions and accommodations.

You will not be compensated.

Risks/Benefits/Confidentiality of Data

There are no known risks. There will be no costs for participating, nor will you benefit from participating. Your name and email address will not be requested or kept during the data collection phase. A limited number of research team members will have access to the data during data collection. Identifying information will be stripped from the final dataset.

Participation or Withdrawal

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decline to answer any question and you have the right to withdraw from participation at any time. Withdrawal will not affect your relationship with The University of Texas in anyway.

If you do not want to participate either simply stop participating or close the browser window. If you do not want to receive any more reminders, you may email us at

jaltobelli@utexas.edu.

Contacts

If you have any questions about the study or need to update your email address contact the researcher,

Joan Altobelli by sending an email to jaltobelli@utexas.edu. This study has been reviewed by The

University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board and the study number is 2012-12-0047.

Questions about your rights as a research participant:

If you have questions about your rights or are dissatisfied at any time with any part of this study, you can

contact, anonymously if you wish, the Institutional Review Board by phone at (512) 471-8871 or email at orsc@uts.cc.utexas.edu.

If you agree to participate, click on the link in the email above.

Thank you.

Appendix I: Approved Consent Script for Study

STUDY NUMBER: 2012-12-0047

Approval Date: 12/18/2012

Expires: 12/17/2013

Consent to Participate in Internet Research

Identification of Investigator and Purpose of Study

You are invited to participate in a research study, entitled “Educator Knowledge and Skills Essential for Accommodating Students with Learning Disabilities in Reading.” The study is being conducted by Joan Altobelli, Special Education Administration Department, of The University of Texas at Austin at jaltobelli@utexas.edu.

The purpose of this research study is to twofold: (a) to identify the instructional interventions and/or accommodations in reading, listed as necessary for students with disabilities in 4th and 8th grades; and (b) to explore the level of knowledge and skills possessed by teacher and campus administrators in regard to the specified interventions and/or accommodations as stated in the students’ IEPs and the frequency whereby they apply and use their knowledge and skills, whether through teacher implementation or administrator supervision of instruction.

Your participation in the study will contribute to a better understanding of professional development needs of teachers and administration. You are free to contact the investigator at the above address and phone number to discuss the study. You must be at least 18 years old to participate.

If you agree to participate:

- The questionnaire will take approximately six minutes of your time.
- You will complete an activity about reading interventions and accommodations.
- You will not be compensated.

Risks/Benefits/Confidentiality of Data

There are no known risks. There will be no costs for participating, nor will you benefit from participating. Your name and email address will not be requested or kept during the data collection phase. A limited number of research team members will have access to the data during data collection. Identifying information will be stripped from the final dataset.

Participation or Withdrawal

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decline to answer any question and you have the right to withdraw from participation at any time. Withdrawal will not affect your relationship with The University of Texas in anyway. If you do not want to participate either simply stop participating or close the browser window. If you do not want to receive any more reminders, you may email us at jaltobelli@utexas.edu.

Contacts

If you have any questions about the study or need to update your email address contact the researcher, Joan Altobelli by sending an email to jaltobelli@utexas.edu. This study has been reviewed by The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board and the study number is 2012-12-0047.

Questions about your rights as a research participant:

If you have questions about your rights or are dissatisfied at any time with any part of this study, you can contact, anonymously if you wish, the Institutional Review Board by phone at (512) 471-8871 or email at orsc@uts.cc.utexas.edu.

If you agree to participate, click on the following link [**HTTP://LINK TO STUDY URL**]

The password for the study is

[**PASSWORD**]. Thank you.

**Please print a copy of this document
for your records.**

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Vita

Joan Altobelli was born in New York City and lived on various Air Force bases, including Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii, before Hawaii was admitted into statehood. In 1967 her father retired from military service and her parents, three sisters, and cat named Socrates moved to Mount Holly, New Jersey, where she attended public primary schools and graduated on a 3-year plan from Rancocas Valley Regional High School. As the youngest daughter of second-generation Italian immigrants, her sisters paved the way to higher education in a family that did not especially value a college education for women. The fourth daughter to attend and graduate from college, Ms. Altobelli attended Montclair State College in Upper Montclair, New Jersey, and was awarded a BA in Speech and Hearing Therapy in May 1977.

A move to Austin, Texas, in August 1977, with the goal of attending graduate school, serendipitously presented an opportunity to become a substitute teacher for junior high and high school students with hearing impairments. Teaching on a deficiency plan, she achieved a Texas Teaching Certificate with specialization in Deaf and Hearing Impaired at The University of Texas at Austin in 1979. After 12 years of teaching, she enrolled in graduate school and was awarded a Masters of Educational Administration from Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos. After 18 years in special education classrooms in Austin Independent School District,

she left her teaching position to become a special education coordinator and later the special education director in Leander Independent School District in Leander, Texas.

During the 2000–2001 school year, Ms. Altobelli was encouraged to apply for and was appointed to the position of special education director for the Austin Independent School District and remained in that position until her retirement in July 2007. Prior to retirement, in 2004, she began the doctoral program in the Special Education Administration Department at The University of Texas at Austin. She is currently the executive director at Extend-A-Care for Kids in Austin, Texas, and is adjunct faculty at Texas A&M University in Killeen, Texas. She resides in Cedar Park, Texas.

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