The Implications of Change for the Practicing Learning Assistance Teacher of the 1990s

by

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ABSTRACT

Learning Assistance Teachers of the 1990s have faced dilemmas as a result of a combination of changes in the education of exceptional students. Major changes have occurred in philosophies, training requirements, administrative and Ministry of Education guidelines and the expectations of Learning Assistance Teachers.

These uncertainties formed the framework for a reexamination of the current role of Learning Assistance Teachers. Four areas of primary attention that were addressed included: 1) to consider the adequacy of training and qualifications given current changes; 2) to note the needs of Learning Assistance Teachers as they perform their jobs; 3) to identify the statedconcerns of these educators; and, 4) to record any recommendations that are posed by Learning Assistance Teachers given the challenges they face.

A questionnaire was mailed to 140 Learning Assistance Teachers, who were from six districts across British Columbia. Sixty-one questionnaires were returned and resultant data was compiled for analysis. Several themes emerged in the results: Learning Assistance Teachers wanted further clarification of their roles; called for a re-examination of the service-delivery system in relation to the funding categories; recommended that, in addition, to wanting more opportunities for inservice for themselves, all educators should increase their training and qualifications; and, finally that the increased support (funding, resources and personnel) is needed.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Over the past fifteen years, the organization and delivery of services for students with special needs has been challenged continuously (Andrews & Lupart, 1993; Brain, 1991; Cameron, 1979; Gartner & Lipsky, 1989; Idol-Maestas, Lloyd & Lilly, 1981; MacKay, 1984; McMurray, 1980; Reynolds, 1980; Reynolds, Wang, & Walberg, 1987; Wang & Birch, 1984; Will, 1986). Accompanying this criticism have been recommendations for reorganization of the delivery of services for students with special needs, which has considerable influence over the manner in which Learning Assistance Teachers complete their assigned responsibilities. Such recommendations called for the consolidation of regular and special education (Stainback & Stainback, 1984), heterogeneous groupings of students (Reynolds, Wang & Walberg, 1987), curriculum-based identification systems (Tucker, 1985), ecological assessment methods (Wang & Birch, 1984), indirect service through teacher assistance teams (Chalfant, Pysh & Moultrice, 1979), in-service training (Moran, 1984), and a consultative-collaborative service delivery model (Freeze, Bravi & Rampaul, 1989).

These suggested reforms have created a scenario in which Learning Assistance Teachers (LATs) face new challenges as they learn to collaborate and coordinate special needs services to better meet the diverse needs of all students. Thus, the focus of the thesis is to consider the concerns and uncertainties that may be expressed by Learning Assistance Teachers when they are provided an opportunity to re-examine their practice.

One issue worthy of investigation is the possible unpreparedness of some Learning Assistance Teachers to effectively and efficiently execute the requirements implicit in a new emerging role. A second issue arises as to whether the challenges faced by Learning Assistance Teachers will be a function of their locale, the availability of resources, the

opportunity for in-service, the training of the Learning Assistance Teacher, and the accessibility to knowledge regarding the proposed changes in special education. A third issue arises from the fact that change is usually met with resistance. Learning Assistance Teachers may be faced with obstacles as they endeavor to meet the demands of reform.

It is the combination of the drive toward greater degrees of integration of special needs children into the regular classroom, the redefinition and expansion of the Learning Assistance Teacher's role to encompass a larger populace of students, a consultative-collaborative service delivery model, and the impact of change that raise possible dilemmas for Learning Assistance Teachers.

If Learning Assistance Teachers are to meet change with success then they must be aware of the challenges they will confront and must be equipped with the necessary strategies to resolve them.

Changing Philosophies and Administrative Shifts

In the early 1990s the role of the Learning Assistance Teacher appeared to be expanding to accommodate various educational philosophies and the service delivery model currently widespread in public education. These philosophies included mainstreaming, integration, the full-service school, and the inclusive classroom. In each case, the preferred service delivery model was a variation of a consultative-collaborative approach (Andrews & Lupart, 1993). The responsibilities of Learning Assistance Teachers have included curriculum development, assessment, direct assistance to teachers, and increased administrative responsibilities - such as serving on school-based teams. Further, a wide range of effective instructional practices that can be employed by general educators, such as cooperative learning groups, mastery learning, curriculum-based assessment, whole language programs, and cognitive strategy instruction, have emerged that were intended to allow for the integration of difficult-to-teach students with age-appropriate classmates in general education. Further, there was an increasing belief that exceptional children could experience success when teachers adapt instruction to meet their needs. As a consequence

of the combination of circumstances, Learning Assistance Teachers have found themselves in a higher profile position within the school context.

Ten challenges faced by Learning Assistance Teachers, as identified by Brain (1991), are given below:

1) To learn new ways to assess, report, plan, implement and evaluate in a "team model."
2) To be comfortably familiar with regular class curriculum across grades.
3) To work comfortably and co-operatively in the classroom without becoming the expert, or the other pair of hands, or resorting to pull-out.
4) To create a team in which members are equal partners in the process of problem solving, one that is time efficient and results in action plans and follow through.
5) To be able to observe and comment upon what the child is able to do in the classroom without being evaluative of the teacher.
6) To provide assessment that reflects program need that will bring about change.
7) To avoid development of dependency in children.
8) To find necessary time to consult and plan.
9) To balance the parade of professionals coming into the classroom.
10) To empower students to be responsible for their own education.

In facing such challenges, Learning Assistance Teachers are no longer just responsible for exceptional children but must also provide support services to the regular classroom teacher as well. The consultative-collaborative approach necessitates a number of changes on the part of Learning Assistance Teachers, regular classroom teachers, and school administrators. This changing array of expectations also has had consequences for the ongoing professional preparation of Learning Assistance Teachers.

Changes in Training Requirements

The recommendations stated in the British Columbia Ministry of Education (1989-1990) were that Learning Assistance Teachers should hold a certificate or diploma in special education and should have university training in consultative-collaboration, curriculum modification/adaptive curriculum, thinking/learning strategies and computer technology. Learning Assistance Teachers, however, are not required to possess these skills. This lack of prescription may result in the unpreparedness of Learning Assistance Teachers as they attempt to fulfill the responsibilities of the job.

At the provincial level, Ministry of Education guidelines (1981, 1984, 1989-1990) have attempt ed to reflect current philosophies and to outline recommendations for the

Learning Assistance Teacher. Past evidence has revealed that at the district and local levels the guidelines and responsibilities bestowed upon the Learning Assistance Teacher varied as a function of the districts' definitions of learning assistance, the needs of the students at the local levels, the philosophies of the schools and the availability of special education personnel to the schools (Schwartz, 1979).

New Expectations

It has been argued that ideally schools should produce a community which accepts responsibility for the special needs of all students and in which all pupils are valued irrespective of their particular abilities (Baker & Zigmond, 1995; Bines, 1988;Sindelar, 1995; Snell & Drake, 1994). Such a task would require all teachers to share their expertise and would require collaboration in developing interpersonal skills among teachers and pupils. If this is the direction that special education and regular education is pursuing, then change in the professional preparation of all teachers is inevitable. That is, if classroom teachers are expected to effectively select appropriate curriculum, provide a suitable environment and support for individual children then they must be given assistance in programming, managing and monitoring. They must be given opportunities for in-service training, support from Learning Assistance Teachers and school administrators, and time to adjust to their new expectations. Likewise, Learning Assistance Teachers must be given the opportunity to learn about and adapt to their widening role, which requires them to be an advocate, a consultant for all teachers and a helper for all children with any kind of exceptional condition. Inherent in this ideology are two questions. First, is the change in the service delivery viewed as necessary, helpful and reasonable? Second, do Learning Assistance Teachers have the ability and the training to undertake effectively the demands of their reformed positions? The future agenda of all educators will be full as they attempt to provide more effective service, better consultative - collaborative skills, better teaching skills and strategies in order to create a school system that serves all students in the most inclusive possible manner.

The combination of changes in approaches and training requirements, of shifts in administration and ministry guidelines and of evolving of new expectations for all educators have created pressing quandaries for the LAT of the 1990s.

Purpose of this Thesis

To determine the impact of changing role expectations, the purposes of the thesis were: a) to determine how Learning Assistance Teachers see their job description; b) to determine whether Learning Assistance Teachers believe that their job requirements have changed; and if so to what degree; c) to determine whether Learning Assistance Teachers believe that they are trained well enough to do their jobs, and if not, to consider training opportunities open to them; and, d) to determine what Learning Assistance Teachers feel they need in order to be able to cope with the proposed reforms.

These four purposes lead to the following more specific research questions centered around the themes of job status, the arising expectations for Learning Assistance Teachers, feelings related to change, and speculation about future needs.

Research Questions

1. Status of Role.

   a) What is the contemporary role description of the Learning Assistance Teacher of the 1990s?

   b) What changes have occurred over the past five years that have directly affected the role of the Learning Assistance Teacher?

   c) What changes have occurred over the past five years that have raised issues of concern for practicing Learning Assistance Teachers?

2. Arising Expectations.

   a) As a result of changes that have occurred over the past five years in the field of special education, what arising expectations do Learning Assistance Teachers perceive as coming under their jurisdiction?

   b) Are these new expectations within the range of capabilities of Learning Assistance Teachers given their current training and qualifications?

Research Questions, Continued

3. Feelings About the Process of Change.

   a) What obstacles do Learning Assistance Teachers experience as a result of the process of change?

   b) What obstacles do Learning Assistance Teachers foresee as a result of the process of change?

   c) What personal dilemmas are faced by Learning Assistance Teachers as they try to meet the demands inherent in the process of change?

4. Future Needs.

   a) What training and qualifications do Learning Assistance Teachers feel are needed to meet with the demands imposed by change?

   b) What recommendations do Learning Assistance teachers suggest that would help to make the transition easier?

   c) What are the current needs of the practicing Learning Assistance Teacher of the 1990's?

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

The delivery of services for exceptional children has changed considerably over the past two decades. Segregated students are slowly taking their place in the regular classroom for a majority of their instruction. Special educators are slowly moving into the regular classroom to deliver services not only to students but to teachers. Landucci and Bachor (1992) argued that this shift in service delivery was brought about in part by five interrelated factors:

1. Efficacy studies showing the need for improved delivery systems for exceptional children.
2. The movement toward normalization and deinstitutionalization which increased the number of students in the public school system who required assistance.
3. The reorganization and reconceptualization of the service delivery network necessitated by the dramatic increase in the number of students identified as exceptional and the extension of categories to accommodate these students.
4. Litigation in special education related to placement practices and the rights to an appropriate education instigated by parent groups and the formation of organizations for the purpose of protecting and advocating for exceptional children.
5. Legislative practices in Europe, United States and Canada.

Primary levers in the movement toward revamp the service delivery system for exceptional children have been the influence of professional educators, the impact of judicial decisions, and the effects of government policies. Each of these general considerations are reviewed in the five sections that follow. Presented in the first part is a brief history of the earliest education services to the evolution of the Cascade models. The influence of professional educators and the impact of normalization and deinstitutionalization are discussed in this first section. This is followedby the second part in which alternative service delivery program are examined. Lobbying, litigation and legislation in Canada and the United States is covered in part three. The reader is presented with a brief history of parent advocacy, formation of organizations, landmark court cases and some milestones that have influenced Canadian and American legislation. A discussion of the impact of student

population and teachers' new roles by the proposed service delivery system constitutes the fourth part of this review. This review is concluded with a summary of past and present events and a brief look at future considerations.

Traditional Delivery of Special Services

The earliest education services. Delivery of services for exceptional children emerged out of the need to provide some form of education for students who could not function appropriately in the regular classroom due to some distinct and observable handicap. This necessity for providing some supplementary education service outside the regular public school system led to the establishment of institutional schools which for the most part housed and educated the exceptional child. The population of students served in these residential schools consisted of students who exhibited physical, intellectual and speech handicaps. Historically speaking, the earliest educational services for exceptional children were provided for the hearing impaired in the 1500s (Henkels, 1972), the visually handicapped in 1784 (Napier, 1972), the mentally retarded in 1911 (Telford and Sawrey, 1972), and the physically handicapped in 1919 (Peterson, 1972). Starting around 1925 mentally retarded children were served in self-contained special education classes.

Until the late 1950s, the predominate organizational arrangement for all of these severely handicapped children was self-contained special classes or residential schools and the designation "handicapped" tended to be reserved for children who were severely handicapped.

The picture of special education services in the late 19th century and early 20th century (1900-1945) reflected a bare tolerance of exceptional children, who were housed in residential and special schools and special classes within schools and thus excluded from the public school system. During this period these atypical children had progressed from substantial neglect into residential schools then into isolated community settings of special schools and special classes.

Proliferation of the special class model. Beginning about 1945 there was a rapid development of public school programs for exceptional children. The population of

exceptional children was extended to include students who displayed, in current terminology, behavior problems or emotional disturbances and learning disabilities. With this widespread assignment of students to extended categories, the public school system harbored two kinds of classes - regular and special.

Educators' concerns. In 1932, Bennett conducted the first efficacy study which compared the desirability of special and regular classes for educating mildly retarded children. Many years later, Dunn (1968, p.5) exhorted special educators to "... stop being pressured into a continuing and expanding special education program (special classes) that we know now to be undesirable for many of the children we are dedicated to serve." Dunn's (1968) review served as a catalyst for other educators to voice their concerns (labelling and stigma being chief ones) about segregated classes. The period from 1945-1970 saw a rapid growth in the interest of exceptional children and an increase in the service delivery for those children.

The implication of the concerns voiced by educators at this time served as one impetus for altering the focus of special education from a predominantly alternative program approach to include a more general service orientation. Thus, in response to the need to reorganize the service delivery system, the Cascade model emerged.

The cascade model. It was believed that exceptional children had a wide range of handicaps with varying degrees of severity and, as a result, differing amounts and types of assistance were needed. In an attempt to make sense of the services the range of special education programs to students was conceived as being on a continuum. This continuum has often been referred to as a cascade system. Reynolds (1962) first described a service delivery system in which eight alternatives from the regular classroom to a full-time residential school were depicted. His intention in advancing this model was that most of the exceptional children would be served, where possible, in the regular classroom. Conversely, very few exceptional students would be served by a full-time residential school. Educational programs in special treatment and detention centers, hospitals and the home were not considered part of this continuum of general services. Implicit in Reynolds'

(1962) cascade system was some way of defining this continuum of services and who should receive services. The continuum was based on a system for sorting children into general categories, which were not necessarily suitable for any particular individual. That is, students were placed in various settings for reasons other than educational performance. Service delivery, at this time, had advanced from a two-box system (regular classes and special classes) to a categorical system in which students, once they were labelled, were fit into categorical systems around which services were to be provided. The cascade model only emphasized the places in which special education could be provided, which led educators to question its efficacy.

In 1967, Willenberg proposed a revised version of Reynolds' original cascade model. However, the only differences were an added category at the bottom of the cascade and the reflection of a stronger preference for return of the students to regular school environments as soon as feasible.

In the latter 1960s educators began to question the justification of placing students into a categorical system just for the sake of placement while at the same time ignoring benefits of such placements. At this time there occurred a change in which educators began to stress the regular classroom as the preferred place for specialized instruction. There was a growing realization that not all extraordinary instructions had to occur in specialized settings and, in fact, placing children in special classes or other such environments could be disadvantageous. Educators realized the need for enrichment of the regular education setting before exceptional children could be moved into regular classes for their instructional needs.

In response to educators' criticisms of the existent cascade system, Deno (1970) developed a variation on this model, which portrayed the basic assumption that children were seldom all able or all handicapped. As in Reynolds' model, Deno's intent was that children should only move down from the top level as far as necessary and return to the top as quickly as feasible. The tapered design indicated the great difference in the number of exceptional children involved at the different levels and called attention to the fact that the

system served as a diagnostic filter. The most specialized facilities were likely to be needed by the fewest children on a long term basis. The trend exhibited at this time was toward fewer specialized places and more diverse regular places as the means of educating exceptional children who were mildly and moderately handicapped. However, the organization of special services did not reflect this trend.

The cascade models developed by Reynolds (1962), Willenberg (1967) and Deno (1970) were subjected to further criticism. The models tended to be too concerned with placement efficiency. Although the models purported to be flexible with allowances for student movement across service delivery options, in reality the focus tended toward placement inflexibility. Students placed into categories were offered simplified curriculum and thus hopes of returning to the regular classroom setting were reduced. A fluidity which may have been intended by the cascade models was not readily apparent in the operationalization of the models.

Partly in response, Reynolds and Birch (1977) recommended a move toward greater diversity of special needs students in the regular classroom. A major change in the focus of the service delivery network was then evident. The focus of the cascade system shifted to meet the individual instructional needs of exceptional children rather than being primarily concerned with student placement. Specialized settings were still reserved but only for complex needs, such as those students who were profoundly or multiply handicapped. Students recognized as mildly to moderately handicapped (behaviorally disturbed (BD), educable mentally retarded (EMR) and learning disabled (LD) constituted the population to be served under this revised instructional cascade.

In summary, in the late 1960s and early 1970s fundamental changes occurred in the organization of special delivery services to exceptional children and the movement toward "normalization" of these children resulted in the movement of residential and special class students into the public school system. Children normally served outside the public education system now became the responsibility of the school. The impact of this movement necessitated structural and curriculum changes within schools which required

service delivery models using new educational techniques. The impact of the movement toward disbandment of special and residential schools led to further reorganization of special services, including the introduction of resource rooms.

Alternate Services

Pull-out resource room. The resource room concept came into existence in the early 1970s as a response to the steady trend toward teaching more exceptional children in the regular classroom. This trend resulted from two factors: (a) the integration, for part of the school day, of exceptional pupils from special classes and schools; and (b) the increase in referrals of students who had not been identified as exceptional students in the past. The principle underlying the resource room was that students went to the resource center to receive specific instruction on a regularly scheduled basis while receiving the majority of their education in the regular school program.

During the 1970s the demand for resource room services had reached such proportions in some schools that resource teachers were hard pressed to meet the need. As a result, modifications in the function of resource rooms began, such as increasing the size of groups being helped or changing who provided direct instruction. For example, Jenkins, Mayhall, Peschka and Jenkins (1974) studied the efficacy of using tutors with the resource teacher as manager. In one study Jenkins et al. (1974) compared academic growth of small groups of students instructed by the resource teacher with that of children in one-to-one tutorial situations with peer or cross-age tutors. The tutor-taught children outperformed the resource teacher group in each of the areas examined: word recognition, spelling, oral reading, and multiplication. Tutors themselves also demonstrated gains in these areas. Jenkins et al. (1974) then suggested that the role of the resource teacher might be adapted to that of tutor trainer and manager thus planning the material for each child but service delivery would come from peer and cross-age tutors. Maheady (1988), in examining the efficacy of tutoring, found that most applications had been within the confines of the regular classroom. Further, he stated that this option had found "informal" applications in

resource rooms but had not gained popularity as a sole means of service delivery in that context.

The problem of student overload for the resource teacher was but one dilemma that required solution. Equally pressing was the need for systematic planning of the instructional structure of the regular classroom in order for exceptional children to experience successful performance. It was evident that with the increase in the school population of exceptional children there would occur child and group management problems as the movement toward mainstreaming gained more popularity. During the 1970s and into the 1980s educators realized the need for more inclusive arrangements for schooling of all children. This necessitated altering school environments to include a greater diversity of students and instructional offerings.

Consultation as a service delivery alternative. The concept of consultation had emerged in the 1980s as a means of meeting six goals: (a) paving the way for designing systematic plans for returning students to the regular classroom,(b) providing service delivery to classroom teachers by giving them direct assistance with classroom problems, (c) assisting and informing parents, (d) devising more systematic and efficient means of instructing and managing students, (e) facilitating effective remediation strategies in both the direct service settings (resource rooms and self-contained classrooms) and the indirect setting (regular classroom),and (f) increasing the number of students receiving special assistance without additional cost to the school budget (Idol-Maestas, 1983).

There are a number of consultative service delivery options for providing educational support to exceptional children. Six service delivery options that involve the provision of consultative assistance to classroom teachers of mainstreamed students are briefly described here. Chalfant, Pysh and Moultrice (1979) proposed the use of Teacher Assistance Teams (TAT), with the primary goals being: (a) to assist teachers with students who are having learning or behavioral problems in the classroom; and, (b) to obtain more efficient and effective delivery of special help to children by placing the initiative for action in the hands of the classroom teacher. Graden, Casey and Christenson (1985) suggested the use of Pre-

Referral Intervention System, with three primary goals: (a) to systematically implement intervention strategies prior to referral for special education services; (b) to identify successful classroom interventions that make decision-making more instructionally relevant and data-based; and (c) to reduce inappropriate referrals to special education. Egner and Lates (1975), McKenzie (1972) and McKenzie, Egner, Knight, Perelman, Schneider and Garvin (1970) argued for a Consulting Teacher, who was to train and assist classroom teachers in providing successful learning experiences for students eligible for special education services. Idol-Maestas (1981, 1983), Idol-Maestas, Lloyd and Lilly (1981) suggested that service delivery be provided by a Resource/Consulting Teacher, who had three primary goals: (a) to provide direct service (teaching) to students with academic and/or social behavior problems; (b) to transfer students for whom direct service has been successful back to the mainstreamed classroom; and (c) to provide indirect, consultative services to classroom teachers to help special needs students succeed in regular classrooms. Deno and Mirkin (1970) proposed the use of a Special Education Resource Teachers (SERT). Their primary goal was to systematically assist regular classroom teachers in maintaining exceptional students in mainstreamed classes. The Resource Teacher (Jenkins and Mayhall, 1976; Hawisher and Calhoun, 1978; Wiederholt, Hammill and Brown, 1983; Wiederholt, Martinez and Harris, 1985) was an integral component of the service delivery network by providing educational support services to students and/or their teachers. The commonality of these service delivery options addresses the need for consultation between special and regular educators if regular educators are to be successful in sharing the responsibility for the education of exceptional students. Inherent in these models, however, are apparent flaws.

None of the six service delivery options have a theoretical base. This led to some serious questioning and skepticism. There are a number of underlying factors that may facilitate successful school consultation that still need to be identified, developed and implemented. Although there may be problems associated with the implementation of the

concept of consultation it appears that as a service delivery model it has its place in the field of special education.

There appears to be promise for the promotion of consultation as seen in the Consultative-Collaborative Service Delivery Model (Freeze, Bravi and Rampaul, 1989) developed at the University of Manitoba and applied in some of the schools in Manitoba with relatively impressive success. Some features of the model include a categorical approach, an indirect service base, ecological assessment using data-based and curriculum-based measures, systematic (rather than child focussed) interventions, a home-school partnership in problem solving, a pivotal role for the resource teacher, funding based on school (rather than child) characteristics, and an emphasis on professional development (Freeze et al., 1989). The model involves six levels of special education service delivery: the classroom teacher, teacher team, resource teacher, in-school service teams and ancillary services. This model combines cooperative planning, consultation, collaboration and teacher assistance teams into one unique service delivery network that has positive implications of finding more and better ways to bring resources to bare on the problem of educating exceptional students (Freeze et al., 1989).

The reality seems clear. If mainstreaming and integration of exceptional children is to result in benefits then all teachers must support each other by joining together their knowledge, responsibilities, expertise and skills in a collaborative-consultative manner.

In the next portion of this review three other influences - lobbying, litigation and legislation - that have played a vital role in the development of the service delivery network as we see it today will be addressed.

Lobbying, Ligitation, and Legislation

Lobbying by parents. Parents of exceptional children have played an integral part in the education of their children (Cameron, 1979; MacKay, 1984, 1987; Smith, 1980; Treherne & Rawlyk, 1979). The banding together of parents and the formation of parent associations began on a local level in the 1940s and 1950s, largely in reaction to inadequate public and professional responses to their children's educational needs and out of their own

need for social support. In the 1960s parents began to organize at the national level. The evolving groups existed either at the local level and were small or they became affiliated with professional organizations. The number of organizations and agencies that exist today for exceptional children are too numerous to list, however, it has been through the banding together of parents for mutual support, community action and for application of political pressure for legislation that have been so crucial to the development of the field of special education.

Lobbying by professionals. Professionals were equally concerned with the special services offered to the exceptional child. As noted earlier special education was originally designed to accommodate severely handicapped children. It was not until 1901 with the establishment of a special department for special education in the National Education Association (NEA) in the United States that special education emerged as a distinct category within general education. The Council of Exceptional Children evolved in the United States in 1922 and was well established in Canada by 1958 with a Canadian office by 1968 (Hardy, McLeod, Minto, Perkins and Quance, 1971). From about 1900 to 1950 residential schools, special schools and special classes increased but by the 1950s and 1960s children with mild intellectual handicaps were placed in special classes as opposed to special schools. This movement lead to dissatisfaction with the provisions made for exceptional children.

Joint lobbying. It was also during this time that organizations emerged in response to the concerns expressed by both parents and professionals. For example, the National Association for Retarded Children (1950) and the Association for Children with Learning Disabilities (1963) became significant lobbying groups which exercised considerable influence over teachers and administrators.

The formation of parent advocacy groups and organizations by professionals did not happen in isolation. Two influential trends that were emerging during the 1960s and beyond were normalization and deinstitutionalization. Normalization developed by Bank-Mikkelson (1968) and defined by Nirje (1969) found its roots in the Scandinavian

countries and was advocated in the United States and Canada notably by Wolfensberger (1972). The principle inherent in normalization argued for the educating of handicapped persons in and for the "normal" environment of the non-handicapped (Flynn and Nitsch, 1980). The normalization movement provided a reconceptualization of attitude and treatment toward the handicapped. Adherents within the school system ranged from those who wanted to move mildly handicapped students into the regular classroom to those who advocated deinstitutionalization of severely and profoundly handicapped people. Deinstitutionalization, an outgrowth of the philosophy of normalization, advocated for the movement of individuals from large institutions into community-based living arrangements. Deinstitutionalization had a profound impact on the public school system as increasing numbers of severely handicapped students were in need of special education services. Normalization and deinstitutionalization played vital roles in the field of special education. Both instigated litigation and changes in policy resulting in the need for a better and extended service delivery network to be offered in the public school system. Although, as noted previously, various forms of the cascade model (Reynolds, 1962; Willenberg, 1967; Deno, 1970) were introduced as a means of placing the increasing categories of exceptional students in a hierarchical framework, there was a mounting dissatisfaction with the educational options available for these exceptional children expressed by parents (through advocacy groups) and by professional educators (e.g. Dunn, 1968).

Beginning around the 1970s parent groups moved increasingly to the courts to stimulate more services for exceptional children. The population of children identified as exceptional had greatly increased as students who had not been identified before were now being referred for special services. This resulted in the extension of the categorical system and parents of exceptional children wanted to ensure that their children had a place within the system along with appropriate services. Parallel to this was a strong movement away from special classes and institutions. Wherever possible, exceptional children began to be educated in the regular school or classroom with the help of support services. In addition, the effects of the civil rights movement of 1953, which had been in progress striving for

the rights of race and sex, spread to include the rights of handicapped persons. Its impact on handicapped people as a whole added fuel to the parents' movement by emphasizing the rights of individuals to an education, to information, in particular in the rights of the parents of exceptional children not only to be informed but to be consulted and fully involved in any assessment of their child's needs and proposals for the child's special education (Rhodes and Paul, 1978). By the 1980s increasing numbers of exceptional children had become an integral part of the regular school system and the notion of equality socially and educationally has become imperative.

Parent advocacy groups, professional groups and organizations have evolved in response to the rights and needs of exceptional children. The mere formation of these groups and organizations, however, was not powerful enough to cause change. It was through litigation that the concerns of these groups took on meaning and initiated legislative action.

Litigation in Canada and the United States

The fundamental rights and freedoms of Canadians are guaranteed by the Canadian Constitution which promotes equal opportunities for all and promises protection against discrimination on the grounds of race, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, sex, age, or mental and physical disability (MacKay, 1984). However, laws across Canada do not clearly and unequivocally obligate the various school systems to provide appropriate forms of education for all students including those with exceptional abilities. There is no constitutional provision in Canada, with the exception of the Declaration of Human Rights, that guarantees the rights of exceptional children (MacKay, 1984).

Much litigation is initiated by parents who may either be requiring the school to provide or extend special education services to a child or may be arguing against the present placement of a child. Court action by concerned parents is the primary vehicle through which society can exert pressure on policy-making or legislation, which in turn will affect educational provisions within the public school system (Nicholls and Martin, 1983).

In Canada, the case of Elwood versus Halifax County-Bedford School District (1986) became a landmark case in the educational rights of disabled children (MacKay, 1987) as Luke Elwood won the right to be educated with his non-handicapped peers. Another case before the courts involved a girl from Alberta with cerebral palsy who had been rejected from a Lamont County school. The Supreme Court ruled that Lamont County was responsible for the child's education (Cameron, 1979). There have been a number of other cases in Canada (Cameron, 1979; MacKay, 1984, 1987; Smith, 1980; Treherne and Rawlyk, 1979) that have called attention to the right of exceptional children to receive an appropriate education.

Using the power of the courts is not as pronounced in Canada as it is in the United States. In the United States litigation has not only confirmed the rights of exceptional children to a free, appropriate education but has also mandated public schools to provide that education.

Like Canadian litigation, a number of landmark cases have had significant impact on many issues of educational law and procedure. Three cases have been selected as illustrations. In a case occurring in 1984, Brown versus State Board of Education of Topeka, the United States Supreme Court declared that racially segregated education was inherently unequal. The Brown decision had a significant impact and has been cited as the basis for many of the "discrimination suits" involving the education of exceptional children (Turnbull, 1981). Mills versus Board of Education in 1972 was a landmark right to education case in which parents and guardians of seven District of Columbia children brought a class suit against the Board of Education, the Department of Human Resources and the mayor for failure to provide all children with a publicly supported education. The Mills case covered a wide range of handicapping conditions and had a great influence regarding rights to education involving the handicapped (Turnbull, 1981). Improvement in services for retarded individuals was inherent in another pivotal case where the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC) challenged the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The resultant precedence was the right to education for all retarded children

in Pennsylvania and advancement of the principle of least restrictive alternative (Turnbull, 1981).

Litigation was instrumental in laying out the groundwork for legislative practices in the United States. Parent groups and court decisions exerted pressure on governments to adopt principles, philosophies and practices in order to augment the regular education program so that all children have the opportunity to develop their full potential. Partly as a result, the field of special education, along with an increased public awareness of exceptional individuals and their rights, has grown rapidly in recent years.

Canadian and American Legislative Milestones

Special education in Canada has followed closely with the events, philosophy and pedagogy of its American counterpart (McMurray, 1980). During the 1970s the tempo of legislative activity regarding exceptional children accelerated in both Canada and the United States in response to parent activism and professional pressure, empirical evidence of the inadequacy and inappropriateness of segregated classes, the extension of categories for service delivery of increasing numbers of students being identified as needing special assistance and the movement toward the concepts of normalization and deinstitutionalization.

In Canada, three major influences - the report of the Commission on Emotional and Learning Disorders in Children (CELDIC), Public Law 94-142 in the United States and the International Year of the Child - lead to the revision or development of policies related to the rights of exceptional children.

The CELDIC report emphasized the inadequacies of the present teacher education programs that were available for teachers of children with emotional and learning disorders. It called for federally funded research and the organization of comprehensive programs for these students and also recognized the need for comprehensive services in the areas of health, welfare and justice (Goguen, 1980). Ballance and Kendall (1969) conducted a survey of the status of provincial legislation related to the education of exceptional children in Canada. The results of their survey was presented in the Kendall Report, which

portrayed that Canadian provinces revealed a wide diversity in standards of certification and in minimum training programs (Hardy et al., 1971). The CELDIC report emphasized the need for changes to occur in the education of teachers at the federal level. It also advocated the development of a new set of concepts to be used in describing exceptional children. This suggestion encouraged the grouping of children based on learning characteristics rather than based on homogeneous physical or intellectual characteristics (Goguen, 1980). Activities at the federal level (CELDIC Report) and at the provincial level (Kendall Report) reinforced the commonality of the necessity for improved teacher education, regrouping of exceptional children and improved legislation for a majority of the provinces. The results from the CELDIC Report and the Kendall Report culminated into the publication of Standards for Educators of Exceptional Children in Canada (SEECC) issued by the Canadian Committee of the Council for Exceptional Children (Hardy at al, 1971).

The primary motives inherent in the publication of the SEECC Report were:

> to establish criteria or standards for personnel engaged in the education of exceptional children for school boards and for departments of education responsible for certification.
>
> to recommend to teacher education authorities the essential content and sequence of training necessary to prepare teachers, administrators and supervisory personnel working in the area of special education
> (Hardy et al., 1971, vii)

The legislative status of Canadian provinces as translated in policies at the district level is crucial, as it is at this level that the details of operation are defined and tested. If local school boards fail to develop thorough and systematic policies on their own initiative then legislation becomes a necessary vehicle through which fair and equitable provision for special education must be or can be implemented by school boards. The CELDIC Report, the Kendall Report and the SEECC Report all had an important impact on the service delivery offered to exceptional children.

A major milestone in American legislation was the passage of Public Law 94-142 as its impact made special education a national concern. Public Law 94-142 promised; (a)

increased federal funding, (b) free and public special education programming to children who needed it, (c) fairness in decisions about the provision of special education to handicapped children and youth, (d) management and auditing requirements and procedures regarding special education at all levels of government (Goguen, 1980). Public Law 94-142 does not have judicial power in Canada, however, the implications inherent in this educational legislation has sensitized Canadian educators and others, school administrators, parents and legislators to the need for policy revision and development (Goguen, 1980).

A third influence that awakened Canadian awareness of the need for policies on the rights of children was the International Year of the Child (1979). The United Nations' Declaration of the Rights of the Child contained one principle that helped to increase awareness; this principle stated that any child, physically, mentally or socially disadvantaged, shall receive the treatment, education and special care required by her/his state or situation (Goguen, 1980).

Summary of Review

In the first part of this review the service delivery network from an historical perspective has been examined. In addition, trends that had a direct impact on the changing population to be serviced and the need for reorganization and reconceptualization of the service delivery network have been presented. These influences have provided impetus for special education to change the service delivery network, the student population receiving services and the preparedness of today's Learning Assistance Teachers.

Implications for Services delivery. Parent advocacy groups, formation of organizations to support and advocate for exceptional children, litigation and legislation have been strong influences in changing the field of special education. However, it would be naive to assume that there is a direct correlation between legislation and litigation and the quality of services. Legislation does not have direct influence on attitudes or responsibility. It will be through the arduous and persevering efforts of committed educational leaders, teachers and others that will effect policy reform and change practice.

Having given this overview, attention now needs to be directed toward the impact of these forces on the evolution of the service delivery network.

Impact of service delivery network. There are two things that directly necessitate a change in the service delivery network - the composition of the population needing service and the availability, the resourcefulness and the knowledge of the population who provide the service.

The decade 1970-1980 saw an increase in programs and funding for exceptional children with the chief responsibility for the provision of education exercised at the local school level. The establishment of programs for exceptional children reflected local conditions and circumstances (Gittin, 1980). That is, the number of students with special needs, the level of concern, the professional capabilities of staff and the availability of support services and consultants varied as a function of location. At the beginning of the 1980s, there were a number of issues and controversies regarding special and regular education. Redefining the relationship between special education and regular education became a continuing issue. There emerged the need for the development of an effective and accountable delivery system for special education programs that functioned as an integral part of the regular public school framework. The interpretation of mainstreaming presented controversy. Some educators believed it to mean that all exceptional children should be educated in the regular class, while others interpreted it to mean an educational placement procedure that was primarily intended for children with mild to moderate handicapped conditions who could profit from regular classroom experience, providing some adaptations were made to accommodate for any handicapping condition. The issue of mainstreaming is still under attack in the 1990s. Common concerns question the eligibility of students to be mainstreamed, the efficacy of mainstreaming and the preparedness of those who teach. Many advocates desire to see the education of all exceptional children fully accepted as a public responsibility and adequate public resources made available to discharge that responsibility properly.

Educators are faced with six challenges as increasing numbers of exceptional children are being accommodated within the regular classroom setting: (1) added responsibilities for regular and special educators; (2) improvements in structure, methods, materials and instructional techniques used in regular classrooms; (3) changes in attitudes toward exceptional children by teachers, students, parents and administrators; (4) redevelopments in teacher training for regular and special teachers; (5) major changes in the governance of schools merging or bridging of special and regular education practices (Reynolds, 1980); and, (6) the restructuring of the service delivery system (Reynolds, 1989). Reynolds (1989) also proposed that the top two levels of the continuum of services were no longer applicable given that we should be able to deliver special education and related services within the general school building and at a continuum level no higher than the special class. A continuum of educational services still existed; however, it was being challenged. Advocates of the Regular Education Initiative (REI) called for a merger of special and regular education, possibly resulting in the elimination of the need for the cascade system (Will, 1986; Wang, Reynolds and Walberg, 1986; Reynolds, Wang and Walberg, 1987; Stainback and Stainback, 1984; Gartner and Lipsky, 1989). The gradual closure of residential schools and special schools is a reality. The impact of this movement has had a direct bearing on the composition of the students to be served.

Changing student population and needed teacher preparedness. As more exceptional children are being moved into the regular classroom within the public schools, educators are concentrating on new innovative programs and instructional strategies. New approaches, effective instruction, individualized programming for all children, protection of rights, management assistance and support for regular teachers and trained, confident staffing are some of the issues that are major concerns in the field of education.

The accommodation of exceptional children in the regular classroom, the change in composition of the students needing service, the extension of services to include pre-school children and adults, the changing concepts toward the education of special needs children, the shift from placement of exceptional children to efficiency of programs offered and cost-

effective delivery have warranted the need for reorganization of existing special services. All of these events have been responsible for the change in the population of exceptional children being served in the public school system.

Ideally, schools should produce a community which accepts responsibility for the special needs of all students and in which all pupils are valued irrespective of their particular abilities (Bines, 1988). Such a task would require cooperation of all teachers in sharing their expertise and collaboration in developing interpersonal skills between teachers and pupils. If this is the case then change must occur in the preparedness of all teachers. That is, if classroom teachers are expected to effectively select appropriate curriculum, provide a suitable environment and support for individual children then they must be given assistance in programming, management and monitoring. They must be given opportunities for in-service training, support from special educators and administration and time to adjust to their new evolving role. Special educators must also be given opportunities to adapt to their widening role which requires them to be an advocate and a consultant for all teachers and to be a helper for all children with any kind of exceptional condition.

CHAPTER 3

Method

To answer the questions given at the end of Chapter 1 (see pages 5-6) a questionnaire was developed. Prior to administering the survey to the participating Learning Assistance Teachers, it was piloted.

Pilot study

In an attempt to ensure the validity of the questionnaire, a pilot study in districts other than those chosen for the study was conducted. The pilot study allowed for constructive feedback and thus allowed for revisions of the questionnaire before its final printing. In addition, the researcher had the opportunity to rectify any ambiguities due to poor wording, misuse of terminology or lack of clarity. The pilot study was conducted in four locales: a small urban area, a large urban area, a small rural area and a large rural area.

Survey Instrument

The instrument for collecting data was divided into five sections: Personal Data, Work Experience, Role Description, New Expectations, and Issues of Concern of the Learning Assistance Teacher. The instrument was designed to obtain demographic information; to examine the present job description of the Learning Assistance teacher; to investigate changes that have occurred in relationship to job expectations; to survey present and future issues of concern; and, to address the personal needs of the Learning Assistance Teacher of the 1990s. Copies of the final versions of the questionnaire are given in Appendix A.

Subjects

Questionnaires were mailed to one hundred and forty Learning Assistance Teachers employed by six different school districts stratified for size and location. These teachers were drawn from described districts (as per page 29).

Rationale for Choice of Districts

To fulfill the purposes of this thesis the sample was chosen from districts that exhibited similar characteristics (i.e. small rural areas having approximately the same population of students) and from districts that exhibited dissimilar characteristics (i.e. small rural and large urban areas having dissimilar populations of students and situated in different geographic locations). Information was accumulated from the data obtained from the large urban and large rural regions and the small urban and small rural districts.

Procedure

Before data collection began, the superintendent of each district that was involved in the study, was contacted by letter for permission to conduct the study in her/his district. Following written permission from the superintendents, the principal of each elementary school in each district was contacted by a letter to acquire her/his approval for participation in the study.

Survey materials were distributed the month of February, 1994 with the return date being the end of March, 1994. The Learning Assistance Teacher of each school received a survey package containing four components: a survey bearing a color code, a letter of explanation outlining the purpose of the survey, a guarantee of confidentiality, a pre-addressed and pre-stamped envelope and a thanks for participating in the survey.

Two attempts were made to encourage non-respondents to return their completed surveys. Liasons were contacted and were asked to remind participants to complete and return the surveys. Two weeks elapsed and the liasons were contacted again.

Definitions

An urban area was a metropolitan district. For the purpose of this study, a district comprised of a population of below 30,000 students but not lower than 15,000 constituted a small urban area. A district comprised of a population of 30,000 or more students constituted a large urban area.

A rural region pertained to a suburban area as distinguished from a city or a town. For the purpose of this study a district comprised of a population of below 3,000 students

constituted a small rural area. A region comprised of a population of above 3,000 students but not exceeding 15,000 constituted a large rural area.

There were six (6) districts that took part in the study. The districts were:

Large Urban			
	Surrey -	District #36 - approximately	38,000
Small Urban			
	North Vancouver -	District #44 - approximately	15,500
Large Rural			
	Terrace -	District #88 - approximately	5,300
	Shuswap -	District #89 - approximately	5,100
Small Rural			
	Buckley Valley -	District #54 - approximately	2,900
	Kitimat -	District #80 - approximately	2,500

CHAPTER 4

Results and Discussion

Prior to discussing the results, the questions given initially in Chapter 1 are restated. Folowing the restated questions, summarize demographic information for the respondents is given. Next, the obtained results are discussed in the following order. First, the frequency or percentage of responses given to the pre-planned questions (see Appendix A) are discussed. Where the respondents could add items to the list of choices, these are tabulated and discussed in order of frequency. Second, the results are presented in tabulated form. The first column of each table has listed the key components of the questions addressed in the survey. The next column depicts the total number of respondents who chose a particular response.

Of the 140 survey packages distributed to the Learning Assistance Teachers in six districts, 61 (43.5%) were returned. Demographic information regarding the type of district, its size and number of respondents is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Respondents: By District, Size and Number (N=61)

District	Size	Number Sent	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Returns Per Site
A-small rural	2,500	15	6	40.0
B-small rural	2,900	15	10	66.7
C-large rural	5,300	20	6	30.0
D-large rural	5,100	20	10	50.0
E-small urban	15,500	35	11	31.4
F-large urban	38,000	35	18	51.4
Totals		140	61	43.5

Work Experience

What is the experience and training of practicing Learning Assistance Teachers?

Classroom experience. Learning Assistance Teachers were asked to indicate the number of years they have taught as a regular classroom teachers and as Learning Assistance Teachers. The results are summarized in Table 2.

All Learning Assistance Teachers had some regular classroom experience as seen in Table 2. There were three clusters of individuals who had 16-20 years, those with 6-15 years, and finally those with less than five years experience. All teachers also had experience as Learning Assistance Teachers. One cluster of individuals had 6 or more years, while the other cluster had one to five years of experience.

Table 2
Teacher Experience (N=61)

Experience	Frequency	Total	Percentage of Total
Years as regular teacher			
	1-2	3	4.9
	3-5	11	18.0
	6-10	10	16.4
	11-15	7	11.5
	16-20	30	49.2
Years as LAT			
	1-2	10	16.4
	3-5	21	34.4
	6-10	7	11.5
	> 10	23	37.7

In-service training in special education. In-service training included short courses completed, workshops attended, and opportunities provided for upgrading skills. Table 3 provides a summary of the results.

Table 3
In-Service Training (N=61)

Training	Frequency	Total	Percentage of Total within Type
One to two week course	no courses taken	17	27.8
	1 course	6	10.0
	2 or courses	15	24.5
	4 or more courses	23	37.7
Workshops			
	none taken	6	10.0
	<5	5	8.1
	6-10	19	31.1
	>10	31	50.8
Upgrading Opportunities			
	within last year	32	52.5
	2 to 3 years ago	15	24.5
	4 to 6 years ago	10	16.4
	7 to 10 years ago	2	3.3
	more than 10 years ago	2	3.3

Educational background. Respondents were provided with close-ended responses to choose from and an opportunity to add other pertinent information. The close-ended responses are summed up in Table 4 whereas the open-ended responses are reported in a descriptive format following the table.

Table 4
Educational Background (N=61)

Education	Total	Percentage of Total
Level of college or university completed		
No degree	3	4.5
Bachelor of Arts	15	22.7
Bachelor of Education	25	37.9
Masters Degree	23	34.9
Undergraduate degree programs in Special Education		
No courses	5	8.2
1 or 2 courses	14	23.0
3 or 4 courses	21	34.4
5 or more courses	21	34.4
Special Education courses		
Introduction to exceptional children	39	59.1
Diagnosis and remediation of learning disabilities	41	67.2
Teaching the slower learner	22	36.1
Child development/psychology of adolescence	38	62.3
Behavior management/precision teaching	24	39.3
Remedial reading	45	73.8
Remedial mathematics	25	41.0
Language development	29	47.5
Counselling/educational psychology	29	47.5
Assessment/testing	37	60.7
Psychology of learning/mastery learning	27	44.3

Additional information on educational background. Five respondents indicated completion of more than one degree. Other degrees not identified on the questionnaire but completed by five of the Learning Assistance Teachers included: Special Education Specialist, Bachelor of General Studies, Music in Special Education and Bachelor of Science.

Twenty-three Learning Assistance Teachers stated they had completed courses in one or two of the following specialized areas: English As a Second Language, Learning Styles, Early Childhood Education, Introduction to Behavior Disorders, Introduction to Mentally Handicapped, Gifted Education, Statistics, Research Methods, Theory and Practice in Whole Language, Megacognition, Administration of Special Education, Theory in Learning Disabilities, Linguistics, Computers in Education, Instructional Psychology, Collaborative Consultation, Special Topics in Reading and Developmental Reading.

Areas of Change

What changes have occurred in the role of Learning Assistance Teachers? What is the current role of these teachers?

Learning Assistance Teachers were surveyed in regard to the average number of students in a monthly caseload, the mode of service delivery employed, the types of students that comprised their caseloads, their responsibilities, areas of competency and a current role description.

Caseload. The average number of students were tabulated from each district and is shown in Table 5.

Table 5
Average Number of Students in a Monthly Caseload

Average Number of Students in Monthly Caseload	Total	Percentage of Total
10	8	13.1
20	13	21.3
30	14	23.0
40	11	18.0
50	5	8.2
60	6	9.8
70	1	1.6
>80	3	5.0

Types of students. The types of students requiring services are presented in Table 6. Since Learning Assistance Teachers are required to provide assistance to a diverse group of

students the total percentage does not total 100%. Rather, each percentage represented the proportion of sampled Learning Assistance Teachers who provided services for a type of student.

Table 6
Types of Students in Caseloads

Type of Student	Number of LATs Working with Each Type	Percentage of LATs Working with Each Type
Learning Disabled	44	72.1
Specific Learning Disabled	17	28.0
Behavior Problems	17	28.0
Attention Deficit Disorder	17	28.0
English as a Second Language	15	25.0
Language Delayed	12	20.0
Educable Mentally Handicapped	9	14.8
Hearing Impaired	9	14.8
Visually Impaired	7	11.5
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome	5	8.2
Gifted	5	8.2
Mildly Mentally Handicapped	4	7.0
Autistic	3	5.0
Dyslexic	2	3.3
Physically Challenged	2	3.3
Epileptic	1	1.6

Responsibilities. Learning Assistance Teachers were asked to indicate from a pre-determined list, the tasks that fall under their jurisdiction of duties. In addition, provision

was made for listing other responsibilities not addressed in that part of the questionnaire. The results are arranged from the most frequently required task to the least frequent and are displayed in Table 7.

Table 7
Tasks Performed by LATs (N=61)

Tasks Reported	Number Engaging in Task	Percentage of Total
Direct instruction to students	60	98.4
Collaborative consultation with staff	60	98.4
Assessment	59	97.0
Record keeping	58	95.1
Individual education planning	56	92.0
Scheduling	53	87.0
Collaborative consultation with parents	53	87.0
Indirect instruction to students	51	84.0
Teaching - small groups	51	84.0
Lesson planning	48	79.0
Collaborative consultation with students	45	74.0
Modelling - for students	43	70.4
Observing - students	43	70.4
Indirect instruction - to staff	35	57.3
Modelling - for staff	24	39.3
Teaching - whole class	20	33.0
Member of School Based Team	19	31.1
Direct instruction - to staff	15	25.0
Teaching - with staff	11	18.0
Supervisor of Special Education Assistants	9	15.0
Observing - staff	7	11.5
Laison person	5	8.2
Supervisor of peer tutors	3	5.0
Parent Tutor Program Supervisor	3	5.0
Physiotherapist	1	1.6
Behavior Management Program Supervisor	1	1.6
Supervisor of Gifted Program	1	1.6
Assistant to French Teachers	1	1.6
Member of Budget Committee	1	1.6
Teacher for Life Skills	1	1.6
Kindergarten screening	1	1.6
Counselling	1	1.6
Crisis team member	1	1.6

Note. Percentage does not equal 100% as many LATs endorsed more than one responsibility.

Areas of competency. Learning Assistance Teachers were asked to identify the areas in which they felt competent. In addition, they were given the opportunity to add to the pre-determined list any competencies not itemized. In Table 8, a summary of the results has been given, starting with the competency for which LATs rated themselves most proficient and ending with ones judged least able.

Table 8
Areas of Competency (N=61)

Area of Competency	Number	Percentage of Total
Instructional strategies	53	86.9
Interpersonal skills	52	85.2
Collaboration and teamwork	48	78.7
Problem solving	48	78.7
Program planning	48	78.7
Case management	47	77.0
Curriculum based assessment	38	62.3
Knowledge of resources	37	60.7
Behavior management strategies	37	60.7
Process assessment	28	46.0
Cooperative learning	2	3.3
Workshops for parents	2	3.3
Self-esteem building	1	1.6
Cultural awareness	1	1.6
Counselling	1	1.6
Computer skills	1	1.6
Being flexible	1	1.6

Note. Respondents identified more than one item, consequently percentage does not total 100%.

Current role description. To determine the current role of Learning Assistance Teachers, they were asked to list their current responsibilities, given an open-ended response format. Learning Assistant Teachers identified clearly established roles, such as direct teaching, and roles that are emerging as demands increase. The results are shown in Table 9.

Table 9
Current Role Description (N=61)

Role Requirements	Number	Percentage of Total
Teaching	30	49.2
Preparing and Assessing Modified Programs	21	34.4
Consultant to Parents Students and Staff,	16	26.2
Facilitating Programs	12	19.7
Special Education Coordinator	6	10.0
Member of School Board Team	4	6.6
Supervisor of Tutoring Programs	4	6.6
Administering and Evaluating Assessments	4	6.6
Coordinator of Gifted Program	3	5.0
Supervisor for Special Education and Tutorial Assistants	2	3.3
Teaching Native Education	1	1.6
Participating as a Behavioural Specialist	1	1.6
Providing Direct Service in a Pull-Out Mode	1	1.6
Case Manager	1	1.6

Effects of Change

What new expectations do Learning Assistance Teachers identify as part of their current role?

Additional task requirements. Learning Assistance Teachers were required to identify from a pre-determined list each of the tasks that they currently perform that were not part of their responsibilities five years ago. The results showed that collaborative consultation had not been a recognized component of some of the Learning Assistance Teachers' duties. Of the sixty-one participants thirteen (21.3%) are now responsible for consultation with parents and staff respectively while eleven (18.0%) reported consultation with students as an added requirement. Direct instruction to staff was cited by ten (16.4%) of the Learning Assistance Teachers as a new expectation. Eight (15.1%) endorsed teaching whole classes as an added requirement while seven (11.4%) reported teaching with staff and indirect teaching to staff were new expectations to their role as Learning Assistance Teachers. Modelling was a new expectation stated by four (6.5%) Learning Assistance Teachers. Assessment, indirect instruction to students and teaching small groups were each acknowledged by three (5.0%) Learning Assistance Teachers as additional job requirements. Only two (3.3%) communicated direct instruction to students as a new expectation.

Number of students. Learning Assistance Teachers were also asked to indicate whether there was a change over the past five years in the number of students in their caseload. Thirty-seven (60.6%) indicated that the numbers had increased, six (10.0%) reported that the numbers had stayed the same, while eighteen (29.5%) acknowledged a decrease in numbers.

Types of student. A change in the type of student being serviced was also addressed in the questionnaire. Twenty-eight (45.9%) reported no change within the past year in the type of students in their caseload. Twenty-six (42.6%) stated that no change had occurred over the past five years. On the other hand, thirty-three (54.1%) identified a change in the type of student within the past year. Thirty-five (57.4%) communicated a change over the past five years.

The Learning Assistance Teachers who responded to a change within the past year and over the past five years were asked to indicate the type of students being serviced. A

summary of these results showing the most frequent type of student to the least is presented in Table 10.

Table 10
Types of Students Being Serviced

Time Span	na	Types of Students	Number	Percentageb
Within the past year	33	Behavior Problems	16	48.5
		Learning Disabled	14	42.4
		Attention Deficit Disorder	8	24.2
		Language Delayed	3	9.0
		English as a Second Language	2	6.0
		Specific Learning Disability	2	6.0
		Autistic	1	3.0
		Fetal Alcohol Syndrome	1	3.0
		Counselling Needs	1	3.0
Over the past five years	35	Behavior Problems	10	28.6
		Attention Deficit Disorder	10	28.6
		Learning Disabled	5	14.3
		English as a Second Language	4	11.4
		Legally Blind	1	2.9
		Non Academic Problems	1	2.9
		Specific Learning Disabilty	1	2.9
		Fetal Alcohol Syndrome	1	2.9
		Language Delayed	1	2.9

Note. a Number of respondents answering each question; bPercentage does not total 100% as some respondents gave multiple responses.

Competencies needing upgrading. Given a list of competencies, respondents were asked to select the proficiencies they would like the opportunity to upgrade. They were also given the option to list other competencies that were important to them but were not itemized. The results are displayed in Table 11.

Table 11
Competencies Needing Upgrading (N=61)

Competency Needing Upgrading	Number	Percentage
Process assessment	32	52.5
Knowledge of resources	30	49.2
Behavior Management strategies	28	46.0
Curriculum based assessment	22	36.6
Instructional strategies	19	31.1
Interpersonal skills	19	31.1
Organization and record keeping	15	24.6
Case management	15	24.6
Program planning	14	23.0
Problem solving	12	20.0
Computer skills/resources	8	13.1
School Based Team Procedures	1	1.6
Stress management	1	1.6
Counselling skills	1	1.6
Dealing with violent behavior	1	1.6
Research insights/information	1	1.6

Note. Percentage does not total 100% as some respondents gave multiple responses.

Demands of Learning Assistance Teachers

Given change, what are the current demands of Learning Assistance Teachers?

Current demands. In an open-ended format, Learning Assistance Teachers were given the opportunity to identify three to five demands that might assist them to be better prepared. The results are presented in Table 12.

Issues of Concern

What obstacles are Learning Assistance Teachers experiencing and what future obstacles do they foresee?

The last section of the questionnaire dealt with the present concerns of Learning Assistance Teachers. Learning Assistance Teachers were given the opportunity to express their concerns, needs and recommendations in an open-ended response format.

Table 12
Demands of LATs (N=61)

Demands of LATs	Number	Percentage
More preparation time	17	28.0
More collaboration time	14	23.0
Training opportunities for all staff	11	18.0
Stricter qualification criteria	7	11.5
Improved ratio of LAT and student caseload	7	11.5
Improved staff support	7	11.5
More LATs with more aide staff	6	10.0
Better resources/funding	5	8.2
Increased support from district	4	6.5
Training in behavior problems	3	5.0
Improved assessment procedures	3	5.0
More in-service to cover types of students and programs	2	3.3
Improved time management schedule	2	3.3
Curriculum development of modified programs/courses	2	3.3
More time to supervise special education staff (Special Education and Teaching Assistants)	1	1.6
Counsellors provided at elementary level	1	1.6
Clarification of LAT role	1	1.6
Gifted Education Program	1	1.6
Better guidelines	1	1.6
More parent involvement	1	1.6

Note. Percentage does not total 100% as some respondents listed more than one demand.

Obstacles encountered during job performance. The initial question asked Learning Assistance Teachers to identify, from a pre-determined list, the obstacles that they were encountering as they performed their job. They were also given the chance to list other obstacles that had not been itemized. The results are shown in Table 13.

Table 13
Obstacles Encountered During Job Performance (N=61)

Obstacles Encountered	Number	Percentage
Insufficient planning/conference time	45	73.8
Caseload too heavy	40	65.6
Insufficient time for instructional planning	20	32.8
Opportunity needed for more in-service training	17	27.9
Opportunity needed for in-service training	17	27.9
Relationship between teachers andLATs needs improving	17	27.9
Competency skills need upgrading	9	14.8
Qualifications need upgrading	5	8.2
Dealing with staff resistance	5	8.2
Lack of time to do everything	4	6.6
Role confusion	4	6.6
Relationship between principal and LATs needs improving	2	3.3
Lack of adequate parental support and cooperation	2	3.3
Poor scheduling of time	2	3.3
Inadequate budget	2	3.3
Too much paperwork	1	1.6
Inadequate resources	1	1.6

Note. Percentage does not total 100% as some respondents identified more than one obstacle.

Table 14
Future Obstacles (N=53)

Future Obstacles	Number	Percentage
Larger caseload	19	35.8
No increase in budget even if number of students increases	16	30.2
Increase in types of students needing services	9	17.0
Increase in students not receiving help due to lack of time	5	9.4
Increase in demands placed on LATs	5	9.4
Cutback in LATs time	4	7.5
Failure of services to keep up	4	7.5
Cutback in Special Education personnel	3	5.7
Increase in amount of paper work	3	5.7
Poorer facilities	3	5.7
Integration without support	2	3.8
Confusion over accountability	2	3.8
Increase in teacher resistance	2	3.8
Legal problems arising	1	1.9
Elimination of LAT position	1	1.9
Increased role confusion	1	1.9

Note. Percentage does not total 100% as some respondents itemized more than one obstacle.

Future obstacles. In an open-ended format, Learning Assistance Teachers were queried about future obstacles that they foresee. Eight (13.1%) indicated they did not foresee any obstacles. Fifty-three (86.9%) listed future obstacles as outlined in Table 14.

Areas of needed assistance. Participants were asked to list the areas where they need assistance to be better Learning Assistance Teachers. Not all Learning Assistance Teachers felt they required assistance.

Seventeen (27.9%) indicated that more time for preparation and consultation was needed. More resources such as computers and learning materials were identified by eleven (18.0%) respondents. More staff help for Learning Assistance Teachers was another request made by ten (16.4%) participants. Eight (13.1%) Learning Assistance Teachers stated that on-going in-service training would be beneficial. Five (8.2%) Learning Assistance Teachers felt that the establishment of a hierarchy depicting accountability would assist their role by providing clarification as to each persons' responsibilities. More funding, a Learning Assistance Teachers' communication network system and stricter qualifications were each identified by four (6.6%) respondents. Three (5.0%) participants felt that there was a need for more leadership and support from the district. Two (3.3% for each) respondents identified each of the following needs: an expansion of services; clerical assistance for paperwork; better assessment procedures; a universal means for record keeping; and, an increased awareness of the role of the Learning Assistance Teacher by regular classroom teachers. Lastly a need for behavior management training and knowledge, a better working relationship with classroom teachers, the establishment of counselling services at the elementary level and an increase in the staffing of Learning Assistance Teachers were each itemized by one (1.6%) participant.

Recommendations to the Ministry of Education

Participants were given the opportunity to make recommendations to the Ministry of Education regarding the changing role of the Learning Assistance Teacher. The results are presented in Table 15.

Table 15
Recommendations to the Ministry of Education

Recommendations	Number	Percentage
Better training opportunities	29	47.5
More funding for resources and personnel	27	44.3
Priorization caseloads to increase LATs effectiveness	23	37.7
Clarification of roles for all educators	16	26.2
Clarification of accountability for students	14	23.0
More opportunities for in-service	12	19.7
More Special Education staffing	8	13.1
Clearer guidelines across the province	7	11.5
Better time management for LATs	7	11.5
Student centered learning and teacher centered support	6	9.8
Expansion of services	4	6.6
Better/increased support from district	3	5.0
Universal reporting techniques	3	5.0
Counselling services at elementary level	2	3.3

Note. Percentage does not total 100% as some respondents listed more than one recommendation.

General Recommendations

The last question of the survey gave Learning Assistance Teachers the opportunity to list their personal recommendations that would help to ease the transition imposed by change. The results are summarized in Table 16.

Learning Assistance Teachers of the 1990s are faced with additional responsibilities as a result of mainstreaming, integration, the full service school and the inclusive classroom. Modification in placement, curriculum and types of students needing services has led to expectations of special educators to offer an expanded set of services. Such services include 1) direct assistance to small groups of students, 2) consultation with teachers to enable them to instruct students with exceptional characteristics, 3) assessment and program planning where direct service is provided, 4) assessment to assist in placement decisions and review, and 5) help for children in an in-class mode.

Table 16
General Recommendations (N=61)

General Recommendations	Number	Percentage
More training/upgrading opportunities that are relevant	35	57.4
Clearer designated roles and responsibilities	31	50.8
Awareness by the classroom teacher of the LAT's role	23	37.7
Better qualified classroom teachers	22	36.1
Special Education compulsory at university level	21	34.4
Better trained Special Education aides	20	33.6
Clearer accountability mandate	18	29.5
More programs for Special Education, eg. cooking	15	24.6
Better education at the university level for LATs	12	19.7
Re-teaching of regular teachers and administrators	12	19.7
Increased support for LATs and regular teachers	11	18.0
Better resources	11	18.0
Better evaluation procedures that are universal	9	14.8
Resource room in each school	7	11.5
Better time management in order to get the job done	5	8.2
Increased staff ratio in Special Education area	4	6.6
Networking system for LATs	4	6.6
Counselling services at all elementary schools	3	5.0
Universal reporting system	3	5.0

Note. Percentage does not total 100% as some respondents gave more than one recommendation.

Summary

The types of students requiring services are directly related to the job requirements of Learning Assistance Teachers. In Table 6 the types of students that are receiving services from the Learning Assistance Teachers who partook in the study were summarized. The range of students is quite extensive and certainly poses a challenge for the Learning Assistance Teacher of the 1990s. The required tasks performed by Learning Assistance Teachers are equally diverse as seen in Table 7. Results indicate that the contemporary role of Learning Assistance Teachers of the 1990s cannot be easily capsulated nor is it universal.

Learning Assistance Teachers have expressed concerns regarding inadequate skills (see Table 11). In addition, they have expressed concerns (see Table 13) that stress key dilemmas such as time management problems, training and qualification needs,

improvement of professional relationships, budget restraints and role confusion. A close examination of Table 13 and Table 14 suggests that there is some relationship between present obstacles the Learning Assistance Teachers are experiencing and future obstacles that these teachers foresee.

The demands of Learning Assistance Teachers (see Table 12) call for realistic time management criteria; relevant in-service training; stricter qualification criteria, clarified roles and responsibilities of all educators; increased support through funding, resources and personnel; and better Ministry of Education guidelines.

Learning Assistance Teachers posed a list of recommendations (see Table 15 and Table 16) outlining six basic suggestions. They call for seven changes: clarification of roles, accountability and guidelines; re-examination of categorization; re-training of all educators; expansion of services through upgrading and program options; re-thinking of the funding formula that would result in one educational system that could support all educators and students; opportunities for upgrading and training for all educators; and clear and concise role definitions that would emphasize a sense of shared responsibility and accountability for all students and by all educators. A message conveyed by Learning Assistance Teachers emphasizes the need for all educators to be equipped with the tools of special educators thus enabling schools to be better prepared to educate a more diverse population that is exhibited in today's schools.

CHAPER 5

Conclusions

There are three limitations to this study. These limitations must be considered when interpreting the results and determining the validity of the findings.

First, there is cause for concern due to the small number of participants. Of the 140 survey packages set out there were 61 (43.6%) completed returns. Therefore, the opinions and comments of the participants may not be a true representation of all Learning Assistance Teachers across British Columbia.

A second major limitation is that this study involved only six districts in British Columbia. The results, therefore, cannot be generalized to other districts. Additional studies of other districts would allow for comparison.

The present study was limited to elementary Learning Assistance Teachers. This third limitation makes it impossible to speculate that secondary Learning Assistance Teachers would give similar responses.

Findings Derived from Learning Assistance Teachers' Reports

Learning Assistance Teachers have provided evidence that the changes that have taken place in today's educational system have not occurred without turmoil.

Through the literature, authors have called for the reorganization of special education (Chalfant, Pysh & Moultrice, 1979; Freeze, Bravi & Rampaul, 1989; Moran, 1984; Reynolds, Wang & Walberg, 1987; Stainback & Stainback, 1984; Tucker, 1985; Wang & Birch, 1984). Learning Assistance Teachers have reacted to these recommendations for change by identifying some of the major areas that have been affected, some of their concerns as a result of change, some of the additional responsibilities that have come under their jurisdiction, some of their needs, and some recommendations that might facilitate the transition.

The types and numbers of students requiring assistance being identified have increased. Along with this increase is the need for Learning Assistance Teachers to

broaden their repertoire of skills, strategies, methodologies and educational requirements in an attempt to meet the needs of today's exceptional students. As the population to be serviced increases, Learning Assistance Teachers are finding an increase in their responsibilities. Results indicate that the present job of these teachers is not easily defined nor is there a clear and concise set of expectations that are universal. That is, Learning Assistance Teachers have reported an array of responsibilities that only reflect their own situations. In a 1979 survey, Schwartz concluded that the role and responsibilities of Learning Assistance Teachers differed from district to district.

The reality of mainstreaming, integration, the full service school and the inclusive classroom has given Learning Assistance Teachers the feeling of unpreparedness as they try to meet the demands inherent in change. These teachers have supported the need for competency upgrading, the existence of obstacles and future dilemmas as a result of change. In response, Learning Assistance Teachers have recommended eight changes: the clarification of all educator's roles, a re-examination of the categorical system, an increase in training opportunities, an upgrading of qualifications for all teachers, an expansion of services, a re-thinking of the funding formula, an increase in support through funding, resources and personnel, and better Ministry of Education guidelines.

Recommendations For Further Research

Research which involves more districts across the province is needed. It should include elementary and secondary classroom teachers as well as elementary and secondary Learning Assistance Teachers. Further studies are needed that aim at finding consistency of the findings from this study to other districts across the province. The research should include a much larger sample of subjects to enable generalization of the findings.

Learning Assistance Teachers Recommendations and Resultant Implications

Three of the recommendations advanced by the participating Learning Assistance Teachers had practical implications centered on the scope of their role, the recommended updating of Ministry of Education guidelines, and training requirements. The fourth recommendation is suggestive of future research into the nature and efficacy of their role In

the following each Learning Assistance Teachers recommendation is given followed by either the practical or research direction implication. Learning Assistance Teachers recommended four changes in policy: a) redefined role, b) updated Ministry of Education guidelines, c) increased training for all educators, and d) increased financial support.

Recommendation #1. Learning Assistance Teachers have called for the redefining of their role to include realistic duties that are within the scope of their capabilities.,

Implication. Learning Assistance Teachers are faced with an exhausting list of duties, however, they have yet to be educated with the tools with which to put new responsibilities and expectations into effective and productive practise. If theses teachers are to be given any hope of successfully accommodating exceptional children then their duties must be realistic and limited to those they are capable of performing.

Implication. Ministry of education guidelines shoule clearly outline the responsibilities of Learning Assistance Teachers and regular teachers so all parties are aware of their roles and each others roles. Although the Ministry of Education guidelines just revised in 1995, outlines proposed changes, it remains to be seen how these changes are received and used.

Recommendation #3 Learning Assistance Teachers have stressed the need for upgrading their skills and knowledge through stricter qualification criteria and more training opportunities in the form of in-servicing, workshops and mandatory university course work in special education.

Implication. It is no longer effective for Learning Assistance Teachers to be the only experts in the field of special education. All educators must be educated in the necessary competencies, specialized knowledge and adaptability in their job.

Recommendation #4 Learning Assistance Teachers have recommended reconsideration of the allocation of funds in order to accommodate increased support services, resources and programs for all students.

Implication The request for more funding may not be realistic given the financial climate that was emerging in 1993. In restrospect, the probability of increased resources is remote.

Research Implication. There is a need for research to determine the efficacy of changes and the nature of the role of Learning Assistance Teachers This research should focus on the affective impact of chnages and their feasibility.

Conclusions

Presently, in special education, the requirements for special and regular educators are at the idealistic stage of development. Even if educators were given these opportunities, they would be of limited value without the learning environment (i.e. the time, materials, equipment and support personnel) necessary to apply them. It appears that the gap between the ideal and reality is enormous. Given appropriate training and conditions all teachers can indeed be expected to help all children learn and grow. Until such a commitment is made and until it is recognized that additional resources must be channeled into the public services, the gap between the ideal and reality will remain vast.

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APPENDIX A

Learning Assistance Teacher Survey

Learning Assistance Teacher Survey

Sheila J. Landucci, Graduate Student of the University of Victoria

Directions: Fill in the appropriate circle before the statement(s) that most closely represents your situation.

PERSONAL DATA

1. Your school district number:

2. Your gender:
   - O female
   - O male

WORK EXPERIENCE

3. Years of regular teaching experience:
   - O 0
   - O 1-2
   - O 3-5
   - O 6-10
   - O 11-15
   - O 16-20

4. Years as Learning Assistance teacher:
   - O 1-2
   - O 3-5
   - O more than 10

5. Grade level(s) to which you provide learning assistance (mark as many as are applicable):
   - O K
   - O 1
   - O 2
   - O 3
   - O 4
   - O 5
   - O 6
   - O 7

6. Undergraduate degree programs in Special Education:
   - O no courses
   - O 1 or 2 courses
   - O 3 or 4 courses
   - O 5 or more courses

7. In-service Special Education training:

   a. One to two week course
      - O no courses
      - O 1 course
      - O 2 or 3 courses
      - O 4 or more courses

   b. Workshops:
      - O none
      - O less than 5
      - O 6 - 10
      - O more than 10

   c. Opportunity for up-grading skills:
      - O within the last year
      - O 2 - 3 years ago
      - O 4 - 6 years ago
      - O 7 - 10 years ago
      - O more than 10 years ago

8. Level of college or university training you have completed:
   - O no degree
   - O Bachelor of Arts
   - O Bachelor of Education
   - O Master's degree
   - O other (please specify)

9. Specialized areas in which you have successfully completed courses:
   - O introduction to exceptional children
   - O diagnosis and remediation of learning disabilities
   - O teaching the slower learner
   - O child development / psychology of adolescence
   - O behavior management / precision teaching
   - O remedial reading
   - O remedial mathematics
   - O language development
   - O counselling / educational psychology
   - O assessment - testing
   - O psychology of learning / mastery learning
   - O other (please specify)

ROLE DESCRIPTION

10. Identify the current number of students (average number per week) that was in your caseload for the month of January:

11. Indicate the model(s) of service delivery you use:
- O in-class
- O pull-out
- O both
- O depends

12. Please list the type(s) of students in your caseload (for example, a hearing impaired student):

13. Please describe your current role in one or two sentences:

14. Please indicate each of the tasks for which you are responsible:
- O assessment
- O direct instruction - O to students; O to staff
- O in-direct instruction - O to students; O to staff
- O collaborative consultation - O with students; O with staff; O with parents
- O teaching - O whole class; O small groups; O with staff
- O modelling - O for students; O for staff
- O observing - O students; O staff
- O lesson planning
- O record keeping
- O scheduling
- O individual educational planning
- O others (please list other responsibilities)

15. Please identify each of the areas you feel competent with:
- O interpersonal skills
- O case management
- O collaboration and teamwork
- O problem solving
- O process assessment
- O curriculum based assessment
- O program planning
- O instructional strategies
- O knowledge of resources
- O organization and record keeping
- O behavior management strategies
- O others:

NEW EXPECTATIONS

16. Please identify each of the tasks that you currently perform that <u>were not</u> part of your responsibilities five years ago:
- O assessment
- O direct instruction - O to students; O to staff
- O in-direct instruction - O to students; O to staff
- O collaborative consultation - O with students; O with staff; O with parents
- O teaching - O whole class; O small groups; O with staff
- O modelling - O for students; O for staff

17. In question 10 you were asked to indicate the number of students in your caseload.

a. Has the number over the past year:
- O increased
- O decreased
- O stayed the same

b. Has the number over the past five years:
- O increased
- O decreased
- O stayed the same

18. In question 12 you were asked to identify the type(s) of students in your caseload.

Has the type of student changed?

a. Over the past year:
- O no
- O yes (please indicate differences in referral)

b. Over the past 5 years:
- O no
- O yes (please indicate differences in referral)

19. Please identify each of the competencies you would like the opportunity to upgrade:
- O interpersonal skills
- O case management
- O collaboration and teamwork
- O problem solving
- O process assessment
- O curriculum based assessment
- O program planning
- O instructional strategies
- O knowledge of resources
- O organization and record keeping
- O behavior management strategies
- O others (please list others that are important to you):

20. Given your level of qualifications and training, please comment on how effectively you are meeting the changing demands of your position. Please give three to five demands and explain how you are addressing them or indicate the assistance you would need to be better prepared.

ISSUES OF CONCERN

21. Please identify each of the obstacles that you are encountering as you perform your job:
- O caseload too heavy
- O opportunity needed for more in-service training
- O opportunity needed for in-service training
- O more planning / conference time needed
- O more time needed for instructional planning
- O relationship between Learning Assistance teacher and classroom teacher needs to be improved
- O professional relationship between Learning Assistance teacher and school principal needs to be improved
- O competency skills need upgrading
- O qualifications need upgrading

Please identify other obstacles you may be experiencing:

22. Do you foresee obstacles that may occur in the near future:
- ○ no
- ○ yes (please list obstacles)

23. Please list the areas where you need assistance to be a better Learning Assistance teacher:

24. Please list recommendations you would like to make to the Ministry of Education about the changing role of the Learning Assistance teacher:

25. If you could make recommendations that would help to ease the transition imposed by change, what would they be? List as many as apply:

Thank you for your participation!

VITA

Surname: Landucci Given Names: Sheila Jane

Place of Birth: Toronto, ON Date of Birth: July 23, 1948

Educational Institutions Attended

University of Victoria	1990 - 1995
Athabasca University	1985 - 1989
London Teachers' College	1968 - 1969
University of Western Ontario	1967 - 1968

Degrees Awarded

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