A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH STUDY OF HOW EXTENDED FIELD EXPERIENCE
PREPARES SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS OF STUDENTS
WITH EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

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A well-prepared and qualified special education teacher is crucial to the performance of students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). The prominent educators and federal government encourage the use of extended field experiences in preparing qualified special education teachers. The study examined the strengths and weaknesses of extended field experience in terms of the perceptions of the prospective teachers and teachers of students with EBD. Both individual interviews and a focus group were used to collect data. The results revealed that extended field experience benefits prospective teachers in showing the reality of the teachers’ world, self-motivation assessment, and professional development. However, there were some improvements that could be made, including more placement selections and more practical knowledge.
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Summary
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Students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) are one of the most difficult populations to work with in our schools (Belknap & Mosca, 1999; Kauffman, 2001; Landrum & Tankersley, 1999; U.S. Department of Education, 1994). The disruptive behaviors and attitudes among students with EBD cause incredible frustration for untrained school personnel. As a result, the needs of this population are unmet. Failing to receive adequate educational services in schools has resulted in students with EBD having higher dropout rates, lower graduation rates, lower levels of participation in postsecondary education, higher levels of unemployment, greater social isolation, higher levels of economic instability, and higher rates of juvenile and adult crimes (Blackorby & Wagner, 1996; Bullis & Cheney, 1999; Hasazi, Gordon, & Roe, 1985; Hasazi, Hasazi, Gordon, Hull, & Johnson, 1989; Kauffman, 2001; Malian & Love, 1998; U.S. Department of Education, 1994) than other students with or without disabilities.

In order to improve the achievement and performance of students with EBD, a well-prepared and qualified teacher is the key (Billingsley & McLeskey, 2004; Brownell & Smith, 1992; Dozier, 1999; Ingersoll, 2001; Kozleski, Mainzer, & Deshler, 2000; Wenglinsky, 2000). A skilled and knowledgeable teacher will strengthen students’ educational accomplishments and positive school experiences. Conversely, an ill-prepared teacher can cause adverse effects on students’ learning and quality of life (Belknap & Mosca, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 1999, 2000; Riley, 1999; Ryndak & Kennedy, 2000). One study conducted in both Tennessee and Texas reported that
students who had effective teachers performed better than those students who had ineffective teachers (Executive Office of the President, 2002).

Nevertheless, our nation is experiencing an increasing shortage of qualified personnel to fill school district positions, especially in the area of special education (Boe, Cook, & Bobbitt, 1998; Brownell, Ross, Colon, & McCallum, 2003; Hawley, 1986; Hoover & Bowen, 1993; Katsiyannis, Zhang, & Conroy, 2003; U.S. Department of Education, 2001). The decreased supply and increased demand contribute to the insufficiency of qualified special education teachers (Belknap & Mosca, 1999; Benner, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 1984; Darling-Hammond & Cobb, 1996; Ingersoll, 2001; Rosenberg, Jackson, & Yeh, 1996). Moreover, the insufficient supply and the rising demand interact with each other to exacerbate the shortage of special education teachers and limit the ability to provide qualified and adequate education to students with EBD.

Problems of Decreased Supply of Qualified Teachers

The decreased supply of qualified teachers results from higher attrition rates of special education teachers in schools, insufficient graduates entering the field of special education, and rising rates of retirements (Bergert & Burnette, 2001; Billingsley, 1995; Mainzer & Horvath, 2001). The special education teacher has a higher annual turnover rate than teachers in general education (Boe & Bobbitt, 1997; Ingersoll, 2001). Approximately 30% of new teachers leave the teaching profession within the first five years (Keefe, Rossi, De Valenzuela, & Howarth, 2000), and about 22% of new teachers leave the teaching profession in their first three years (Executive Office of the President, 2002). Boe, Cook, Bobbitt, and Weber (1996) examine national databases and report
that 5% of special education teachers transferred to general education, and 6% of special education teachers left teaching each year. In general education, teachers who left teaching were the same percentage as special education teachers. However, only 0.4% of general education teachers transferred to special education. The result indicated a total annual turnover rate of 11% for special education and 6.4% for general education.

Kozleski et al. (2000) state that there are about 17,000 special education teachers entering the field annually, but this is only about half of the number needed to fill the vacancies. In 1999-2000, more than 12,000 openings for special education teachers were left vacant or filled by substitutes (Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education [SPeNSE], 2002c). The shortage of qualified teachers of students with EBD has been more critical than other disability areas. Katsiyannis et al. (2003) examine the trends in teacher availability in special education by analyzing data from the annual reports to Congress over 11 periods, from 1988 to 2001; they report that the highest percentage of unfilled positions were in the EBD category, and fewer teachers were fully certified in the EBD category.

There are numerous consequences of the special education teacher shortage. Consequences include (a) reducing services received by students with disabilities, (b) forcing schools to hire uncertified teachers to fill vacant positions, and (c) offering expedited or alternative routes to certification such as provisional or emergency certification (Billingsley, 1995; Ingersoll, 2001; Rosenberg, 1996; Scheuermann, Webber, Boutot, & Goodwin, 2003). The alternative path into the teaching profession emerged in the 1990s in response to teacher shortage, especially in the high-demand
teaching fields such as special education (Huling, Resta, & Rainwater, 2001). Though those individuals with provisional or emergency certifications may graduate from college, they have little or no formal preparation in how to teach children and youth with disabilities (Rosenberg, 1996). Each year, more than 50,000 people who lack of preparation required for their teaching positions enter the teaching profession on emergency or substandard licenses (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, n.d.). In 1998-1999, approximately 387,284 teachers were employed to provide special education services to students with disabilities. However, about 10% of those teachers were not fully certified for their positions (U.S. Department of Education, 2001).

The certification status among teachers of students with EBD is worse. More than 50% of beginning teachers who serve primarily students with EBD are not fully certified for their positions. Of those who are not fully certified, 39% hold the emergency certifications and 1% do not hold any teaching certificates (SPeNSE, 2002b). Katsiyannis et al. (2003) reveal that more teachers of students with EBD enter the profession through alternative certification programs than other beginning teachers. Approximately 27% of beginning teachers of students with EBD enter through alternative certification programs compared to 10% of other beginning special educators (SPeNSE, 2002b).

Problems of Increased Demands for Qualified Teachers

Aside from the decreased supply of qualified teachers, the increasing special education student enrollment worsens the problem of special education teacher shortage. The rising enrollment of special education students is due to the rising birth
rate and immigration (Miller, Brownell, & Smith, 1999; Riley, 1999). Between 1992 and 1999, the number of students with disabilities, ages 3 to 21, grew at a rate almost 3 times greater than the overall student population (McLeskey, Tyler, & Flippin, 2004). In 2000-2001, the number of students with disabilities, ages 6 through 21, served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has increased 28.4% since the 1991-1992 school year (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). In addition, the number of minority students is on the rise (Keefe et al., 2000; McLaughlin, Artiles, & Pullin, 2001). There is more than a fourfold increase in the proportion of students with disabilities who do not speak English at home (U.S. Department of Education, 2002).

The increasing student enrollment causes greater teacher demand, and the number of special educators entering the special education profession does not keep pace with the rate of growth of the enrollment of students with disabilities (McLeskey et al., 2004).

In sum, there are two types of special education shortages, a quality shortage versus a quantity shortage. A quantity shortage is the number of persons needed to fill open positions. In contrast, a quality shortage exists when schools cannot fill positions with professionals possessing adequate certifications (Boe, Cook, Kauffman, & Danielson, 1996). In order to develop sufficient numbers of highly qualified special education teachers, Kozleski et al. (2000) and Krep (1988) suggest that prospective teachers receive more extensive and consistent experiences in classrooms earlier in their training programs. The various experiences in school settings can prepare prospective special educators for the daily challenges that they may face. The President’s Commission on Excellence in Special Education also recommended that personnel preparation programs expose prospective special education teachers to the

Definition of Extended Field Experience

There is no agreed-upon definition of the field experience. The field experience should be defined based on the ways these experiences are conceptualized, organized, and actually implemented (Ribich, 1995; Watts, 1987; Zeichner, 1987). Generally speaking, field experience refers to all off-campus activities in which prospective teachers can become involved with actual contact with pupils and personnel who are responsible for students (Elliott & Mays, 1979; Seiforth & Samuel, 1979). The field experience is most likely to occur in a public or private schools, some of which may be designated as professional development schools, and sometimes may occur at the laboratory schools in the university settings (Byrd & Garofalo, 1982; Elliott & Mays, 1979; McIntyre, Byrd, & Foxx, 1996). Field experience encompasses various activities ranging from passive observations to active participation in teaching. The variety of activities may include, but are not limited to, observing experienced teachers in the classroom, tutoring individual or small groups of students, preparing instructional materials, grading students’ works, supervising students at assemblies and on field trips, and teaching in classrooms (Huling, 1998; Seiforth & Samuel, 1979).

In the 1960s and early 1970s, the definition of field experience in the literature was synonymous with student teaching, which normally occurs in the last semester of training programs (McIntyre, 1983). In contrast, early field experience usually occurs prior to student teaching (Byrd & Garofalo, 1982; Cruickshank & Armaline, 1986; Elliott & Mays, 1979; Huling, 1998). In this study, the term field experience refers to a broad
range of training curricula and activities that take place off campus. The placements include not only public and private schools, but all kinds of educational facilities such as residential and day treatment programs (L. M. Bullock, personal communication, September 27, 2004). Student teaching and early field experience are only segments of the field experience components. The term extended field experience is described as a well-supervised and integrated part of training activities throughout the program. The prospective teachers may be required to attend semester- and year-long daily field experiences that occur in schools for a half to a full day (Brownell et al., 2003).

The Goal of Field Experiences in Special Education Teacher Preparation

It has been recognized that the instruction offered in public schools is inadequate to address the needs of students with EBD. This lack of instruction results in limited outcomes for students with EBD (Kauffman, 1997; Landrum & Tankersley, 1999). Part of the solution to this problem is to enhance special educators’ capabilities to address the unique characteristics and demands of students with EBD (Sugai & Bullis, 1997). The extended field experience is needed to serve this purpose (Rosenberg et al., 1996). Moreover, providing extended field experience for prospective special educators may reduce the shortfalls of special educators (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Kreps, 1988; Rosenfeld, 2001), and improve special educators’ multicultural awareness (Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996).

Improving Teacher Quality

Many special education teachers do not believe their training programs adequately prepared them for their jobs (Billingsley & Tomchin, 1992; Kozleski et al., 2000; Nicols & Sosnowsky, 2002). George and George (1995) examine the career
intentions of 96 teachers of students with EBD. The results indicated that 36.5% of the sample planned to leave the field during the upcoming year, and 10.4% were unsure about their future career plans. Nearly two-thirds of both potential leavers and stayers indicated that their college coursework did not prepare them for the reality of teaching students with EBD. Many of the committed special education professionals who work with students with EBD have not received sufficient training for the job (Rosenberg, 1996). Therefore, teacher educators should prepare special educators who are competent to work in the complex classrooms of today and tomorrow (Gay, 2002; Salzillo & Fleet, 1997; Yellin, Yellin, & Claypool, 2003). Field experience is one of the most important components for the development of quality teachers. Such experience contributes to prospective special educators being able to deliver adequate instruction for students with special needs within the context of the real teaching culture (Rosenberg et al., 1996).

Reduce Teacher Shortage

Some researchers believe that prospective teachers may stay in the teaching field longer if they have a better understanding of the nature of their work and skills needed to perform effectively in the classroom (e.g., Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002; Mani, 1989). Shea and Babione (2001) state that field experience might help develop prospective teachers’ skills and confidence to remain in the special education teaching field. Fleener (1998) reports that prospective teachers who received increased amount of field experience in their teacher preparation programs remained in the profession at significantly higher rate than those prepared through traditional campus-based programs.
Multicultural Awareness

There are a growing number of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students with and without disabilities enrolled in public schools. It is projected that by the year 2010 almost 43% of all school-age children will come from minority groups (Kea, Trent, & Davis, 2002). Unfortunately, our educational personnel have not been well prepared to work effectively with this diverse population (Gallegos & McCarty, 2000; Keefe et al., 2000; Voltz, 1998). Not every special educator who commits to children with disabilities is prepared to deliver adequate education for all students (Pugach, 1996). The Executive Office of the President (2002) reports that fewer than 36% of new teachers were confident to implement curriculum and performance standards, and less than 20% of new teachers felt prepared to meet the needs of the CLD students.

Darling-Hammond and Cobb (1996) assert that teachers must be prepared to attend to the diversity that students bring with them to schools. Many special education teacher preparation programs have attempted to incorporate the content of multicultural education into courses and the field experience (Kea et al., 2002). It is believed that coursework alone is insufficient to encourage the emotional responses that the prospective teacher requires to meet the needs of the CLD students. Placing prospective special education teachers in direct contact with pupils with diverse cultural backgrounds and supervised by university faculty who possess the multicultural perspective is a common strategy to enhance prospective teachers’ cultural competence (Voltz, Dooley, & Jefferies, 1999; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996).

McSwain (2002) reports that prospective teachers who receive training consisting of both university coursework and field experiences did not report their level of
competency in the education of CLD students with disabilities to be significantly higher than those who received only university coursework. Although the findings from this study cast a doubt on the benefits of field experience, the participants in this study were placed in settings only twice a week for 2.5 hours for 16 weeks. In addition, it is unrealistic to assume that every new teacher has acquired sufficient competency to teach students with diverse backgrounds by the time they complete their training programs. Individual differences, such as abilities, background experiences, and educational history, would interact with each other and produce a wide array of educational outcomes (Maheady, 1997; Ryndak, Clark, Conroy, & Stuart, 2001). Special education teachers should have knowledge of children’s cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Pugach, 1996), and be able to adjust their instruction in response to their pupils’ needs (Maheady, 1997; Osunde, 1999).

Purpose of the Study

The special education teacher preparation program is aimed at preparing highly qualified teachers who can effectively work with students with disabilities in complex classrooms. In order to achieve this goal, better understanding of the current practice of special education teacher preparation, particularly focusing on the field experience, is necessary. The purpose of this study is to understand the values of extended field experience in terms of the perceptions of the prospective teachers and teachers of students with EBD.

Significance of the Study

There is considerable literature that addresses the value of field experience in general education; however, there is limited information regarding the use of field
experience in preparation of special education teachers. Data are inconclusive that extended field experience will develop effective teachers. There has been renewed interest in extended field experience in recent years, because of challenges from prominent educators (e.g., Darling-Hammond & Cobb, 1996) and the President’s Commission on Excellence in Special Education (U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Service, 2002). However, what the prospective special education teachers gain from the extended field experience is still vague.

The outcomes derived from this study may serve to (a) increase the understanding of teacher educators about using field experience for preparing prospective special education teachers and provide insights as to how to improve quality preparation; (b) increase the understanding of teacher educators who do not require extended field experience in preparing teachers about the benefits to be derived from these experiences and encourage them to incorporate extended field experience into their programs; and (c) increase the understanding of on-site supervisors of the needs of prospective special education teachers. Further, the policymakers may view this study useful in promoting highly qualify teachers in special education, which is in response to No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and reauthorization of IDEA.

Assumptions

Prospective special education teachers' perceptions and opinions regarding extended field experience could not be observed externally; therefore, the researcher will utilize interview methodology and focus groups to elicit desired information. It is necessary to assume that the research participants were honest while answering the
interview questions. It was also assumed that the research participants stated their opinions objectively without involving personal prejudices.

Limitations

Each study has limitations due to different research methods. There are three limitations identified for this study.

1. Research is limited to preparing special education teachers of students with EBD.
2. The small sample size drawn from one teacher preparation program might limit the generalization of the results.
3. The research participants volunteered to participate in the study. The voluntary participants might not be representative of the group from which they were taken.

Definition of the Terms

Terminology may be applied to different meanings in different fields. There is a need for the researcher to define the terms to ensure that readers understand the precise meaning of each term used in this study. A list of terms and definitions used in this study are delineated below.

1. Competency-based special education teacher preparation model: Teacher preparation programs provide prescribed courses and practice on the basis of a list of competencies identified that special educators should attain in order to effectively increase achievement of students with disabilities (Blanton, 1992; Heath & Nielson, 1974; Ryndak et al., 2001).
2. Extended field experience: The prospective teachers attend semester- and year-long daily field experiences that occur in schools for a half to a full day, which are well-
supervised and incorporated practice throughout the training program (Brownell et al., 2003).

3. *Field experience*: A broad range of structured activities that occurs off-campus. The placements include not only public and private schools, but all kinds of educational facilities such as residential and day treatment programs (L. M. Bullock, personal communication, September 27, 2004).

4. *Laboratory schools*: Schools developed on university campuses and devoted to the preparation of future teachers as well as to the education of K-12 students (McIntyre et al., 1996).

5. *On-site supervisors*: The public or private school teacher who provides guidance to prospective teachers in the field experience (Byrd & Garofalo, 1982). Also referred to as the cooperating teacher.

6. *University supervisors*: The university faculty or designee who is responsible for the supervision of prospective teachers during the period of the field experience (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Byrd & Garofalo, 1982).

**Research Questions**

Two research questions have been formulated to guide this study.

1. How do prospective teachers of EBD who are currently completing their required extended field experience perceive the overall strengths and weaknesses of their experiences as they apply to their present and future work with students with EBD?

2. How do teachers of EBD who recently completed extended field experience perceive the overall strengths and weaknesses of their experiences as they apply to their present work with students with EBD?
In recent years, field experience has become a critical agenda in teacher education reform (Borko & Mayfield, 1995). Many teacher preparation programs have increased the number, variety, and duration of field experiences (Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; McIntyre et al., 1996; Prater, 2002; Prater & Sileo, 2002; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001). The emergence of such a trend is an attempt to improve the quality of education provided to both children and prospective teachers (Becher & Ade, 1982; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Jenkins, Pateman, & Black, 2002; Simpson, 2004). It is believed that if prospective teachers have opportunities to observe and practice teaching and learning under supervision, they may have a better understanding about children and teaching (Becher & Ade, 1982; Connor & Killmer, 2001). Many prospective teachers believe their field experiences to be an important factor in the process of learning to teach (Griffin et al., 1983; Kampfe et al., 2002; Richardson-Koehler, 1988; Walthall & Barnes, 1995).

In this chapter, the researcher examines the literature in both general and special education with regard to field experiences, including student teaching, early field experience, and extended field experience. This literature review addresses six strands: (a) the history of the field experience, (b) the rationale of the field experience, (c) the advantages and disadvantages of the field experience, (d) the quality of extended field experience, (e) the review of research methods, and (f) the utilization of qualitative methodology.
History of Field Experience

Field experience has been part of teacher preparation programs for decades. However, we have little knowledge about how field experience has been integrated into teacher preparation programs. The development of field experience can be described in five stages: (a) apprenticeship stage, (b) establishment stage, (c) professionalization stage, (d) expansion stage, and (e) emphasis stage.

Apprenticeship Stage (1500s-1800s)

The apprentice stage is from 16th century to early 19th century. According to some authors (e.g., Cruickshank & Armaline, 1986; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990), field-based experiences in teacher preparation can be traced to the medieval apprenticeship system. An apprenticeship is defined as a person who learns an art or trade by working under a skilled master for a certain period of time; after a few years, he or she may become a master (Cruickshank & Armaline, 1986). The apprenticeship derived from teacher guilds and tutor system (McCarral, 1934; Mead, 1930). In the 16th century, in Germany, teachers formed themselves into guilds. Young people needed to learn the art of teaching by apprenticing themselves to master teachers, and to pass an examination as well as to teach for several years as an assistant until a vacancy for the master teacher arose in the guilds. In the early 1800s in England, the headmasters prepared tutors by offering after-school training for some of the promising students; the tutors might become headmasters themselves after a certain amount of experience. Later, the first English teacher preparation school was developed based on the tutor system. With the aim of becoming a teacher, individuals would need to graduate from a class with a prescribed course of study and work (Hughes, 1982). In America, with the
influence of European countries, the apprenticeship was the approach used to become a schoolteacher in mid-1800s. This approach was the forerunner to the normal school (Ducharme & Ducharme, 1996; Mead, 1930; Merrill, 1967).

Establishment Stage (1800s)

In the early 1800s, France was the first country to establish normal schools for training teachers. In each normal school, there was a laboratory school annexed to it and under the control of the normal school. Students who entered normal schools were required to receive university coursework and participate in practical work in the laboratory school during their last year of training (Mead, 1930). Almost simultaneously, people in America began to take account of developing a formalized system for teacher preparation. The first normal school in America was established in Lexington, Massachusetts in 1839. Similar normal schools were established throughout New England in the years that followed (Cruickshank & Armaline, 1986; Hughes, 1982).

In America, similar to teacher preparation models in France, there was a laboratory school attached to each normal school; the prospective teachers would receive field training under the supervision of experienced and skillful instructors in laboratory schools (Borrowman, 1956; Hughes, 1982; McCarrel, 1934). The major components of the field experience were imitation and repeated practice of certain teaching methods demonstrated by professors and classroom teachers (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990). Later, the Worcester State Normal School began to use public schools as sites for student teaching (Mead, 1930). Although prospective teachers were required to have some kind of teaching practice, the length of the field experience was
varied. For example, in 1869 the Oswego Normal School required 20 weeks of field experience for graduation, but other schools only required two weeks (Merrill, 1967).

The training of special educators began to emerge in 1800s because numerous states and private institutions were beginning to serve various exceptional populations (Osgood, 1999). According to Winzer (1993), there were three routes for individuals who were interested in serving people with disabilities. First, many institutions utilized in-service training to develop professionals who would like to work with students who were deaf, blind, and mentally retarded. Teachers would learn basically through an apprenticeship. The second route was to receive training in both normal schools and institutions for the disabled. Individuals might receive formal training in either kindergarten or primary education in normal schools, and were sent to institutions to work with students with disabilities for a specified period of time. The third route was to attend special education training programs at colleges and universities. For instance, the Teachers College of Columbia University established a special education training program for teachers of students who were blind in 1884.

**Professionalization Stage (1900s-1950s)**

The trend of professionalization of teacher education emerged in the early part of the 20th century, and field experience became an essential and fundamental part of teacher education (Hughes, 1982; Merrill, 1967). According to some authors (e.g., Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Hughes, 1982), there were two major developments responsible for the professionalization stage. First, many states began the development and implementation of a certification process. States passed laws requiring field experience and professional courses as prerequisites to certification. Second,
professional teacher organizations emerged and began to advocate for the practice of field experience as part of formal coursework. For example, the National Association of Supervisors of Student Teaching, founded in 1920, promoted field experience through annual meetings and publications. The American Association of Teachers Colleges (AATC) established the first set of standards for teachers colleges, including the guidelines for field experience (Merrill, 1967). The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) was founded in 1922 to support special education professionals by setting professional standards and providing opportunities for professional development. In 1946, the National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards (NCTEPS) became an important force in raising standards of the teaching profession. In 1952, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) advocated higher and more appropriate standards applied to field experience, such as the number of staff assigned to student teaching, types of arrangement with local schools, and amounts and kinds of supervision (Merrill, 1967).

Expansion Stage (1950s-1970s)

In 1948, the American Association of Teachers Colleges (AATC) published the Flowers Report which recommended the expansion in the number, length, and variety of field experiences (Cruickshank & Armaline, 1986). In 1961, the NCTEPS of the National Education Association urged that teacher preparation programs provide prospective teachers extended field experience within the frame of professional coursework (Hughes, 1982). The Council for Exceptional Children (1978) published practicum guidelines for special education professionals. By the end of 1970s, the
extended field experience became a common practice in teacher education in the United States (Seiforth & Samuel, 1979).

There were other significant developments in the expansion stage. One development was an increased use of public schools for field experience. Prior to the 1920s, the university laboratory school was the dominant place for field experience. However, between the years of 1930 to 1947, there was a dramatic change toward the use of public schools as practice sites. Following World War II, the increasing numbers of student teachers overwhelmed the campus-based laboratory schools, which made the use of public school field experience a necessity (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Hughes, 1982).

Other developments also influenced the expansion of field experience. For example, the federal government began to provide support for personnel preparation in special education and related services. In 1958, the government passed the Public Law 85-926 to support the preparation of higher education professionals who could provide leadership in the field of mental retardation (Kleinhammer-Tramill & Fiore, 2003; Smith, 2000). In 1961, Public Law 87-276 was mandated to support teacher preparation for children who were deaf (Kleinhammer-Tramill & Fiore, 2003). In 1963, Public Law 88-164 was signed by President John F. Kennedy to expand the scope of training to prepare special education professionals for children with mental retardation, deafness and hearing impairment, speech impairment, visual impairment, emotional and behavioral disorders, and physical and health impairments and to provide funding for the development of teacher preparation programs (Bullock, 2004; Burke, 1976). In 1965, the federal government enacted the Elementary and Secondary Education Act which
provided financial support to establish quality public education programs, inclusive of the supports of field experience (Merrill, 1967). Within the past few decades, teacher educators have placed additional emphasis on the need for quality field experience for preparing prospective teachers (Prater & Sileo, 2002).

**Emphasis Stage (1970s-Present)**

The emphasis stage was the turning point for field experiences in the history of teacher education. Field experience is one component of teacher preparation programs that strongly influences teacher qualifications. During this stage, several legislative and educational reforms exerted their influences on field experience.

**1970s-1980s**

The passage of Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) 1975, resulted in dramatic changes in educating students with disabilities (Nelson, 1978a; Wigle & Wilcox, 2003). The special education teacher began to be required to perform more complex roles in providing educational services to children with disabilities. For example, special education teachers needed to (a) involve parents in the process of decision-making, (b) understand legislation and procedures of individualized education plans (IEP), and (c) participate on multidisciplinary teams. Due to a variety of new knowledge and skills that were needed by teachers, on-campus training followed by one-semester of student teaching was no longer satisfactory in preparing special education teacher candidates. The approach of extended field-based training which takes into account both the complexity and reality of special education service delivery became important (Nelson, 1978a).
Moreover, the competency-based model dominated special education teacher preparation in 1970s (Shores, Cegelka, & Nelson, 1973). The interests toward the competency-based model were spurred by the federal government’s funding for training of special education teachers (Lindsey, 1978; Zeichner & Liston, 1990). The competency-based teacher preparation curriculum was influenced by the behavioral theory; it emphasized the development of specific and observable skills of teaching in regard to pupils learning (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990). The philosophy of the competency-based model consisted of four principles: (a) designing lessons that meet the objectives of what students need to learn, (b) testing students’ progress of learning, (c) providing feedback to students, and (d) modifying the lessons and teaching again (Evertson, Hawley, & Zlotnik, 1984). In Gable’s (1991) interview with Shores and Nelson, there are two levels of competencies in the competency-based model: the knowledge-based competency, that is, knowledge required to pass written exams and the performance-based competency, that is, the teaching behavior of prospective teachers. Prospective special education teachers should have the capacity of generalization to transfer knowledge and skills they have learned in preparation programs to educating pupils in the classrooms. The extensive field experience may provide opportunities for prospective teachers to practice and demonstrate skills and knowledge required in a competency-based training model (Nelson, 1978b). By 1978, the interest in offering competency-based teaching training model had become a strong force (Buck, Morsink, Griffin, Hines, & Lenk, 1992). Today, many special education teacher educators continue to use the competency-based model in preparing special education teachers (Blanton, 1992).
1980s-1990s

Beginning in the 1980s, the reform movement in teacher education helped to shape the practice of field experience in both general and special education teacher preparation programs (Buck et al., 1992; Ribich, 1995). Beginning with the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, followed by several other reports such as *A Nation Prepared* (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy’s Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986), *Tomorrow’s Teacher* (The Holmes Group, 1986), and *A Call for Change in Teacher Education* (American Association of College for Teacher Education, 1985), public education has undergone the serious criticism of its quality and performance.

Two common themes emerged in all reports that urged education reforms (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). The first theme was that students must be held to a higher standard, including more homework, longer school hours, higher expectations, and a solid academic curriculum. The second theme was the quality of teaching. For the sake of improving the quality of teaching, one consensus among reports was the emphasis on the use of authentic field-based experiences in preparing well-trained prospective teachers (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Valli & Rennert-Arie, 2000). It was believed that the teacher is the foundation for other education reform efforts; upgrading professionalism of teaching demands immediate attention (Darling-Hammond & Cobb, 1996; Huling, 1998).

During this period, the professional development schools (PDS) model to train prospective teachers has emerged and influenced the structure of field experiences. Many teacher preparation programs established partnerships with public schools to
prepare new educators and promote continuum professional development of school personnel (Prater, 2002; Simpson, Whelan, & Zabel, 1993). Teacher education programs became more reality based; the prospective teachers began to be required to have more hours in public schools (Paese, 1996).

1990s - Present

With the enactment of Goals 2000 in 1994, education reform has been emphasized at the federal level. However, early in the federal involvement most attention was given to policies (e.g., increasing teachers’ pay, offering better working conditions, providing broad and deep school curriculum, providing safe schools) (Lindsey & Strawderman, 1995; Tharp & Gallimore 1988). Much of the literature indicated that successful teacher education reform should involve (a) new or renewed relationships between schools and universities, (b) novel associations between special and general teacher education programs, and (c) reinvented organizational structures within teacher education programs (Lindsey & Strawderman, 1995). In the field of special education, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990 included provisions for improving the quality of the educational service for students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD), which emphasized the preparation of qualified personnel (Maag & Katsiyannis, 1999). The IDEA 1997, furthermore, mandated that all personnel that provide special education and related services should meet the states’ highest personnel standards (Dudzinski, Roszmann-Millican, & Shank, 2000; Smith, 2000).

The passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) forced the teacher education reform to its peak. Over the years, the federal government has played the role of the
supporter to assist states and institutions of higher education to recruit and prepare high-quality teachers through incentive grants (Darling-Hammond, 1999). The NCLB, for the first time, gives the definition of what it means to be a highly qualified teacher (Cochran-Smith, 2002; Hardman & Mulder, 2004; Rosenberg, Sindelar, & Hardman, 2004; U.S. Department of Education Office of Policy Planning and Innovation, 2003). Each state is required to develop a plan for ensuring that all teachers would be highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 school year, which means that provisional or emergency certifications would no longer be allowed and all new teachers must fully meet qualified standards (U.S. Department of Education Office of Policy Planning and Innovation, 2003). Building a partnership between K-12 schools and institutions of higher education is highly encouraged by federal government, and teacher candidates working under the guidance of experienced teachers as well as university faculty is strengthened (Rose, 2002).

In addition, the inclusion movement has assisted in promoting extended field experience in special education teacher preparation. Placing students with disabilities in regular classrooms has urged collaboration between special and regular education teachers. Collaboration skills need training and practice (Kilgore, Griffin, & Otis-Wilborn, 2003; Whitten & Rodriguez-Campos, 2003). The university alone cannot provide all of the knowledge and skills needed by special education teachers to be able to effectively work with other professionals involved in serving students with disabilities. Field experience is one of the best tools for teachers to sharpen their cooperative skills (Buck et al., 1992; Lane & Canosa, 1995). Richards, Hunley, and Weaver (2003) utilize both university training and school sites to train general and special education prospective
teachers collaboration skills; the result indicated that the prospective teachers not only had positive attitudes toward collaboration but also developed collaboration skills.

In recent years, field experience has become a requirement by all states in training prospective teachers (Berliner, 1985; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Ribich, 1995). Further, some states include field experience as one requirement of certification. Katsiyannis, Landrum, Bullock, and Vinton (1997) investigate the state certification requirements and specific competences required for teachers of students with EBD. The field-based experience was required by 19 states.

In sum, in spite of deriving from the apprenticeship system, field experiences have developed into an essential training model in preparing prospective special education teachers. Both special education teacher educators and the federal government recognize the importance of field experience. The field experience has also become a tool for some state governments to evaluate the qualifications of special education teachers.

The Rationale of Field Experience

The theoretical base of field experience is grounded in the work of John Dewey (Huling, 1998). Dewey (1904, 1959) believes that teacher preparation should not be limited to the theoretical basis; practical work should be included. According to some authors (e.g., Corrigan, 1978; Nelson, 1978b), combining both campus-based training and field experience is one of the most effective training methods. The knowledge about education is not meaningful if isolated from the contexts in which educational concept is to be used (Blanton, 1992; Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Kibler, 1997; Ryndak et al., 2001). Field experience plays an important role in helping prospective special education
teachers learn to teach (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987). Through planned and carefully supervised learning activities, prospective teachers may establish a multifaceted schema required to be an effective teacher for promoting students’ learning (Huling, 1998; Merrill, 1967). The field experience gives prospective teachers a more realistic view of the discipline and deepens their understandings and insights about teaching (Lortie, 1975). Teachers would not know how to teach if they do not have opportunities to practice teaching (Corrigan, 1978).

Instead of considering field experience as a chance for demonstrating methods and techniques previously learned, it is crucial to view it as an important tool to improve the prospective special education teacher’s resourcefulness in a real school setting (Merrill, 1967; Zeichner, 1996). Prospective special education teachers interact with the special education profession by means of the field experience (Nelson, 1978b). The interaction between the trainees and the profession serves at least five functions (Byrd & Garofalo, 1982; Davenport & Smetana, 2004; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987; McIntyre, 1983): (a) orientation, (b) diagnosis, (c) professional development, (d) connecting theory and practice, and (e) evaluation. Each of these five functions will be briefly discussed in the section which follows.

**Orientation**

Due to the rising rate of shortage among special education teachers of students with EBD, increasing both quality and quantity of special educators has never been more critical than at this present time. A well-organized field experience, providing a sensation of the reality, can speed up prospective special education teachers’ socialization to the field, such as the realities and demands of classrooms as well as
expectations encompassed in the culture of the school (Belknap & Mosca, 1999; McIntyre et al., 1996). Huling (1998) believes that field experience is a better method to prepare prospective teachers dealing with the complex realities of today’s schools, classrooms, and students. There are three basic orientations.

The first orientation is to inform prospective special education teachers the realities of their future job descriptions. In the past, prospective teachers might work with children or practice their teaching skills in the last semester of teaching training programs. Some prospective teachers might, for the first time, understand the painful reality that they do not like being a special education teacher or belong in the teaching profession. Some might choose to leave and some might choose to stay. For those who do not want to teach but choose to stay often make little contribution to the field because they do not commit to their jobs. If prospective teachers have field experience earlier in their training programs, they can make a realistic choice about their careers (Applegate, 1987; Paese, 1996; Ruhl & Hall, 2002; Sears, Cavallaro, & Hall, 2004; Seiforth & Samuel, 1979). In addition, some prospective teachers may have images of what schools and teaching are about based on their past experiences, but find out the differences between the reality and their images when they begin teaching. Often, teacher preparation programs emphasize the technical aspects of teaching and provide the limited conceptions of the reality of the teaching (Elliott & Mays, 1979; Knowles & Cole, 1996). Field experiences can help teacher candidates to form a more realistic concept of themselves as being special education teachers of students with EBD.

The second orientation is to familiarize prospective teachers with realities of learning environments. Iannaccone (1963) declares that field experiences can help
prospective teachers to modify their behaviors from what they have been taught in universities to what seems to be required on the job. For instance, planning lessons is the daily activity for teachers. In the idealistic classrooms, there are no interruptions and no disruptive behaviors. Teachers can perform the lesson the way it was planned. However, in reality, any unexpected events may happen in the classroom, teachers need to be able to adjust the flow of instruction in response to the characteristics of the learning environment and students’ individual needs (Spencer, 1996).

The third orientation is the reality of psychological comfort. Armstrong (1989-1990) views field experience as a mechanism for familiarizing prospective teachers with the school environment. This familiarity may increase the prospective special education teachers’ level of psychological comfort and thus reduce stress which is one of the major factors resulting in special education teachers’ leaving the profession (Fore, Martin, & Bender, 2002; Gersten, Keating, Yovanoff, & Harniess, 2001). The teacher of students with EBD may experience a high rate of occupational stress, job related distress, and the greatest risk for burnout (Nicols & Sosnowsky, 2002). Acquainting prospective teachers with the reality of their chosen profession prior to graduating will help them to generate appropriate adaptive response toward identified potentially stressful situation (Fore et al., 2002).

**Diagnosis**

Field experience gives prospective special education teachers chances to examine their self-motivation. The higher internal motivation is correlated with higher levels of commitment to work; higher commitment to work will result in greater performance and potentially better student outcomes. Accordingly, good performance is
self-rewarding and gives the teacher the incentives to continue performing well (Rosenholtz, 1989). Byrd and Garofalo (1982) encourage prospective teachers to assess their own motivation to teach during the period of field experience. By doing self-evaluation, prospective teachers can decide if they really want to be teachers.

Self-assessment is particularly important for prospective special education teachers who would like to dedicate themselves to working with students with EBD. Students with EBD are the most difficult population in the schools, and it is easy for special educators to feel frustrated when working with them. If special education teachers cannot motivate themselves to effectively interact with students, students will not achieve their potentials and the success of the teachers will be inhibited. In addition, prospective teachers can examine their own perceptions of teaching and roles as educators (Scherer, 1978-1979). After self-examination, prospective special education teachers can make decisions about committing to the profession and motivating themselves to continue professional development.

Connecting Theory and Practice

Teacher preparation programs have emphasized the need to connect theory and practice for many years (McIntyre et al., 1996). It is important to have a successful marriage between theories taught in universities and the realities experienced in the classrooms (Bukken, Aloia, & Aloia, 2002). Field experience is designed to link knowledge presented in university classrooms with the future teaching activities expected by prospective teachers (Krutilla & Safford, 1990; Rosenberg et al., 1996). The prospective teachers are able to observe and apply theories learned in the universities concurrently in classrooms (Elliot & May, 1979; Szabo, Scott, & Yellin,
2002). With the increasing amount of field experience required in preparing prospective teachers, the theory-to-practice problem may be solved (Imig & Switzer, 1996).

**Professional Development**

A highly qualified teacher should be equipped not only with a knowledge base about teaching and learning, but also a set of skills for performing effective instruction (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Reitz & Kerr, 1991). From the perspective of cognitive theorists, knowledge would be acquired through the contexts in which individuals would use it. Knowles and Cole (1996) believe that personal experience and practice are the basis of learning. The learner would gather information from the experience; the accumulated information would assist the learner to practice the knowledge in the future. Therefore, the teacher’s professionalism is influenced by the interaction between teachers and the environments (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Borko & Putnam, 1996; McDermott, Gormley, Rothenberg, & Hammer, 1995; Vonk, 1995). Krutila and Safford (1990) explore the perceptions of special education student teachers by analyzing their journals. The result revealed that the field experience provided an optimal opportunity for critical reflection and improved prospective teachers’ professional growth.

**Evaluation**

Field experience can provide evaluation of whether or not the prospective teachers are ready to teach (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Kyriacou & Stephens, 1999; McIntyre et al., 1996). Prospective teachers may receive good grades in the university courses and believe that they are making good progress toward becoming effective teachers. However, they may not be able to
translate what they have learned into effective practice (Elliott & Mays, 1979). The field experience serves the function of evaluating prospective teachers’ competencies.

In summary, field experience plays various roles in teacher preparation programs. First, field experience is like a mentor to guide prospective special education teachers to become familiar with the realities of schools and classrooms. Second, field experience is a gatekeeper to keep individuals who are not qualified or not interested from teaching. Next, field experience is a coordinator to connect theory and practice. Finally, field experience is an examiner to evaluate prospective teachers’ competencies.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Extended Field Experience

The belief of learning by doing and practicing has been acknowledged by the higher education professionals as early as the mid-twentieth century. The trend of increasing the amount and variety of field experience for prospective teachers has emerged (Becher & Ade, 1982; Darling-Hammond, 1999). The reasons for supporting the extended and early field experience in preparing special education teachers are to improve and refine their instructional competencies (Buck et al., 1992). The generally held assumption is that teachers will become more effective if they have more field experiences, which will enable them to make the transition from “prospective teacher” to “teacher” more smoothly (Applegate, 1987; Becher & Ade, 1982; Belknap & Mosca, 1999; Lapan, & Minner, 1997; Zeichner, 1981). However, not all literature is in favor of extended field experience (e.g., Cruickshank & Armaline, 1986; McDiarmid, 1990).

**Advantage of Extended Field Experience**

There are two major advantages of providing early and extended period of time in field sites. The first advantage is that the opportunities of an extensive field
experience will give prospective teachers more time to develop competences and confidence concerning teaching (Billingsley, 1995; Byrd & Garofalo, 1982; Gonzalez, 1995; Kyriacou & Stephens, 1999; Little & Robinson, 1997; McDermott et al., 1995; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1993). According to Keefe et al. (2000), the prospective special educators at the University of New Mexico are required longer field experience training in a variety of placements, and have various opportunities to work with experienced special educators, regular educators, families and community. Most of the prospective teachers were satisfied with the requirement of the field experience and felt well prepared to start teaching. The University of Texas at Arlington implemented a field-based teacher preparation program and found that graduates were more (a) confident and skilled in effective planning, (b) knowledgeable about site-based decision-making and innovative instructional strategies, and (c) successful in their first day in the schools (Wilmore, 1996).

Minner, Varner, and Prater (1995) report that most prospective teachers who graduate from training programs where they had the opportunity for extended field experience were highly skilled, knowledgeable, confident, and well-prepared in the schools where they work. Fueyo (1991) and Johnson (1986) report that prospective teachers increased their teaching skills and confidence after receiving field-based experiences. Samaras (2000) reports that preservice teachers developed a considerable sense of their pupils’ individual differences during the time of their field experience and were able to adapt their teaching to meet the individual needs. Ramsey (1986) finds that field experiences elevated prospective special educators’ capabilities
in assessing and diagnosing students with disabilities, coordinating services, and providing IEP.

The second advantage of extended field experience is to facilitate cognition gain. The early and longer field experience is associated with cognitive gain in professional coursework because the concrete experience may reinforce learning in the on-campus classes (Borko & Putnam, 1996; Byrd & Garofalo, 1982; Cruickshank, 1990). In Denton’s (1982) study, the early field experience positively influenced cognitive attainment in subsequent methods of teaching coursework. McIntyre (1983) agrees that field experience positively affects students’ self-concepts, attitudes toward teaching, and interpersonal skills. Although the extended and early field experience has been proven beneficial for prospective teachers’ confidence and cognition, Johnston (1994) argues that the value of school experience in teacher education seems to be accepted on blind faith. There are pitfalls that require attention from special education teacher educators.

Disadvantages of Extended Field Experience

In spite of positive research regarding extended field experience, there is no guarantee that increasing the frequency and duration of the field experience will automatically increase the quality, effectiveness, and competencies of the prospective teachers (Bukken et al., 2002; Cruickshank & Armaline, 1986; McIntyre et al., 1996). Scherer (1978-1979) reveals that early field experience might positively influence student teachers’ self-concept, but not performance. Davis (1976) reports that the students who received longer field experience did not report greater estimates of professional enhancement. In addition, classrooms are not set up as laboratories for preparing future teachers (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1986). There is a particular
set of routines and relationships established in the classrooms prior to the introduction of prospective teachers. The prospective teachers may either feel constrained (Bullough et al., 2002; Johnston, 1994), or adopt patterns of behaviors used by the on-site supervisors (Dewey, 1904). As a result, the extended field experience cannot always be viewed as a positive approach for developing prospective teachers (Bennie, 1982; Dewey, 1904; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990). There is the need to emphasize the quality of field experience.

Quality of Extended Field Experience

The emergence of the extended field experience is due to the assumption that the more time the prospective teachers spend in the field the better teachers they may become. However, instead of emphasizing the quantity of the field experience, it is more important to take account of the quality (Zeichner, 1981, 1990). The field experience involves the interactions among program features, settings, and people (Elliott, 1995; Zeichner, 1987). In order for the extended field experience to be effective, relationships between prospective teachers and supervisors, program structures, and environments should be carefully considered.

Relationships between Prospective Teachers and Supervisors

Generally speaking, there are three parties involved in field experience (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Shaw-Baker, 1995). The first party is the prospective teacher. The second one is the on-site supervisor who is the public or private school teacher that provides guidance to prospective teachers during the period of field experience. The third party is the university supervisor who is the university faculty or designee who is responsible for the supervision of prospective teachers during the period of the field
experience. A well-organized field experience may bring benefits to this triadic relationship. On-site supervisors can receive assistance from university students during the school day, such as asking the prospective teachers to do small group tutoring or individual instruction. Prospective teachers can have actual teaching experiences in the classrooms and improve their teaching skills. University supervisors have opportunities to walk out of their “ivory tower” and bridge the gap between theory and practice (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Elliott & Mays, 1979). Before discussing the prospective teachers’ relationships with the on-site supervisors and university supervisors, the importance of supervision will be briefly addressed.

Importance of Supervision

The responsibilities of on-site and university supervisors are not only to monitor performance and provide compliments or constructive feedback, but also to guide the prospective teachers to judge their own work (Berliner, 1985). There are two types of practice teaching (Bullough et al., 2002; Cruickshank & Armaline, 1986; Erdman, 1983). The first one is apprentice teaching. The role of the prospective teachers is viewed as helper or assistant to the on-site supervisors. The prospective teachers simply model their on-site supervisors and assist them in the classrooms. The prospective teachers just need to satisfy their supervisors according to some standards to prove they are capable of teaching.

The second one is partnership teaching. The university and on-site supervisors should be the partners of the prospective teachers in the route of becoming competent educators (Mills, 1980). The prospective teachers will be involved in all kinds of teaching and learning activities (e.g., planning lessons, managing classroom
environment, conducting teaching). The supervisors, both university faculty and on-site supervisors, will provide critical feedback to encourage the prospective teachers to reflect and analyze their own teaching (Bullough et al., 2002; Little & Robinson, 1997). Anderson and Radencich (2001), as well as Sears et al. (2004), report that the prospective teachers from their studies viewed the feedback from supervisors as valuable. Becher and Ade (1982) assert that the feedback is much more important than the modeling because the prospective teachers who receive more feedback about their performance in the field experience are more likely to receive higher ratings than the prospective teachers who received less feedback. The prospective teachers who receive more feedback seem to retain desired teaching behavior over time (Cruickshank, 1990; Werner, Avila, Resta, Venglar, & Curtin, 1995).

In addition, the guidance from both on-site and university supervisors can help prospective special education teachers focus on critical aspects of classroom teaching and interactions. Without guidance, the field experience is merely apprenticeship, and the prospective teachers cannot see beyond what they want or need to do (Applegate, 1985; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1987; Weaver & Stanulis, 1996; Willard-Holt & Bottomley, 2000). As a result, the prospective teachers may be easily prejudiced by their own past experiences (Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann, 1986; Gallego, 2001; Rabinow, 1960). Most teacher candidates have nearly 13 years in public or private school settings as students; they are familiar with school and classroom routines, and, therefore, with the context of the field experience. The familiarity may limit prospective teachers’ capabilities of confronting their beliefs about teaching and professional growth.
during the process of field experience (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1986; McDiarmid, 1990; McIntyre et al., 1996).

Since the prospective special education teachers do not spend their school years in special education classrooms, they may not have the pitfall of familiarity (Pugach, 1992). However, Kagan (1992) reports that most prospective teachers enter teacher preparation programs with their personal beliefs about teaching, images of good teachers, images of self as teachers, and memories of themselves as pupils in classrooms. These personal beliefs and images usually remain unchanged in the preparation programs and follow the prospective teachers into the field experience. It is important for prospective teachers to modify and reconstruct their prior beliefs and images by interacting with their supervisors. Applegate (1986) agrees that personal history may affect prospective teachers’ perceptions of field experience. Bukken et al., (2002) emphasize the importance that both on-site and university supervisors should understand the influence of past experiences in shaping prospective teachers’ perceptions, expectations, and awareness of teaching.

**On-Site Supervisors vs. University Supervisors**

The on-site supervisor is generally documented to be the most important influence on field-based training (Griffin, 1982; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2002). Fairley (1995) describes the beginning prospective teachers as receptive “balls of clay” that are ready to be molded into sculptures of educators at the beginning of the field experience. The on-site supervisors are the sculptors; their personalities, professionalism, values, skills, and knowledge have crucial impact on prospective teachers’ professional development. The prospective teachers tend to unconditionally
accept the practice they observe in the field placement (Zeichner & Teitelbaum, 1982); their attitudes, values, and philosophies are inclined to conform to their on-site supervisors (Griffin, 1986; Zeichner, 1980).

The university supervisor also plays an important role in prospective teachers’ field experience. The university supervisor is responsible for transmitting skills and knowledge about teaching and evaluating prospective teachers’ performance (Griffin, 1982). In addition, the university supervisor is expected to be the mediator to bridge the theories taught in university classrooms and field experiences. However, supervision is a time-consuming task for university supervisors who have other teaching, research, and responsibilities (Beck & Kosnik, 2002; Lignugaris/Kraft & Marchand-Martella, 1993). Koehler (1984) reports that university supervisors do not perform their duties well; their roles are limited to social and support functions within the context of on-site supervisors’ classrooms.

Johnson (1986) investigates the factors that influence skill acquisition of prospective teachers during field experience and revealed that both on-site supervisors and university supervisors had great influence on prospective teachers. On-site supervisors influenced students by being role models, providing feedback, and offering suggestions for improvement. However, on the contrary, the primary influence the university supervisors had toward prospective teachers was providing new information. The feedback and suggestion for improvement was secondary influence. Clark, Smith, Newby, and Cook (1985) reveal in their study that teachers relied on their own ideas in crafting their teaching practices in their formal training, and the next most frequently perceived origin of teaching behaviors was on-site supervisors or field experience.
University supervisor was cited infrequently as the origin of teaching behaviors. Richardson-Koehler (1988) has a similar finding that prospective teachers stated the origin of their teaching practice was mostly from themselves and on-site supervisors; university class had less influence.

On the other hand, Borko and Mayfield (1995) report that university and on-site supervisors had limited contribution in the process of prospective teachers’ learning to teach. They explored the roles played by the on-site and university supervisors in prospective teachers’ learning to teach and found that the conversations between prospective teachers and on-site supervisors rarely included in-depth exploration of issues of teaching and learning; the conversations between prospective teachers and university supervisors were frequently too rushed and included less about prospective teachers’ teaching. Bullough et al. (2002) report that the prospective teachers from their single-placement study did not receive what they expected and wanted feedback from their on-site supervisors; the prospective teachers perceived that their on-site supervisors only offered a place for practicing teaching. Evertson et al. (1984) find that some on-site supervisors tended to focus on how to use specific materials and methods in classroom settings. There was little or no talk focused on underlying philosophies for teaching. Some researchers think that the only function of field experience is assimilating prospective teachers into existing patterns of school practice (e.g., Koehler, 1984; Salzillo & Fleet, 1977; Zeichner, 1980); the relationship between the on-site supervisor and prospective teachers may constrain growth and learning (e.g., Graham, 1997; Hawkey, 1997; Sudzina, Giebelhaus, & Coolican, 1997). Cruickshank (1990) declares that with the aim of benefiting from field experience, the prospective teachers
must share a common view of the teacher’s role with their on-site supervisors; and the on-site supervisors influence the behavior of prospective teachers mostly by modeling behaviors.

Quality Supervision

Both university and on-site supervisors are gatekeepers of our society to keep children away from inept teachers (Ryan, 1982). In order to promote the most benefits in field experience, the university and on-site supervisors should be partners that commit to the same goal that is providing a rich and beneficial learning environment for prospective teachers. However, uneven quality of supervision is one of the current obstacles in field experience (Zeichner, 1996). The on-site supervisors are usually recognized as the on-site technicians, and the university supervisors are in charge of evaluation and supervision of prospective teachers. Nelson (1978b) argues that the university supervisors should be collaborators, rather than controllers. Both university and on-site supervisors should have equal partnership.

The other obstacle of quality supervision is limited communication between on-site and university supervisors (Casey & Howson, 1993; Hayes, 2002; Kahn, 2001). Kibler (1997) and Rosenfeld (2001) state that university supervisors normally make few visits to prospective teachers in the field sites. The prospective teachers depend mostly upon the on-site supervisors during the time of field experience. The limited communication between the university and the field sites may cause the prospective teachers to devalue the benefits of the field experience and both units fail to accomplish their mission of developing qualified teachers.
Placement Selection

Field site selection and placement are crucial for developing future teachers (McIntyre et al., 1996). Most field-based experiences are located in traditional public school or private school settings, but, sometimes, the prospective teachers have opportunities to work in alternative settings. The field site is the place for prospective teachers to integrate what they observe in the classrooms into their personal teaching approach in order to improve their instructional practice (Armstrong, 1989-1990; Thiessen, 1992). According to the survey conducted by the Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education (2002a), special educators believed that the field experience placement was important to the development of prospective teachers’ skills and knowledge.

The various contexts of field experience can enhance prospective teachers’ professional development (Knowles & Cole, 1996; McIntyre et al., 1996), but an earlier study conducted by Evertson et al. (1984) reported that the prospective teachers’ professional development seemed to move ahead in similar patterns across settings. Even though, Rabinow (1960) encourages training programs preparing teachers to work with students with EBD to provide prospective special education teachers field experiences in various settings because students with EBD frequently move from placements to placements. The various placements can give prospective teachers more knowledge of advantages and disadvantages of different placements.

Unfortunately, many universities selected placements based on convenience (Bullough et al., 2002; Goodlad, 1990; Griffin, 1982). In addition, the prospective teachers usually work with one on-site supervisor during the period of field experience.
As a result, the prospective teachers may get a limited view of the benefits of field experience (Lortie, 1975; McIntyre et al., 1996). It is important for teacher educators to make a deliberate decision regarding the learning process of prospective teachers. Therefore, the prospective teachers can make the most out of the limited time spent in field placements.

In addition, the prospective teachers should have opportunities to explore a full range of responsibilities. The special educators have many challenges in daily routines of the school life (e.g., participating in IEP meetings, preparing and delivering instructions, managing classrooms, cooperating with parents and regular teachers, supervising paraprofessionals); they should have opportunities to explore the realities of their future job requirements. Moreover, the services provided to students with EBD involve multi-agencies, including social services, schools, health, and juvenile justices. Special educators are required to cooperate with various community agencies. The field experience should not only be provided in the classrooms and schools, but also in the community agencies. The broad variety of contexts will prepare prospective teachers for the full scope of the teacher’s role (Nelson, 1978b; Zeichner, 1996).

Program Structure

One function of the field experience is to connect theory and practice. However, Darling-Hammond (1999) and Pugach (1996) are disappointed that there are still many teacher preparation programs struggling to achieve this goal. Teacher preparation programs and the field sites often have unmatched goals, practices, and beliefs with regard to field experience (Goodlad & Wise, 1991; Griffin, 1982; Grisham, Laguardia, & Brink, 2000; Watts, 1987). Generally speaking, the university professor expects
prospective teachers to integrate theory with practice and begin to emerge as professionals. School personnel, however, expect prospective teachers to learn the culture of school and lives as teachers (Fullan, 1985; Griffin, 1986; Whitfield, 1995). Teacher preparation programs and field site personnel must coordinate learning goals in order to ensure quality preparation (Applegate & Lasley, 1982; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Reitz & Kerr, 1991; Zeichner, 1990).

In addition, Erdman (1983) states that the quality of field experience depends on the relationships between the goals expressed by teacher educators and its meaning to prospective teachers. The curriculum of field experience should assist prospective teachers to connect their learning in the campus and field sites, and be able to transform the knowledge into personal assets (Blanton, 1992; Willard-Holt & Bottomley, 2000). Moreover, in order to better connect theory and practice, the field experience should be offered along with the method courses (McIntyre et al., 1996). Thus, the prospective teachers have some familiarity with both theory and practice, and have a better understanding of ideas advocated by lectures (Mead, 1930; Zeichner, 1990). Munby and Hutchinson (1998) and Wilson et al. (2001) believe that incorporating field experience into university courses is a powerful tool to develop prospective special educators’ professional knowledge working with children with special needs because the theoretical underpinnings of the program can be translated into activities simultaneously. Byrd and Garofalo (1982) report that the prospective teachers might be better prepared in the field sites if they have received certain lessons on campus recently. Hayes (2002) states that curriculum closely tied to the field experience is highly beneficial to the prospective teachers’ development as teachers. Finally, the
sequence of field training is important (Lortie, 1975). The sequence of the field curricula should be well organized, from simple to complex, in order to reduce the anxiety of the prospective teachers and maximize the benefits of field experience.

In sum, there are three important components to be carefully considered about the quality of field experience (i.e., triad relationships, the learning environment, and the program design). The interaction among triad relationships will affect the prospective teachers’ knowledge and skills gain. Good supervision will provide guidance to help prospective teachers enhance their qualifications. A variety of placements will give prospective teachers more chances to experience different contexts of realities. A special educator of students with EBD will need ample knowledge about how placements influence students with EBD. The knowledge gained in various field sites can help prospective special education teachers make right decisions in determining the adequate educational placements that meet the students’ needs. Finally, in order for the field experience to wed theory and practice, the teacher educators and on-site supervisors should cooperate and both have input in designing the training curricula and activities.

Review of Research Methods

In general, the methodology used in the literature regarding field experiences can be categorized in three methods. The first method was the quantitative approach. Most quantitative methods used were surveys (e.g., Grimmett & Ratzlaff, 1986; Hayes, 2002; Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1993) and inventories (e.g., Applegate & Lasley, 1982; Scherer, 1978-1979). The second method was the qualitative approach, including focus groups (e.g., Kyriacou & Stephens, 1999; Panyan, Hillman, & Liggett, 1997), interviews (e.g.,
Billingsley & Tomchin, 1992; Calderhead, 1988; Veal & Rikard, 1998), observations (e.g., Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Goodman, 1985; Richardson-Koehler, 1988), and journal analysis (e.g., Krutilla & Safford, 1990). The last method is the combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches (e.g., Johnson, 1986; Mahlios & Maxson, 1995; Moore, 2003).

The literature centers on three themes. First, literature focuses on the evaluation of certain teacher preparation programs which incorporate field experience as one important component (e.g., Fueyo, 1991; Welch & Kukic, 1988). Second, many proposals suggest recommendations of how to structure a well-organized and beneficial field experience training, and discussion of issues of implementing field experience (e.g., Bennie, 1982; McDiarmid, 1990; Rosenberg et al., 1996). Finally, the majority of literature focuses on prospective teachers’ perceptions of field experience, the triad relationships, and placement ecology (e.g., Armstrong, 1989-1990; Fairley, 1995; Griffin, 1986; Thiessen, 1992; Zeichner, 1980). Much of the literature is from general education. The research regarding field experience training in special education is deficient, not to mention literature that emphasizes the field of EBD. However, the federal government has encouraged using extended field experience in developing special education teachers. Investigating how prospective special education teachers learn during the period of field experience has become the priority.

Utilization of Qualitative Methodology

Beginning in the early 1900s, educational research was dominated by quantitative research (Stainback & Stainback, 1984). It was not until the 1960s that qualitative research emerged in the education field. Calder, Justen, and Smith (1990)
conducted research to investigate the trend in the number and types of research articles published in selected special education journals in 1968, 1977, and 1986. The results revealed that qualitative research only accounted for a small number of published research. In 1990s, some special education publication (e.g., *Remedial and Special Education*) put an effort to encourage special educators’ interest and understanding of qualitative research, as well as more rigorous standards required for a qualitative research were emerged, qualitative research was finally accepted as a legitimate means of conducting empirical inquiry (Pugach, 2001).

**Benefits of Using Qualitative Research**

The qualitative research does not focus on discovering the truth or laws that would describe reality. Rather, the qualitative researchers view the reality to be established through interaction between events and a person’s perceptions of those events (Bogdan & Lutfiyya, 1996; Ferguson & Halle, 1995; McReynolds et al., 2001; Stainback & Stainback, 1984). A common way to access these perceptions is through interviews or focus groups. There are at least three benefits for using qualitative methods. First, the qualitative method views the interviewees as active participants and allows them to tell their own stories in their own words (Ferguson, Ferguson, & Taylor, 1992). The researcher can receive the firsthand experiences in the process of interviews. The function of the researcher is to facilitate story telling by the research participants and provide an insider’s view to readers (Stainback & Stainback, 1984). Second, qualitative research is usually conducted in natural settings where people live, work, and play (Anzul, Evans, King, & Tellier-Robinson, 2001; Simpson, 1996). The naturalistic data collection allows unexpected variables and new hypotheses to emerge.
in the process of data collection (Crowley, 1994-1995; Stainback & Stainback, 1984). Third, one of the prominent characteristics of qualitative research is its multiple presentation style. The researchers can utilize different written style and formats to present their findings (Ferguson et al., 1992).

Validity and Reliability

The definitions of reliability and validity in qualitative and quantitative research are different (Bogdan & Lutfiyya, 1996; Stainback & Stainback, 1984). In quantitative research, the reliability means stability over time (Mertens & McLaughlin, 1995), and the validity refers to the degree to which the meaningfulness and usefulness of the inferences drawn from the study reflect the specific concept that the researcher is attempting to measure (Creswell, 2003). In order to reach the reliability and validity, quantitative researchers are required to standardize their procedures, which means whatever happens to research participants in the research situation should be uniform (Bogdan & Lutfiyya, 1996; Stainback & Stainback, 1984).

In qualitative research, validity is used to determine whether the findings are accurate from the standpoints of the researcher and the participant (Creswell, 2003); reliability is whether the data collected can be the representative of a true or full picture of what the research is intending to exam (Bogdan & Lutfiyya, 1996; Stainback & Stainback, 1984). Several strategies are recommended by Creswell (2003) to ensure the validity and reliability of qualitative research, including (a) collecting data from different sources to build a consistency for the themes, (b) using peer checking to enhance the accuracy of the findings, (c) hiring an external auditor to review the entire
project, (d) using rich description to convey the findings, and (e) presenting discrepant information that counters the themes.

Qualitative Research in Education Research

The research in teacher education has shifted to a qualitative approach in the past few years because it can better portray the complexity of teaching (Ferguson & Halle, 1995; Knowles & Cole, 1996; Munby & Hutchinson, 1998; Munby & Russell, 1998). The most commonly used qualitative method in educational research is the interview, including both individual and group interviews (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). The individual interview emphasizes on in-depth understanding of individuals' specific knowledge or perceptions that would not otherwise be available to the researcher. The group interview involves addressing questions to a group of participants who have been selected for a specific purpose, which is also called a focus group. In focus groups, the participants interact with each other to explore specific topics, and individuals' views and experiences; the researcher can gather data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction found in a group (Krueger & Casey, 2000; Litoselliti, 2003; Morgan, 1997).

Qualitative research can assist the researcher to understand the research participants from a holistic perspective (Stainback & Stainback, 1984). The selection or integrating methodologies in qualitative research is guided by the nature of the problem and the researcher’s perspective (McReynolds et al., 2001). Different purposes can lead to different design decisions (Ferguson et al., 1992). The researcher needs to familiarize the benefits and limitations of the chosen methodology before conducting the study.
Conclusion

Teaching students with EBD is a great challenge for special educators. Students with EBD have been recognized to have the poorest outcomes among all students with disabilities. It has been believed that if the qualifications of special educators can be improved, the outcomes of students with EBD will be enhanced. However, our nation is experiencing the serious problem of shortage of qualified special educators, particularly teachers of students with EBD. Several federal mandates have put an emphasis on qualifications of special educators, including IDEA 1990, IDEA 1997, and NCLB. The causes of deficiency of qualified special educators include (a) higher special education teacher attrition rates, (b) insufficient graduates entering into the profession, (c) rising rate of retirement, and (d) increasing enrollment of students with disabilities.

Special education professionals suggest that providing extended field experience in special education teacher preparation programs may raise special education teachers’ competence and reduce the crisis of teacher shortage. However, there is little definitive data to conclude that extended field experience will develop more effective teachers. The quality of field experience is more crucial than the quantity of field experience. While pursuing the quality of field experience, the equal partnerships and on-going communication between university and on-site supervisors should be promoted. In addition, the prospective special education teachers should have opportunities to experience various field sites and explore a full range of teacher responsibilities. Finally, the field sites and university training programs should have matched goals, and the curriculum of field experience should be meaningful to prospective teachers.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Providing prospective special education teachers more field experiences in order to improve their capabilities of educating students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) has been encouraged at the federal level. In addition, the special education professionals expect that extended field experiences can contribute to the problem of teacher shortage and enhance special educators’ abilities to educate the increasing number of students with challenging behaviors. However, not all experiences are educative (Dewey, 1959). Increasing the quantity of field experience without giving attention to the quality of field experience will not enhance teacher preparation programs. This study will seek to understand how extended field experiences contribute to the preparation of special education teachers of students with EBD. This chapter includes (a) the purpose of the study, (b) the research questions which guided the study, (c) research participants, (d) data collection procedures, (e) the researcher’s role, and (f) data analysis procedures.

Purpose of the Study

The special education teacher preparation program is aimed at preparing highly qualified teachers who can effectively work with students with disabilities in complex classrooms. In order to achieve this goal, better understanding of the current practice of special education teacher preparation, particularly focusing on the field experience, is necessary. The purpose of this study is to understand the values of extended field
experience in terms of the perceptions of the prospective teachers and teachers of
students with EBD.

Research Questions

In order to understand how extended field experience impacts the prospective
special education teachers of students with EBD, studying which aspects of field
experience contribute to the prospective teachers’ learning process and how
experiences are used in the learning process become very crucial. The research
questions which follow guided the study.

1. How do prospective teachers of EBD who are currently completing their required
   extended field experience perceive the overall strengths and weaknesses of their
   experiences as they apply to their present and future work with students with EBD?

2. How do teachers of EBD who recently completed extended field experience
   perceive the overall strengths and weaknesses of their experiences as they apply
   to their present work with students with EBD?

Research Participants

The sampling procedure consists of both homogeneous sampling and criterion
sampling (Gall et al., 1996). The homogeneous sampling is to select a sample with
similar characteristics so that the researcher can get in-depth information about what
the sample represents. The criterion sampling procedure is to select cases that satisfy
an important criterion. There are two types of participants: (a) current graduate students
who are completing their final semester of required field experience, and (b) individuals
who have completed within the past year the field experience requirements in the EBD
program. The sample was recruited from the Special Education Project in Behavioral
Disorders at the University of North Texas (UNT). Current graduate students were invited to participate in a focus group, and recent graduates were invited for individual interviews. Eight current graduate students were invited, but only three people attended the focus group. Six recent graduates were invited, five of whom agreed to be interviewed. The composition of research participants were seven females and 1 male; 2 African Americans and 6 Caucasians. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of North Texas (see Appendix A).

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected through a focus group and individual interviews. The focus group was 90 minutes in length and was conducted in one meeting room at the UNT. The focus group was guided by a predetermined questioning route (see Appendix B). Each individual interview consisted of an one-hour session, and it was conducted at the time and location that was best for the participants. The individual interviews were guided by a predetermined sequence of open-ended, yet semi-structured, questions (see Appendix C). The probes were used, based on each participant’s answers, to bring forth additional information (e.g., Could you tell me more about that?; Could you think of anything else?). The entire sessions of the focus group and individual interviews were audio recorded and transcribed for data analysis. An assistant moderator aided the researcher in conducting the focus group. The role of the assistant moderator was to take field notes, operate the tape recorder, handle environmental conditions and logistics (e.g., refreshments, lights, seating), and respond to unexpended interruptions.
The Researcher’s Role

I played two roles in the data collection process. In the individual interviews, I was the listener, followed the flow of the predetermined interview questions, and sometimes provided probes to elicit interviewees’ responses. However, I would not interfere in interviewees’ responses. In the focus group, I served as a moderator to guide the group discussion and encourage each participant to express his or her ideas.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis in this study combined Hycner’s (1999) guidelines and Gillham’s (2000) suggestions to analyze focus group and interview data. Data analysis included seven steps. First, the interview tapes were transcribed for analysis. Second, I suspended as much as possible my interpretations and entered into the worlds of the interviewees by listening to the records of the interviews and reading the transcripts. Third, each word, phrase, sentence, and paragraph was reviewed in order to obtain the interviewees’ meanings. The purpose of this step was to find the themes of the interviews. Fourth, the coding system to categorize the themes was developed and the themes extracted from the transcripts were assigned to different categories. Fifth, categorized information was related to research questions. Sixth, the above five steps were repeated in order to enhance the internal validity. Finally, the outcome has been reported in a narrative form to answer the research questions. In order to protect the identity of the participants, pseudonyms were used in reporting the outcomes; other information that might identify participants, such as participants’ field sites, was omitted in the transcripts. The tapes were disposed of at the completion of the study.
CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of this study is to understand the values of extended field experience in terms of the perceptions of the prospective teachers and teachers of students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). Three prospective teachers of students with EBD participated in a focus group and five teachers of students with EBD were interviewed. All transcriptions are included as Appendix D. The information generated in this study was organized through the process of data reduction and data analysis.

Data Reduction

Line by line analysis of interview transcripts was conducted. All references emerged from the values of field experiences perceived by prospective teachers and teachers of students with EBD were extrapolated. The extrapolated references were then analyzed to identify participants’ comments that were expressions of the same ideas, but might be expressed in different phraseology or different examples. When applicable, these references were then combined into a unique single theme: (a) orientation - includes classroom reality experiences (e.g., teacher’s job responsibilities, student behavioral management); (b) personal analysis - includes decision-making for future career choice; (c) professional development - includes skills and knowledge learning, diversity of perspectives, and confidence enhancement; (d) on-site supervisor - includes communication with on-site supervisors; (e) university supervisor - includes communication with university supervisors; (f) connecting theory and practice - includes
being able to apply what has been learned from campus coursework to field sites; (g) placement selection - includes placement related issues; and (h) program structure - includes requirements for field experiences and campus coursework.

Data Analysis

The outcomes from this study are reported in response to each of the study research questions. Before moving on to the section of findings, it is necessary to have background information of study participants.

Backgrounds of Study Participants

The three participants who attended the focus group were individuals who were pursuing their master’s degree in education with specialty in working with students with EBD in the Special Education Project in Behavioral Disorders at the University of North Texas (UNT). The five individuals who participated in the interviews had completed field experience requirements in the same program within the past year. Four participants had no teaching background before entering the teacher preparation program. One participant had a special education background in deaf education and an elementary education certification, but no experiences with students with EBD. All participants were/are full-time students in the program and received the extensive field experiences along with their campus coursework. Full-time students are required to spend 22.5 hours weekly (337.5 hours per semester) in an educational setting with students with EBD, along with their academic course work. The placement selection included behavioral units operated in public schools, public school self-contained classrooms, alternative schools, and juvenile correction centers. Most of these placements are specially designed for students with EBD. The prospective teachers usually rotated
through a series of placements. Some prospective teachers visited more placements than others due to the availability of the placements and participants’ personal interests and situations. For instance, one participant was interested in being a transition specialist; her last placements were focused on transition planning for students with disabilities.

Research Question 1 and Discussion of Findings

1. How do prospective teachers of EBD who are currently completing their required extended field experience perceive the overall strengths and weaknesses of their experiences as they apply to their present and future work with students with EBD?

   Strength 1: Orientation

   The field experience helped participants understand the realities of the classroom environments, job requirements, and diversity of students. The variety placements gave participants experiences in diverse classrooms, including chaotic and orderly classrooms, and helped participants understand that they might not, initially, have an ideal classroom when they become teachers. They needed to learn how to handle different classroom environments. In addition, each classroom consists of a wide range of student diversity. Even in the EBD classroom, students may have secondary diagnoses. It is important for special education teachers of students with EBD to have knowledge about students with other disabilities. Two of the three participants stated that some of their placements gave them an opportunity to interact with students with Down syndrome and other disabilities.
Finally, all participants stated that field experiences opened their eyes to the real world of special education teachers. Special education teachers not only need to know how to managing students’ behaviors and deliver lessons, but must also understand requirements of the teacher to do a lot of paperwork, locate resources, and take care of students’ hygiene. Three participants complained that they were required to do some duties such as filing and copying in their field sites. Although they did not think their on-site supervisors should ask them to do that, they understood those duties were part of teachers’ job descriptions and they would need to perform those duties when they became an official teacher. One participant mentioned that field experience made her realize that changing students’ diapers might be part of special education teachers’ job requirements. Moreover, one participant stated that she experienced resource shortages in some field sites and this made her realize that some schools do have resource needs. The experience helped her know that she needed to have skills to locate needed resources when she becomes a teacher.

**Strength 2: Personal Analysis**

The diversity of placements gave all participants the opportunities to examine which age group they would like to teach in the future and in what kinds of placement they would be more comfortable working. Another benefit of experiencing the diversity of placements was to give participants chances to become familiar with those placements. If there are any positions open in those placements, the participants would already know whether or not they would like to apply. One participant stated that she would not work in a certain school because of the complicated behavioral systems. In addition, the field experiences helped participants build relationships with staff in the
schools, and helped schools to know the capabilities of the prospective teachers. One participant stated that she was asked to do many duties outside of the classroom (e.g., lunch duties) in one placement. She thought it was a good opportunity for her to know other school staff beside the classroom teachers. If there was any position available in that school, she had self-assurance that the school administrators already knew her and she could present herself confidently.

**Strength 3: Professional Development**

Professional development was one of the most valuable aspects mentioned by the three participants. All participants stated that they were able to see how the different behavioral systems operated in different schools. Some behavioral systems might be complicated, and some might be simple. By actually experiencing different kinds of behavioral systems, the participants learned how to implement them, and know which system worked better. Second, the participants had chances to assist classroom teachers to plan and deliver lessons, such as one-on-one and small groups. The subjects the participants had opportunities to practice included social skills, math, science, and reading. The teaching opportunities helped participants not only practice teaching skills, but also learn to teach students with different levels in the same classroom. In addition, by interacting with classroom teachers, the participants could learn different teaching styles and observe which style benefits students the most. Finally, the participants were required to attend regular seminars as part of their field experiences requirement. In the seminars, they would discuss concerns with their university supervisors, and the university supervisors would provide some presentation regarding practical information that a special education teacher should know, such as
attending individualized education plans (IEP) meetings, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and writing IEPs. All participants agreed that field experience brought them valuable knowledge and skills that cannot be taught through textbooks. The hands-on experiences let the participants see different issues and be able to put them together. Therefore, the participants could assimilate something different and beneficial for their future use.

**Strength 4: On-Site Supervisors**

All participants stated that they usually had good relationships with their on-site supervisors. However, the participants also stated that whether or not they could get a worthy experience depended on their on-site supervisors. Some on-site supervisors were more friendly and flexible than others; they would give participants opportunities to practice teaching skills, express their ideas on teaching and lessons, and attend in-service training. Conversely, some on-site supervisors might not give sufficient guidance and opportunities to participants. At some sites, the teacher assistants might also be unfriendly. One participant stated that some of her on-site supervisors could care less about what she was doing. Another participant said that she was asked to do copying and filing that the teacher did not want to do. However, the participants stated that adjusting their own attitude and taking the initiative became crucial under these circumstances. They found that when they became more open in communicating with the classroom teachers, the classroom teachers would give them more opportunities. One participant stated that she was able to observe each classroom teacher and teacher assistant first, and determined the comfortable interaction style to get along with
classroom teachers and teacher assistants. The field experience enhanced the participants’ abilities to establish good interpersonal relationships.

**Strength 5: University Supervisors**

All participants mentioned that their university supervisors were available and approachable. When they needed the guidance from the university supervisors, the university supervisor could always provide assistance they needed. When the participants’ personal lives interrupted their training, the university supervisors would be willing to work with them at a personal level. University supervisors had been described as a valuable asset to the participants.

**Weakness 1: Placement Selections**

Placement selection was a major concern to the three participants. The issues included limited choices, limited flexibility, limited length, and driving distance. All participants stated that their field sites were assigned with limited personal inputs. Every semester the participants would get letters to inform them of their placements. Sometimes the participants might have chances to choose one out of two placements, and sometimes they might be assigned to placements based on their interests. Although the participants did not like limited placement selections, they did agree that the experiences turned out to be good. The diversity of placements helped participants discover their abilities to adapt to different environments, as well as to learn about the benefits and advantages of different programs.

Second, one placement might have more than one prospective teacher from the same teacher preparation program. The participants stated that the number of prospective teachers in the same placement limited the chances of rotating in different
classrooms. The participants would like to have more flexibility to visit different classrooms in one placement in order to learn more knowledge and skills from different teachers. Third, seven and half weeks in one placement seemed to be too short. One participant said that she did not have enough time to implement the social skill lessons she created for her particular field site. Two out of three participants believed the longer stay could help them to get more involvement in the field sites and practice more needed skills to become an effective teacher. Finally, the driving distance to certain field sites became a big issue. One participant stated that the stipend could not cover her gas and highway toll fee to certain field sites. In addition, the longer drive was time-consuming.

**Weakness 2: Program Structure**

All participants are required to attend campus coursework for 9 credit hours as well as 3 or 4 days in field sites. Three participants stated that they stressed out at the last semester because they also needed to spend some time in searching future job opportunities. Although the program provided regular seminars to give them training on some practical information, they stated that the program still lacked information on how to fill out job applications, what to expect in job interviews, and how to apply for teacher certification. However, tying the field experience with campus coursework did bring convenience for participants. The participants stated that they did not have to go out to find a job to accumulate the experiences for teacher certification qualification.
Research Question 2 and Discussion of Findings

2. How do teachers of EBD who recently completed extended field experience perceived the overall strengths and weakness of their experiences as they apply to their present work with students with EBD?

Strength 1: Orientation

The participants mentioned that field experience exposed them to the variety of responsibilities that might be required of the special education teacher, including attending IEP meetings, collaborating with paraprofessionals and other school staff, planning lessons, managing students’ behaviors, and others. In addition, by staying in the classroom, the participants were able to observe many unanticipated situations that might happen, such as parents’ and school staff’s visiting, or students’ sudden behaviors; the participants learned that they had to be flexible in the classroom and be able to deal with any unexpected circumstances. Finally, the variety of placements offered chances for the participants to experience future relationships they might have with their colleagues and students. Some participants learned that they would not take things personally while facing unfriendliness from school staff and students; they learned how to deal with it professionally.

Strength 2: Personal Analysis

Working with students with EBD can be very frustrating due to students’ disruptive behaviors. Three out of five participants agreed that field experience served a function to evaluate their self-motivation for working with students with EBD. By doing field experience, the prospective teachers could get the first-hand experience about what they would be dealing with in their future career. Therefore, the prospective
teachers could make decisions about whether or not they would like to continue in this field. In addition, the variety of placements provided participants opportunities to assess which age group with which they would be more comfortable teaching. One participant stated that when she first saw the behavior outburst of one high school male student in her field site, she began to evaluate her own capabilities working with high school students. After experiencing more age groups in her field training, she made the decision that she would like to work with students of elementary age.

**Strength 3: Professional Development**

Professional development was another beneficial advantage pointed by all participants. The field experience provided an alternative channel for the participants to learn how to be an effective teacher. First, the participants were able to view the world of education from perspectives other than university professors. By interacting with classroom teachers and observing the communication between classroom teachers and students, the participants were able to share classroom teachers’ philosophies and ideas. Second, the participants learned not only from classroom teachers’ experiences and knowledge but also from their own mistakes. By observing classroom teachers’ classroom management skills and students’ reactions, the participants were able to make a judgment as to what techniques or interventions were good, what could be learned and applied in the future, as well as what should not be used in the classrooms. Third, some participants mentioned that the notes and documentation they kept from their field experiences became a very useful resource for them in their current positions; they consistently referred back to the knowledge they gained during their field experience, such as effective teaching techniques or effective instructions. Finally, the
field experience built the participants’ confidence of being a teacher. Participants had ample opportunities to practice their skills and knowledge in real classrooms. Ample opportunities of practicing helped participants master teaching skills and become capable of managing a classroom effectively. Some participants admitted that if they had not received extended field experience, they would not have confidence to do their current jobs. When they first began teaching, they did not feel like neophytes because they already had plenty of experiences in the classrooms.

There are many skills required for special education teachers in order to work effectively with students with EBD. One of the most important skills is behavioral management. The participants stated that each placement tended to have a different behavioral management system. Most of these placements implemented some kind of point or level system; students were required to maintain their behaviors in order to receive points and move to next level. At some sites, the participants had the authority to mark students’ point sheets. All participants were required to become familiar with behavioral management systems implemented at different sites. By experiencing different behavioral management systems, the participants had opportunities to compare one to the other in different situations and to be able to know what kinds of systems work for different age groups. One participant even created her behavioral management system in her classroom based on the experiences she had from her field experience.

Some participants were able to converse with students about their outburst behaviors and feelings while others stated they did not get a chance to have one-on-one conversations with students regarding disruptive behaviors. While the participants
were having conversations with the students, the classroom teacher or other school staff would be present to avoid liability issues that non-school staff cannot be left alone with the students. For those who did not have opportunities to counsel with students, they were still able to observe how classroom teachers handled students’ disruptive behaviors and the resolutions to it. By interacting with students and their behaviors, the participants learned to understand what caused students’ disruptive behaviors, the motivation of students’ behaviors, and what the students tried to communicate with through their behaviors.

Another skill the participant frequently practiced in the field sites was instructional delivery. All participants were required to perform lesson delivery to the whole class in each site as part of their evaluation. Social skills were the most frequent subjects that the participants were asked to teach. Some participants would need to follow the school curriculum; some participants had chances to develop their own lessons and deliver them. In addition, the participants would be asked to do small group or one-on-one instruction with certain students; the subjects might include math, reading, language arts, and science.

While participants were doing their field experience, they had regular seminars to attend. The university supervisor would present certain practical information that the participants might be using in their field sites or future jobs. The participants stated that seminars gave them some directions and guidance to seek opportunities to observe or practice in their field sites.
Strength 4: On-Site Supervisors

The on-site supervisors were usually the principals of the field sites. However, the principals usually transferred the supervision responsibilities to the classroom teachers. Therefore, the participants usually referred to the classroom teachers as their on-site supervisors in the interview. At certain sites, for instance, in the smaller schools, the participants had more chances to interact with the principals, which enabled them to talk about their relationship with the principals. Generally speaking, the participants had positive relationships with their on-site supervisors. The on-site supervisors not only shared their experiences with the participants, but also provide daily support and guidance. The feedback the participants received from the on-site supervisors were usually encouraging and positive. The participants stated that they usually received high scores on their evaluations. However, they would like to have had more in-depth and constructive feedback. For instance, instead of saying “good,” the participants would like their on-site supervisor to tell them how to improve their teaching skills. Even though, all participants stated that if they took initiative to ask for specific feedback, the on-site supervisors were willing to give more constructive suggestions. While in the classrooms, the participants believed their classroom teachers provided a welcoming environment for them to step in and help out students’ learning.

Strength 5: University Supervisors

All participants were satisfied with their relationships with their university supervisors. Each participant had regular meetings with their university supervisor to discuss issues they might face in the field sites. The supervisor might visit the participants in their field sites irregularly for performance evaluation or just to see how
the participants were doing in their field sites. The communication between the
participants and the university supervisor was always open and positive. Whenever the
participants needed guidance, the university supervisors provided timely help and
support to participants. The communication channel included phone calls, emails, as
well as formal and informal meetings. Two participants had incidents happened in their
field sites with which they felt uncomfortable; their university supervisors acted as a
bridge between them and the field sites, and helped them to solve problems. Some
participants mentioned that their university supervisors not only gave them advice about
their teaching, but on personal issues as well. The feedback the participants received
from their supervisors was usually encouraging.

**Strength 6: Connecting Theory and Practice**

Connecting theory and practice was the most valuable and obvious benefit of
field experience mentioned by all study participants who attended individual interviews.
All participants were required to attend campus coursework and receive field site
training simultaneously in their teacher preparation program; they agreed that field sites
provided an excellent placement for them to practice what they had learned recently in
the schoolwork. For instance, all participants mentioned that they were able to practice
how to conduct Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) on students with EBD in their
field sites. Finding a target to conduct FBA was a requirement of one campus course,
and the field sites became the convenient placements for them to practice. In addition to
transferring what has recently learned to practice, some participants believed that
classroom teachers were a valuable resource to provide guidance and modeling for
them. For example, one participant stated that her classroom teacher was able to guide
her through all steps of conducting an FBA and supervising her while she was doing the FBA on her own. The campus instructor was not the only resource for building knowledge; the on-site supervisor played the role of additional helper. One participant mentioned that field experience provided not only hands-on experiences but also opportunities to see theories practiced by experienced teachers. The prospective teachers could study materials from textbooks and examine those in field sites concurrently.

**Weakness 1: Placement Selections**

Several concerns emerged regarding placement selections. First, driving distance became a big concern to most participants. Some field sites required over one-hour of driving, and it was stressful for the participants. Second, there were limited placement availabilities. The participants stated that they did not have many choices where they could go. They might be offered chances to pick one out of two places for their field training. However, some participants stated that after they expressed their preferences and interests, they would be assigned to placements that met their needs. For instance, one participant was interested in the transitioning, so her last two placements were in the transitioning centers with high school students. Third, all participants would like to have a greater diversity of placements. Some participants believed the majority of their placements centered on more restrictive environments that specialized in students with EBD. They did not have enough chances to see less restrictive environments for students with EBD and how those environments handle students’ disruptive behaviors. In addition, some students with EBD might be sent to residential placements outside the school districts. The participants did not have
chances to see those alternative placements. Moreover, some participants did not have sufficient opportunities to interact with students from other cultural backgrounds. Most of them only met one or two minority students in their field sites. Finally, one participant stated that she preferred to stay in one field site longer than one assignment period, because she believed that building relationships with students in the field sites was not easy. By the time they established trustful relationship with the students and the students started to make progress, they had to move on to the next placement, and all the foundation they had built was lost.

*Weakness 2: Program Structure*

The participants had experienced some disconnectedness between the preparation program and the field sites. First, the participants revealed that most information they received from campus focused on theories. They believed if they could have more practical knowledge and skills they would be more successful in their field sites. One participant stated that the students with EBD often come to school with secondary diagnostic labels. One participant stated that if she could have received more information about related disorders, she would have had a better understanding of her students. In addition, one participant stated that her campus coursework did not teach her how to plan lessons based on students’ levels. For instance, the participants were required to perform lesson planning and delivery in field sites. However, the students in one classroom might have different reading or math levels. How to prepare lessons meeting individual needs became a challenge. Second, two participants would like to have had more communication between the preparation programs and the field sites. One of them experienced an administration change while she was in one field site. The
chaotic administration situation did not provide adequate learning environment for her. One participant stated that she sometimes believed her on-site supervisor did not really understand the needs of the prospective teachers.

Weakness 3: Limited Responsibilities

One of the concerns the participants had in their field experiences was their limited responsibilities in the field sites. Although the participants had opportunities to deliver instruction or managing students’ behaviors in the classroom, all participants expressed that they were treated more like a teacher’s assistant than a teacher because they were asked to do teacher assistant tasks. Some participants stated that their teacher assistants felt threatened and were unfriendly.

As mentioned before, due to the liability issue, the interns could not be left alone with the students, and one school staff should be present. The participants did not have any chance to take charge of the whole classroom. Some participants stated they were asked to perform certain types of responsibilities (e.g., marking students’ point sheets, delivering some lessons). However, they did not have authority to deal with students’ behavior or make decisions. The lack of authority sometimes resulted in students’ manipulation of situations and participants’ difficulties in dealing with certain circumstances in the field sites.

Conclusion

The study revealed the strengths and weaknesses of extended field experiences in terms of the perceptions of prospective teachers and teachers of students with EBD. Both groups agreed that the extended field experiences brought them to the world of reality, gave them chances to assess their motivation in teaching students with EBD,
and developed their needed skills to become teachers. However, they also admitted that there were some improvements that could be made (e.g., more placement choices, more practical information provided). The characteristics of extended field experiences identified through this study might supplement current limited information regarding the use of field experience in preparation of special education teachers.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The study explored the strengths and weaknesses of extended field experience in preparing teachers of students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). Study participants were identified through the techniques of homogeneous and criterion sampling that they either needed to be current graduate students who were completing their final semester of required field experience or individuals who had completed within the past year the field experience requirements in the teacher preparation program. A total of eight individuals participated in the study. Three prospective teachers who were pursuing the master’s degree in education with specialty in working with students with EBD attended a focus group and five teachers of students with EBD who recently graduated were interviewed. The interviews were then transcribed and analyzed, utilizing qualitative research methods, with the intent of identifying themes. Through the process, themes emerged to reveal values the participants perceived as strengths and weakness of extended field experience. The strengths of extended field experiences mentioned by prospective teachers included reality of teachers’ world, tolerance and capability self-assessments, professional development, and positive interaction with on-site and university supervisors. The strengths of extended field experiences recognized by teachers of students with EBD included reality of teachers’ world, self-motivation and capability examination, professional development, positive interaction with on-site and university supervisors, and connecting theory and practices. The weaknesses of extended field experiences identified by prospective teachers were limited placement
selections, heavy workload, and limited assistance in job hunting. The weaknesses identified by teachers of students with EBD included limited choices for placement selections, a lack of communication between university and field sites, and limited responsibilities in field sites. These findings could provide valuable information for developing quality special education teacher preparation programs.

Implications

This study used a focus group and individual interviews to accrue data in order to attain participants’ viewpoints of how extended field experience contributed to the preparation of special education teachers. The outcomes derived from the two different groups have some commonalities and differences. Both groups believed that field experiences brought them to the world of realities. They could either participate in or observe what a real teacher does in the classroom. They learned about a special education classroom, how students with EBD might behave, and what a special education teacher might be required to do. Both groups admitted that field experiences gave them opportunities to examine their own tolerance when dealing with students with behavioral problems. By interacting with different age groups of students, they learned to make decision regarding which age group they would be more comfortable working with. The findings revealed that these hands-on experiences not only prepared prospective teachers’ minds, but also gave them necessary tools to perform well in the real classrooms.

In addition, the findings revealed that whether or not the prospective teacher could get needed training in field sites depended on the on-site supervisors or classroom teachers. Some on-site supervisors or classroom teachers were more willing
to give prospective teachers opportunities to practice teaching skills; some viewed prospective teachers as teacher assistants and asked them to do teacher assistants’ tasks. However, some participants mentioned that after open communication, the on-site supervisors or classroom teachers were willing to help them get more experiences. The reason might result from on-site supervisors or classroom teachers not understanding the needs of prospective teachers.

Although two groups of participants received the training from the same teacher preparation program, they still had different viewpoints toward their extended field experiences. First, the group of individual interviews could easily describe how valuable extended field experiences prepared them for their current positions, such as confidence and skills learned from field sites. The prospective teachers, however, could describe what they learned from the field sites, but might not know how they could utilize those experiences in their future positions. The differences might result from the fact that the recent graduates who have experiences as being a real teacher in the classrooms, so they would be better able to describe how extended field experiences prepared them for their current positions. Second, while talking about the program structures, the prospective teachers focused more on what improvements could be made in order to help them locate teaching positions. Instead, the group of individual interviews expressed their suggestions on how to improve the quality of teacher preparation program and prospective teachers’ qualifications. The reason could be accounted for that the prospective teachers were in the last few weeks of their last semester while attending a focus group discussion, the anxiousness of graduation and worries of job hunting made them focus more on their own needs. Furthermore, due to
personal interests, availabilities of the placements, and the numbers of the prospective teachers, some participants might experience more placements than others. In addition, each participant might meet different school staff even going to the same placements. The dissimilar experiences could lead to different views of their field experiences.

All participants agreed that their extended field experience training was wonderful and precious. Although there were some ups and downs in the process of training, they cherished this experience and they believed that these experiences gave them confidence and skills to become effective teachers. Some suggestions are derived from the study for improving the qualities of teacher preparation programs:

1. The driving distance is one major concern for the participants involved in the study. Driving over one hour each way a few days a week could be a burden to prospective teachers. If the prospective teachers can have more placement choices based on their interests and locations, the prospective teachers may have more time for research and study.

2. In order for the prospective teachers to have better experiences and more adequate training in field sites, it is important for on-site supervisors or classroom teachers to receive training in how to mentor prospective teachers, how to provide guidance, and understand the needs of prospective teachers.

3. Practicing teaching skills, either small-group lesson delivery or whole class lesson delivery, is one of the major training activities the prospective teachers have in their field sites. However, there are many other skills that are required for being a special education teacher, such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), crisis prevention intervention (CPI), individualized education plans (IEP) writing and many others. If
the prospective teachers can have opportunities to attend in-service training that school districts provide for their teachers and those hours for attending in-service training can be counted toward their required hours for field training, they will be willing to attend those trainings and learn more practical and useful knowledge and skills for their future jobs.

4. Several participants mentioned that staying in one placement for only one assignment period seemed too short. They believed they did not have sufficient time to build relationships with the schools and students, or to fully contribute their knowledge to the field sites. Although the function of field experience is to provide opportunities for prospective teachers to learn and gain experiences through diversity of placements rather than ask them to improve classroom students’ behaviors and performance, the teacher preparation program may provide prospective teachers some opportunities to stay in one placement for a longer period of time. As a result, the prospective teachers may get more involvement in the one placement and learn more skills they need.

5. Students with EBD are often placed in different settings. It is beneficial if teachers of students with EBD have more knowledge about placement options for their students. The teacher training program may arrange some research or visiting opportunities for prospective teachers to learn more about alternative schools and other types of placements.

Recommendations

The findings of this study give a snapshot of the strengths and weaknesses of extended field experiences in preparing special education teachers. The findings
support the functions of extended field experiences referred to in the literature (e.g., Huling, 1998; Knowles & Cole, 1996; Rosenberg et al., 1996; Sears et al., 2004), including orientation, diagnosis, connecting theory and practices, professional development, and evaluation. The data generated from this study suggest future investigation in two areas. The first area indicates a longitudinal study on whether or not the special education teachers of students with EBD who receive extended field experiences would stay in their professional fields longer than those who do not receive extended field experiences. Additionally, further research on comparing the qualifications of special education teachers of students with EBD who receive extended field experiences and those who do not receive extended field experiences in terms of the perceptions of school administrators and other school staff would be warranted.
APPENDIX A

CONSENT FORM
October 29, 2004

Hsin-Yi Wang  
Department of Technology and Cognition  
University of North Texas  

Re: Human Subjects Application No. 04-325  

Dear Ms. Wang,  

As permitted by federal law and regulations governing the use of human subjects in research projects (45 CFR 46), the UNT Institutional Review Board has reviewed your proposed project titled "A Qualitative Research of How Extended Field Experience Prepare Special Education Teachers of Students with Emotional and Behavioral Disorders." The risks inherent in this research are minimal, and the potential benefits to the subject outweigh those risks. The submitted protocol and informed consent form is hereby approved for the use of human subjects in the interview sessions only. **Federal policy 45 CFR 46.109(e) stipulates that IRB approval is for one year only.**  

Enclosed is the consent document with stamped IRB approval. Please copy and use this form only for your study subjects.  

It is your responsibility according to U.S. Department of Health and Human Services regulations to submit annual and terminal progress reports to the IRB for this project. Please mark your calendar accordingly. The IRB must also review this project prior to any modifications.  

Please contact Shelia Bourns, Compliance Administrator, at ext. 3940 or Boyd Herndon, Assistant Director for Compliance, if you wish to make changes or need additional information.  

Sincerely,  

Scott Simpkins, Ph.D.  
Chair  
Institutional Review Board

P.O. Box 305250 • Denton, Texas 76203-5250 • (940) 565-3940  
Fax (940) 565-4277 • TTY (800) RELAY TX • www.unt.edu

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APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONING ROUTE
Focus Group Questioning Route

1. I understand that all of you are in your final semester of required field experience. Tell us the field experience placements you have experienced so far, and which placement you most enjoy and why?

2. What do you usually do in your field sites? How do you think of these duties? Are they helping you to become an effective teacher?

3. Please describe the most and least valuable aspects of your field experience training. How do those aspects impact your learning to be a teacher?

4. Many competencies/skills have been believed to be important for teachers of students with EBD, such as behavior management skills, collaboration, social skill teaching, vocational education, multicultural awareness, counseling skills, IEP planning, assessment…etc. Could you please talk about your field experience regarding these competencies? What kinds of training activities in your field sites provide opportunities for you to master these competencies?

5. What kinds of interaction do you have with your university supervisor and on-site supervisors? What kinds of support and feedback do they provide that help you to improve your teacher qualifications?

6. What are your primary concerns with field experiences? What recommendations do you have?
APPENDIX C

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW GUIDE
Individual Interview Guide

1. Please describe the field experiences you had in your teacher preparation program.

2. I know that you were required to experience a variety of placements in your training program. How many placements do you believe that provide adequate training opportunities to meet your needs as being a special educator of students with EBD and help you to do your job in your present position? Why?

3. What were your duties in those field sites? How did those duties help you to improve your qualifications?

4. It is hard to be a teacher of students with EBD. Many skills and competencies are required in order to be successful in the classroom, such as behavior management skills, collaboration, social skill teaching, vocational education, multicultural awareness, counseling skills, IEP planning, assessment…etc. Please give me some specific descriptions of any kinds of training activities provided by your on-site supervisors that give you opportunities to practice these competencies. For example, your on-site supervisor might ask you to attend students' IEP meetings or plan a lesson to teach social skills.

5. What have been the most valuable aspects of your field experience training that you can apply to your present work? Why?
6. What have been the less valuable aspects of your field experience training? Why?

7. What kinds of support and interaction did you have with your university and on-site supervisors? How do support and feedback from your university and on-site supervisors help you to improve your teaching capabilities?

8. How did field experience help you learn to teach?

9. What were your concerns regarding field experience training? What suggestions do you have that may bring more beneficial and practical field experiences to current prospective teachers?
APPENDIX D

TRANSCRIPTIONS
MODERATOR: I UNDERSTAND THAT ALL OF YOU ARE IN YOUR FINAL SEMESTER OF REQUIRED FIELD EXPERIENCE, TELL US THE FIELD EXPERIENCE PLACEMENTS YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED SO FAR, AND WHICH PLACEMENT YOU MOST ENJOY AND WHY?

No. 2: I will go first. This is my last semester, and I have been in …7 placements for field experience. I did 2 in my first semester, which was 2003. That would be at A behavioral unit, and the B program. That was…kind of…contradicting thing….very contradicting because…one place was kind of quite, conservative, and order, than the other placement…..chaotic. There was always something going on….always…never quite moment. So that was……I needed that. I needed to see the opposite. I needed to be able to experience the good site and bad site….not so much about the site…but….the activity….I needed to see that. If I am going to be a teacher, I don’t know what I am going to get….you know….. a great class all the time is not a good experience. I like the way it contradicted for me the first semester. The second semester I had…..those two were behavior adjustment units. The second semester I had C and D. C is a resource classroom, it was a heaven. I was just like….oh…..I wanted to go everyday. I would like to go everyday if I could. I didn’t have any problems. There was nothing I couldn’t do. She would allow me to be the teacher, and not just an intern; so I was totally involved in the program and helped the students. And, then, I did the opposite thing, the contradicted thing, I went to another school where I was basically observing, I didn’t have the hands-on. I could do things to help the students, but I really wouldn’t do any instruction. At summer, we all had this big, great experience. I am not sure you got chances to do it (Looking at No. 1). We had to go to this extended program, E program. Some prospective teachers did not think that they should go to this program because they were special education. They felt that they didn’t have to go to this summer school. But I did. We had chances to pick three different areas we wanted to work in. For two weeks, we were in that area….had the opportunities to work with developmental students…PPCD, which is the young children up to the age of 6. Then, also…the…I can’t remember what group of students they were, but they were Down syndrome. They were able to learn, capable of learning, and can do a little bit hands on. So we have a lot of diversity there. That was a great experience, I mean for anyone, for teachers, for emotional and behavioral disorders. That experience was beyond any, because we saw so much. It was a great experience. I….every time anyone ask me “how’s your field experience?” “How things are going on?” I said “I loved it.” Someone said “did you like all of them?” I said “I actually did.” Each one was a different learning experience. Now my last placements were in little schools. I had one little school that was kind of quite, nothing going on, no activity. Teachers loved you everything did. You can do everything you want. Then I went to another school. The teacher was like in
another world, could care less about you were there or not. She didn’t show any expression. So, my last semester…I just kind of, I am still the type of the person that I would jump in. I don’t wait anyone to tell me “Hei! Can you do this?” I am just doing it. So, if I see a student needs sitting down and doing a work, subject. I would help them. If they need help, I will help them. Basically, that’s how….we have a lot diversity in our program. It’s a very good program. The field experience can get you prepare to have your own classroom, because you see so many different kinds of things. A lot of people got chances to go to F, I didn’t get the chance to go to F school. But…just…all the diversity you have…all the types of students you have…not just the emotional behavioral students.

**No. 1**: It kinds of help you to learn, to get prepare for what you really want to end up working with in special education. I think it kinds of helped me. I can get to feel what I really want to ……the type of kids I deal best with, the ones I don’t. I guess I can talk about my experiences. Actually, I only did two. I started the program in the spring, and I will finish the spring next year. I started at A for the half of the semester, and it was a pretty……overall…it was a pretty good experience. They were different, because they were totally males out there, so have to….learn….I guess…dealing with the male culture, and they were considered like an inmates. Most of them…..the majority I spent was…..like a GED room. It was pretty much just one-on-one, like an assistant, with their math, reading, and writing. I did a lot of time in reading. Some of the program…I guess…a lot computer programs that they did, and some reading program was the big thing there. It was really interesting. You got to see… like… their level how low, they really are. I think the place was really like….like number 2 said….you have to really jump in and get involved, not just sit there. Otherwise, you will be bored. You won’t get anything out of the experience. If you just sit there and observe the whole time, you are not going to get the feel of what’s going on there. I think…it’s really…it definitely helps to jump in there, and go at it. The second place I stayed was B. That was a totally different material. You never worked with those types of students…..totally like….mentally…oh….ill…and behaviorally kinds of disorders….just a totally new experience. Overall, it’s a very good experience. Actually, I went back to A field site in the summer, because the XXX is my emphasis. I wanted to see if that is really where I want to be there. I guess that’s why I don’t have many experiences like No. 2 because I chose to go back to see if things changed for better or worse. Right now, I got back. I got you guys confused. I went to A at the very beginning, and then B program. In the summer I went back to A, now back to B program. Actually, it’s been pretty good. I am really in there, in there, hands on, helping out a lot, getting to do lesson plans and actual teaching, and learning different behavior and how to deal with it right. We were able to take a CPI training to deal with this type of kids. You just try to deal with nonviolently with them. Overall, I had pretty successful experience. I think it’s very good. I am proud to have this program, participate in a lot. That’s what I think about right now.
No. 3: This is my last semester here at this program. My first three semesters, I enjoyed very much. I went to A, actually, that part of semester we normally switched, but, at that semester, I did the full-time. When I had to go back during summer, they told me “no”, because they’ve already done basically two terms there anyway. So, I got chances to go to B, which is..., I probably wouldn’t trade it. It was different, probably not anything I would want to do, but it turned out the situation that I was be able to work in the classroom. You know it was a C classroom, we were talking about earlier, or the daily living classroom. I would be able to do that. Probably not something I would be most happy doing, but you know, it was a very different perspective. I did spend some time in the behavioral classroom there at C. I went to the behavioral unit at D. The good time….so far…..was the program is great. There wasn’t really any acting out. You would normally be in the school. I think it was what she talked about. It’s so calm and quite, nothing happened. But my problem was when I was there, we had a.....I was in the high school classroom. There were three adults, two children, and those children didn’t come in the one day. So, from 8:30 to 1:00, we just sat there and said “Hei! Where is the kids.” I think it was a little bit personally bored at that place. There was someone else in other classrooms, so there wasn’t any possibility to change. But, I got a different perspective. There was a very complicated behavioral system there. I think at the E now, it’s very complicated, too, just not comparing to the behavioral system at the D. So complicated, I am a little bit concerned that if there is a position opening there now for me, I probably couldn’t figure out the system to use in my own classroom, but that was good. Then I went to F, definitely, definitely my favorite. I was just with the teacher who had been through this program several years ago. It was just a really cool environment. They were team teaching. I actually found out about the half way through this semester that the other teacher wasn’t in the teaching position, which was finishing his bachelor degree. However, it worked very well. It was fun, a little school, enjoyed very much. If I have any choice, I would teach middle school at this point. Then....now....I am moving into the G program. I think part of my problem with G is that I am the intern that stays there the least. There are 7 or 8 of us right now, and four classrooms. I am always the one with someone else in the classroom, standing in the door if there are too many adults. And there are changes going on in my personal life, a job turning into the full-time. You could know that’s how I was affected. But I am definitely getting the perspective. I mean the crazy place we keep talking about, I think it’s probably, judging by the way people talked at the end of this year, it was a little bit calmer than it was instead of last year.

No. 2: The Fall of the 2003 was awful.

No. 1: That’s what I heard.
No. 3: The Fall, I really enjoyed to …get to see the different teachers, you know, perspectives…from teachers to….have come form different places. I think the G is a little bit off, because all the teachers, the counselor….every singe of them has come from UNT program. They all have the same perspectives on everything. I think that's something the program is lacking a little bit because they don’t have any sort of diversity. So I think they would benefit from having some other perspectives. If they try to hire me, I may say “no, hire someone from somewhere else.” But I enjoyed it, I consider it really…..this experience has been my…..I am happy being there. I enjoy them so much; I think I get more out of them than I was in the classes sometimes. I definitely…you have to put more into them than you do in your classes.

No. 2: I can tell you….hm…..the program…..in the field experience….I’ve actually gone through. The field experience….the first part.....you do the intensive training on….what I can say…. You have to put in certain amount of hours, that’s your requirement if you want to go through this program full-time. The first two semesters you are to do so many hours. That’s fine. You have to do hours until you graduate, but they decrease as you graduate. You take the classes. As you take the classes, you do your modules, you do your log, you do all that stuff, and you see how things are going. I think once you have done two full semesters, I think that’s enough, because where I am at now in the program, what I am doing in the field experience, I am there 15 hours a week….hm…..I don’t need to be monitored anymore. I understand that they have to, but that’s the tedious part of the program. I have 5 classes; I don’t want to…”oh, my god, I forgot to do my log.” You know, at this point, last semester, it’s not necessary. I understand that’s the requirement, I respect that. I am getting the grade of something, but I really don’t get credits for because that doesn’t count toward anything in the program. So either makes it part of the hour that you require to have, or just dump it. It’s just to me, it wastes the hour, wastes the money. I don’t know. That’s my thing.

No. 3: It’s been such a difficult semester for me, and have been so difficult for me to be involved in the classroom, because there are so many interns in the classroom, so many adults. I think I am losing a little bit confidence. So now….here’s the time when they say “I got something, you got to take care of the classroom.” The problem is….“can I do it anymore?” Six months ago I would say I could do it. Now, I am going…..I don’t know I am doing so well anymore. It’s kind of knocking the wind out of me a little bit. But I would not trade it.

No. 2: Right. I am thinking your last semester, that will be a good field experience for you actually out there getting the practice, filling out the application, getting help for all of that. That would be an intensive program, an activity or something added to the program. You know, when you get to the last semester, it’s time to fill out those applications. I knew this person in our program, who didn’t know everything she needed to know that when she graduated. She took the state
exam, but she was not certified. She needed to be recommended through another program. So if you are not part of teacher certification program, you will be confused about the teacher certification process. If you can have some kind of intensive application training, that would be great. You can get all the resource you need to get the experiences and find the job. The teacher training program can have a workshop or something.

**No. 1:** That would help.

**No. 2:** That would help so many people. There were a lot of people who got confused last semester. They were lost because they would like..."I have to do that?" It would help them in a long run because the goal is for us to get out and to teach. We all try to commit two years of teaching. We don't have the necessary skill. I know that sounds strange for a master student. There is so much bureaucracy out there. The whole university...you still have to follow some steps. There should be outline wherever program you go through. There should be something that could help you and guide you in the way. That to me would be helpful, maybe a mocked application or something, a mocked interview.

**No. 1:** The good thing the teacher preparation program brings out so far, along with the field experience, they do seminars, at least certain amount of time a month. Your supervisor would come to talk to you, to see how the things are going, and to give you information that would be helpful when you take off to the teaching. This semester so far, we would receive information on IDEA, IEP, and another one on how to......how the ARDs go. When you are an actual teacher, you have to go to these ARDs. The class doesn't really give you that information. You know....you read about it, somebody mentioned it a little bit about it, you are kind of ..."what's that?" Seminar is, actually, really effective. That's good.

**MODERATOR:** HOW DO YOU CHOOSE YOUR FIELD SITES?

**No. 2:** You don't choose.

**No. 1:** You get assigned.

**MODERATOR:** CAN YOU TALK TO THE PROGRAM ABOUT YOUR INTERESTS?

**No. 1:** I think if you have special circumstance or special situation they may work with you, depending on a lot.....what types of students you have, what evaluation they got from your previous supervisors, whoever works with you. I think that depends on the way....a lot on...what they...you get.....kind of choice or not.
No. 3: I haven’t received any choice at all. That’s kind of frustration for me at the beginning because we got letters that’s carbon copy letter that send to the sites instead of letters address to us. For instance, it states “we ask them to call you.” The last two placements were a little bit different. We got letters said that this is where you will be going, instead of ….so much more….interviewer coming to you and ….that’s how we found out. But think about it, I wouldn’t choose D. I wanted to end up G just because everyone is talking about it. I just want that experience. It took me to the very last one to get it. But I think if he handed me the list and ask me “this is A, B, C….etc. Which one do you want?” I wouldn’t know. I don’t even know what they do, what I would like about them. I wouldn’t be able to choose. I don’t know if I can really choose.

No. 2: My interest is emotional and behavioral disorder, so being able to see the other side of special education helps. You usually see kids with behavioral disordered and learning disorder in transitioning units because they have behavior problems. I have had this choice to go to two different schools; one of the schools is my daughter’s school, so I liked that. The program professor did give me the choice this last semester, not to choose schools I wanted, but where I wanted to be. He asked me which school you would like to go to. I told him that I lived in xxxx, and I wanted to be close to home. He probably didn’t have idea how close he gave me to close to my home. I actually went to my daughter’s school. When I got the letter, I didn’t know I would get the letter…it’s like …you are going….xxxxxx, so and so. I wanted to stay in my daughter’s school because I developed the social skill program for them; I just started getting into it and implemented it. Everywhere I go, I teach lessons. I tried math in middle school. I always did social skill lessons. Even….I created my lesson plans; I actually had the experiences to teach. I could do a lot of shadowing, and following through lessons. I even had opportunities to got…not really substitute, but watching over the period for another teacher that’s not even special education. I would say sitting there…you ought to be involved in the classroom. Somewhat the diversity of the work of this placement is not all I would like to do. But because of whom I am and I will give you a story. At first I didn’t want to go, I wanted to stay where I was. I pleaded. I even had a teacher call and say “can she stay because we are working on a social skill program that students just received.” I know this child, he goes to my church. I know he needs me to be there with him. And the teacher preparation program was like “no, we already recommended you there.” I understand what happened but they just didn’t tell me the real reason. I got there. I had this concern that what was going to happen when I got there because of what someone else told me. Because who I am, I didn’t let that affect me. So I would jump in, and still did what I had to do. I created a lesson plan, and I created an assignment. I had a total lesson plan. The teacher didn’t have them, but she asked me to do them. Anyway, I got over that very quick. So you do have your ups and down with different programs. Now in the program at D, the aid didn’t let us do anything. We can’t even stay in the classroom with students. That
doesn’t give us experiences if we are not able to interact with students as teachers.

**No. 1:** Sorry. I am kind of jumping in. It also helps when we are in those placements, where you are, when you were there, whatever teachers or subject, I think it all helps. It helps us if we can be able to get around, move around to observe other classrooms, help out other rooms. So you don’t just have one…about how this person is running the classroom, and this is the way goes. We can get the variety of everybody….how everybody….how they do….you know….because everybody does…..they do things differently. I think that’s really helpful. It would be helpful for me to going around to see, because some teachers are really calm while others are aloud and just…they are totally different. You can see how it affects different students’ moods or what trigger the behavior, that kinds of things. So you can pick up different techniques that you can use, and the one you shouldn’t use.

**No. 2:** Yes. That’s amazing.

**MODERATOR:** I THINK WE ALREADY TALKED ABOUT SOME OF THIS. COULD YOU PLEASE TALK MORE ABOUT WHAT YOU DO IN YOUR FIELD SITES? WHAT KINDS OF JOB RESPONSIBILITIES DID THEY GIVE YOU?

**No. 3:** Supervision. Mostly. What I get most from the field experience is, probably, understanding how their behavior system works. Because the curriculum is going to change depending upon which district I end up working. The level of my students is going to change depending on where I am going to work. Probably the most I would take in is the behavioral system. The majority of my classes used different philosophy, point system, and the level. They are all doing in such a different way, but that’s why I get the most out of it. Monitoring the behavior, getting comfortable and familiar with the behavioral system. I could say that’s really complicated or…..that’s very simple. Obviously teaching a lesson and interacting with the students one-on-one. With me the first time, I have to teach a 18-year-old how to divide. I realize that I am going to be a lot……teaching on different level completely in the same classroom…and that’s my first training in C. It made me wonder why some students were there instead of a little bit more therapeutic environment. So we did that, you know I could teach a lesson if we got to….have some experiences creating lesson plans, carrying about it, knowing how long it’s going to take. I was a horrible nervous speaker you can tell that I was starting like crazy right now, so I have to learn to get comfortable with, preparing a lesson. That was mainly what we have done. I get involved because I want to get involved, but I am also afraid that so involved may take away my ability to objectively see what’s going on around me. You know, I’ve ever seen some of the restrictive environment. That’s a little bit frustrating because we were
not allowed to have interns with the students….you know…a restriction of the placement, a policy for them.

**No. 1:** Sometimes they really lack of the people, they just want you to do everything…..you know…you are the intern, and that’s not really what you are there for. Sometimes you have to….like…really shake yourself, and said what I am here for. You have to have a talk with supervisor or……to straightens that out because some people just dumping works on interns. That’s how you get treated at some places.

**No. 3:** I have been a copy girl, I have been a grading girl.

**No. 1:** The filing…..the secretary work ……you know…I am here to get involved with the kids, to understand the behavior, to understand what you got to do to….you know…to help the behavior. Yes, some places would get you trapped with the filing, and the copy. You got to really look out and watch out for it.

**No. 2:** I actually had the opportunity to give a mocked test. That was good. Like I said, it’s just ….it’s a school….so….the teacher has a lot to do with it, not just the school. The teacher has a lot to do what you are able to do in that classroom, not the policy of the district, not the policy of the school, it’s the teacher. They want you to do something, you are going to do it. You are going to be able to do it. If the teacher feels threatened, then you are going to be the copy girl, you are going to be the filing person, you are not going to have that……that’s what I feel right now. I don’t know if she feels threatened but it’s like……

**No. 1:** I was going to say that….I don’t….want to have something to do with it. It’s like being….feeling dirt. Sometimes some placements…..I think it doesn’t matter the laziness. At their part, they don’t want to ……”I don’t want to do this, here you go.” They like……your are the dumping ground because you are here now. But if you talk to the right people, you get to work you way out of it, get to do why you are there.

**No. 2:** Not just teaching social skill lesson….you know…you can actually be involved. That’s me, I can sit back. What I do at the first day I am there, I totally observe my surroundings to see what boundaries I have, what I can do, what I can’t. Then from there, I do what I have to do. Basically, that’s what I have been told from supervisors, that’s you have different ways doing it. You can’t never take somebody else’s’ opinions of the site. You have to go in and do it yourself and experience it yourself. Now, by all means, he is right. But, I am able to handle it different. So where…..assuming I don’t have a good experience, I am able to take every little inch I can. I do lunch duty……you know…..because they said you have to do all your hours. If you take lunch, then you don’t make those hours. It just depends on who your university supervisor is.
No. 1: oh……..good.

No. 2: Your experiences also depend on your supervisor. I have to tell you. We have to make every increment of our time. Seriously, that was, as a matter as a frustration of my field experience. Anyway, I had that person tell me one thing, and I was going to do it. So anyway, I did lunch duty, I did everything. But by doing that, I am putting myself to the eye of the school, to where….if there is a job open there, they will know me, and I can go and talk to the principle. You just have to show the initiative. That’s a big thing. You are presenting the information to people, so they can understand the purpose of the field experience. You have to initiate, you have to be part of it, you have to put yourself there. “This is what I want to do and help me to do it, or teach me how to do it.” You are giving me a series of tools that I need so I can become a teacher that I want to be. If you sit back and you wait, for everybody to tell you what to do while you are there, you are just going to be sitting there pretty much. You are going to be bored. Oh, I can’t do this. So what I do, I go in, if this is boring……like today is the most boring day in my whole life, I just find something to do. I would….who needs help?” Make them need me. I just can’t sit. I have to do something. Maybe that’s good for me. It may not be good for everybody. It helps me to be successful in the field experience. Take the initiative.

MODERATOR: PLEASE DESCRIBE THE MOST AND LEAST VALUABLE ASPECTS OF YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING? HOW DO THOSE ASPECTS IMPACT YOUR LEARNING TO BE A TEACHER?

No. 3: Probably the most valuable…..getting the variety of the perspectives because we really……you look at one, you get many. You look at two, you get them all. The most I get was the different perspectives. I also understand that the grading and the filing have to be done by teachers. So seeing the variety of the job that teachers have to do is probably the most valuable. The least valuable…..hm……probably the least valuable thing I can think of is caught up the curriculum because the curriculum changes so much, if I focus on……my frustration is……I really enjoy the curriculum. I forgot to look at the big picture. They can’t carry over the curriculum that much. I have to remember those. I have to remember that, the curriculum, even the social skills, not the focus of the field experience.

No. 1: The most valuable …….I can agree the majority of what No.3 said. Also, I think just getting somebody ……the different teaching styles that out there, and I guess, the techniques that you can use when dealing with the behavior. I think that’s the most valuable thing that I can say about that. The least, just….what I mentioned before, like…..you being an intern, sometimes you are placed things that you shouldn’t be required. I think the problem is not the majority of the time you are there…..but that kind of thing…..the least.
**No. 2:** I think the most valuable is just the diversity, being able to see odd aspects of the special education from changing diapers to build social skill lessons. That’s the diversity I have been gone through. I like that. I think that’s valuable, you never know where you got to be. You may have a major in emotional and behavioral disorder with the special education certification. You can’t teach everything. You can’t. The least is….I can agree with them, sometimes when your placement situation was……you feel like you just not needed….like you are just there, you are just an intern. That can be overwhelming at the time. Like No.3 said, you can just move on, that’s pretty much I will do. So when it happens……you know I am human…..it’s very touching for people to have that perspective than you do at that time. Through the passage of my….at this program, I am willing to do what you got to do, and it will all pass.

**MODERATOR:** MANY SKILLS THAT HAVE BEEN BELIEVED TO BE IMPORTANT FOR TEACHERS OF STUDENTS WITH EBD, SUCH AS BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS, COLLABORATION, SOCIAL SKILL TEACHING, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS, COUNSELING SKILLS, IEP PLANNING, ASSESSMENT…ETC. COULD YOU PLEASE TALK ABOUT YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE REGARDING THESE COMPETENCIES? WHAT KINDS OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN YOUR FIELD SITES THAT PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU TO MASTER THESE COMPETENCIES?

**No. 2:** I am going to talk very quick, the negative…..I shouldn’t….but that’s true. When you are a teacher of special ed, of emotional behavioral disorder or whatever, you are placed in the situation that you are not going to be giving the tool that you need, so if you don’t know how to do the math, you just…forget it….because sometimes they don’t even have the teacher edition. So if you don’t know how to figure it out, you make sure you are giving something you can grade yourself. You are not following the guidelines of the curriculum, and give them the next series of skills they need to pass the test. From what I have seen in different placements, sometimes they don’t have the tool they need to give……to deliver…..especially at A. I taught with math and science. They had textbooks for students, but they didn’t have teacher edition of everything. They need it, so we don’t have to have calculator turn zero, and……..the PTA…..the everything. The resource really makes difference. In my field experiences, everyone’s resources have been different. Some teachers have abundant, and some teachers have nothing.

**No. 1:** I can say…I think….this semester I thought I see the most…..I think they tried to make sure you have understanding what to do. As far as……the CPI training was awesome. That’s something you need to take with when you leaves, especially special education teachers. Learning what to do within the situation, so
the……the de-escalation…..all these different things you know……how to bring the situation down and get the students back. The training they offered, you could go or just not to go, but that was very helpful this semester. So far, I mentioned previously, the seminars, to me, that’s the one. They actually gave you packet. We discussed things that you are going to be facing, such as the ARDs, how to look at the IEP, the BIP, what ever, no one knows how to do. We kind of get the idea, what things look like, what they expect, and eventually, you get into the actual teaching world, the actual teacher. Somebody is trying to be there, you can lean on, kind of guide you, so you can just take off.

No. 2: The training…..I tried to get to the CPI training in the class I am in now, but again….you know, who’s willing to give you the necessary tool you need. Where No. 1 is, she had a very spiritual leader who wanted to give her as much as knowledge possible, so she was provided the opportunities to do CPI training, which I think the school would want you to have that. When you fill out the application for a job and you already have that, which makes you even more prominent. So…I tried to get the CPI training, but I never got the word , yes or no, I think they would like…“huh? What would you want it for? I don’t understand why?” I think that’s a valuable tool because it’s a requirement in order to be a teacher in many of the districts. I think all of the districts think it’s a requirement because you have to be able to handle the student in a certain way in the least restrictive environment. That’s part of the law. CPI helps you to handle them in the least restrictive way. You want to restrain them; you don’t want to hurt them. They teach you the concept of how to do it and deescalate the situation. I think that’s a good thing, so her being able to get that, that’s great.

MODERATOR: WHILE YOU ARE IN THE CLASSROOM, DO YOU HAVE ACTUAL EXPERIENCE TO PRACTICE ANYTHING IN THE CLASSROOM?

No. 1: Social skills you can actually practice. I was able to…..in the spring….to do some social skills. That’s something I was able to get practice in the site.

No. 2: Up until now, I have done everything. I taught math, science, whatever. I do it. I taught. Up until this semester, this last 8 weeks, I have been able to do all. At one placement, I do every single of subjects, reading, math, social skills, and social studies….everything.

No. 1: That’s right. You put yourself out there, take initiative, like No. 2 was saying. You actually learn something; you will be able to……like part of the staff. They treated you just like one of the other, lunch duty, field trip you take with them, teaching lesson one-on-one….whatever. They take you to calm their behavior down, the problem solving….you can actually be there……like an actual staff member. You get to put what you are learning….practice there.
No. 2: They would allow you to. If you take the initiative, they would let you do whatever you want. You can go to ALE, you can do everything, but some schools just have the limits. I don’t know why, but this one school I am at, they just …..you can do social skills; you can do that once a week, maybe twice. Or you knew this is your assignment, you went into the lesson plan, you get it done. It was something you plan, give it to your supervisor. They would come in and that was your day to teach. Other than that, those are just some sites. Like A is good. B is excellent. C center, you can do a lot of hands-on, like helping them with different assignment. You can sit with some students and ask “what can I help you?” As far as jump up to in front of the class, doing the instruction, that wasn’t going…..as far as any of those….alternative learning environment, that wasn’t going to happen. Being left alone in the room with the students, it wasn’t happened. So you feel kind of inferior….you feel like….what am I here for? I can’t do anything.

MODERATOR: NO. 3, DO YOU WANT TO ADD ANYTHING?

No. 3: I think that’s my problem, wasn’t able to jump in ….because you are working in one-on-one. It wasn’t an uncomfortable situation for me. I think that’s not a problem for me. The problem I had….really to get the full experience. I was very very young when I started the program. I was 4-month older than the students, and so…..everyone looked at me like I am incompetent, irresponsible. I had a comment got back to me that I was looking for a man. I think once I got a little bit confidence because I was took out of it…..I was ready to go….because I was there for a long time, I was able to build a firm relationship with the adults there I worked with. I am very close to them. It’s very hard to leave, but it didn’t start out that way. I think the reason that I didn’t get practice….I had my first lesson, I was going to be left alone with a class of guys, and the principle came over and sat in the front raw. That’s……but it worked out very well. We do get experiences, options, to do those things. We do, in a way, have to remember why we are there, what our place is, I am an intern. We have to remember that we do have a place there, and over the frustrating…..to be an intern. We would get better experience; we have better time working with the adults we are working with, if we stay in their level. I think…probably….out of the picture that we understand where we stand. And I was more frustrating than anybody being an intern. I have been professional intern since I was 18. I do understand that I am there to learn. I am not there to disrupt the program. I think that’s what I got the most benefit of it when we all working together instead of being one of them. I never had the problem with the teacher, but some teaching assistant did have concerns with me being there. They have been uncomfortable with me being there. They always said “I am old as your mother.” I just like……ok, I am not trying to take your place here. But I think if I remember……ok… if you have do a little bit diplomacy what would you do in the situation. One day, I pulled one aid aside and said “could you teach me how to do this?” After that, we were ok. I think we
just need to let them understand that we are not here to take over. We were here to learn for ourselves. For the benefit of your program, because that would happen, if we are learning the best of the ability, your program will be better. But, still, we are here to learn, not to be in charge.

No. 2: Right. I never…wanted to be in charge, but I didn’t want to sit back. Because I know it’s her classroom or his classroom, you can’t take charge, but you do have to take initiative. The imitative is the biggest thing. If you don’t take the initiative, you’re probably going to sit there and fall in sleep. That’s my goal. If I am ever going to get an intern, do not work them to their bone; do not let them feel that I am in control with them. As a teacher, you are here for me; I am not going to control you. I am going to use this against you. So I don’t……beyond my boundaries……I will respect that in my class, I would not never make implication to do so. To me, one class I had, I took the board, and the teacher stepped aside the board. What I did was rewrite everything she had. This time, I wrote the date on the board and put on the “good morning”. She erased it. I was….ok, I am done. It’s weird. You have to know the situation, to understand. Because I know, I understand. I am ok with it. A lot people may not understand, but I understand. Every teacher has a reason in a way. Every teacher is different. The purpose should be all the same. If your let the purpose become personal, it’s not what you’re supposed to do, then you can’t focus. Your teaching doesn’t go on top of it. So, my experience is, just watching, observing, and looking.

MODERATOR: WHAT KINDS OF INTERACTION DO YOU HAVE WITH YOUR UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR AND ON-SITE SUPERVISORS? WHAT KINDS OF SUPPORT AND FEEDBACK DO THEY PROVIDE THAT HELP YOU TO IMPROVE YOUR TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS?

No. 1: So far, my university supervisors….they are totally down to the earth. Actually, I can talk to them through emails, or on the phone, because they are really open to give you all kinds of ways to contact them if you’ve ever have the question, or you’ve ever wanted to get in touch and talk about something. So far, there are really……really…..available. As for the leaders in the placements, actually, let me go back to the B. While I was there, the person who was in charge had a heart attack. So actually the school …kinds of functioned in a rough level. It was different. Then I came back during the summer, things were calmer, whole lot in an order. So it kinds of show me that when the head person is not there what things can happen. But at B experience, the relationship there….I never really got to know him, that’s the sad part from the distant, but I heard that he is a awesome guy, so…that’s all I can say about that. The teachers there at the time….kind of in charging…..for the most of the part, we have a good relationship, like people I can communicate with or complaint, or talk to….that kinds of things. As far as the placement, like A, it’s awesome. Internship is fun. Being approachable, someone you can communicate with about whatever, even
with something you think she don’t want to hear it. She is really open to whatever, she is willing to set a time with you or grab her while she is down the hall, pull her aside, just very approachable and nice. You don’t feel that she is way up here, and you are way down there. She is totally…whole atmosphere…everybody is kind of connected. I think that helps a school to function better when the staff, the head person who is in charge of the school, and everybody is on the same page. I think that helps out so.

No. 3: I had great interaction with university supervisor in the past. Especially this semester, my personal life is kind of crazy. She has been really understanding, willing to work with me in the personal level. I have been to her office and said I am going to start crying now because it has been a little rocky. I got that same experiences from my supervisor before when I was in B. She was kind of had a rough time herself, we had been on the same level. That approachability has been great because……not necessary……the leader of the……the professor who is in charge of the program is not necessary the one you want to approach with the problem because he is part of the program, he doesn’t want our personal life to get in the way of the…..efficiency and the effectiveness of the program he designed. It’s nice to have someone we can deal about the personal things. She has been great about how can we work out to make things a little bit easier for you without reducing the requirement of the program, to make it I can function. That has been really great. My on-site supervisor, I had……I think what’s making the difference now is I am there the least because I am the last semester intern, anyone else is in the middle of everything, so they are going 22 hours a week and I am going 15 hours a week. So that changes a little bit there, but I have other things going on to worry about. But I never had a bad experience. I never felt that I am not wanted at the place, my input was not valuable in the classroom, or with the principal or the person who is in charge. Like No. 1 talked about the principal in B is amazing. He called me after work and said how can I help you with, he called the head of the program and discussed my schedule. He told me to bring my notebook and said that “we could make it work to get your work done.” They always have been really great. I am sorry that some of the people haven’t gotten to know him because he ends up being quite ill. So we haven’t been able to met same people.

MODERATOR: NO. 2, DO YOU WANT TO ADD ANYTHING?

No. 2: So far, the first semester was good, the second semester was fine……I am not sure I want to talk about this. I think this fall semester……in the program….I think her responsibility ……… I understand what we are all going through…….try to get around the program. She doesn’t….She doesn’t have the compassion to go………you know….they have a lot of lean way, believe or not, but when they go directly to the head of the program and say “can they do that?” He is going to say “no”, but they have the power, because they all do it. I don’t
want to get anybody in trouble but they have a power to make an adjustment as necessary. She is just not there. There is a holiday coming. In the past, you went to school on that day, you got that day. Not this semester, so that hurts me because not that I needed it. I have a funeral to go to, I have to make up 8 hours, anyway, we are out for one week, but we only get the credit for one day. In the past, if you are out for one week, like Thanksgiving last year, my first semester, Thanksgiving was counted. Whatever day you work on that week, you got credits for those hours, and the spring. Up till...like a couple weeks before...spring break...they were like...no that’s not going to count...all of a sudden .....don’t worry about it......you get credits for spring break. Those kind of thing helps students like a full load of class, because you have to add hours to that......plus to go to school at night, you barely make it here.....anyway. It’s the load......unbelievable. Doing the 22 modules and the modules and modules, and the modules in that module. Sometimes the course load and the field experience, and the university supervisor cannot image. As far as the site supervisors, up until this last semester, everything has been fine. Although she did give me a good evaluation, I don’t think she put any thought in it. I think she just copy what I have. We are supposed to get the comments on the fact about what I do and how I do it, but she just went down the line.........there is no communication......that bothers me. You can know I talk....and talk... I need feedback. That’s what we were there. Here is the opposite. Usually you compete with the aid, now I am getting all the attention from the aid. It’s this last placement, I am used to the teacher to give me the feedback......you have to do this, do that.........oh...it’s great, you are doing a good job......blah....blah....whatever. I get zero. I have to say “good morning”, get into her face. It’s a little bit depressing. But I know the situation......so.......I am not taking it personal. But it does affect me because I need to know what’s going on, how I am doing. Once the aid said “she thinks you are a valuable person, she thinks you are doing a great job.”

MODERATOR: WHAT ARE YOUR PRIMARY CONCERNS OF FIELD EXPERIENCES? WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS DO YOU HAVE?

No. 3: I would say that you may get a little bit skewed perspectives on your....this focus group because you are taking people who are a little bit dated. We are a little bit burn out. So the frustration is coming to top. If you ask me the last semester what I think about the field experience, I would say the best part of it, of this program. I still do. It’s true. I don’t want to present skewed to......when you write it down. Definitely, it’s the best thing about the program. Definitely it’s worth preparing our best to become a special education teacher.

No. 1: Definitely.

No. 3: Definitely, it’s teaching us the most about ourselves because we are learning to deal with disappointment.....with little personal things....
No. 2: hm....yeah...yeah...

No. 1: Those you can take or leave it....

No. 2: I agree.

No. 3: More children than we will be able to see in our own classroom.

No. 2: I agree.

No. 3: this is what it's doing for us. And instead of......I think....we are getting a little bit affected what it's doing to us.....getting ......having to work on the exact hours, being hired, getting to put out the situation we would like to be included. So I want to make sure that’s been put on the tape, so it can be put on what you are working on. Because this is......I don’t think this program is duplicated. I think this is it. I heard of it.

No. 1: Yeah, that’s what I heard.

No. 3: Looking around, this is the only one.

No. 1: It’s very good. From what I am from, I know not the special ed, but regular education may have something similar, which is good.

No. 3: the perspective.....they took us out for.....the student teaching...the last and the first semester.......completely......no foundation to build that classroom and that environment at that time. This put us in the situation to see very good programs, to allow us to put together all that knowledge and build something different. I would not do the same way the teacher I worked with. I definitely say that this is program that should not be compromised.

No. 1: definitely.

No. 2: So, our full-time student is not like part-time students for the financial reason. They have to somehow get those hours, whether they get a teaching job or something like that. They eventually have to get those hours in. For a lot of them have gone on and started, either paraprofessional or teaching, and I think they will not count either hours. I know some people have circumstance. I did full-time, full-fledge. If you ask me ....you know, last semester.....I would have so much......less negative attitude, but I am in the last three weeks, I am so happy that I am done with this part of it. But I wouldn’t give it out for anything because I started last August, and I am done this December. I didn’t finish my bachelor that quick. I wouldn’t give it for anything. It has been the best part of my whole experience. It’s worth it. You can have the book knowledge, when you get to the
hands-on experience, it may still be different. All the diversity we have seen, all the different types of people that we deal with, either good or bad, whatever it is. It’s part of you that are going to do out there. You may have a partner teacher or paraprofessional you are working with. You know....you are coming in as a new teacher, and they have been there for 20 years. They have seen the teacher come and go. So....I like to thank that we have to do it. If I have to write a paper about it, I definitely would say that I have experience of it. No matter what they are, they are part of.....I am going to need to...... I don’t know the head of the program planed that. It was a very far coming. From day 1 to the end, I have never seen the same thing twice. I know No.1 here only has been two places, but I have been to so many places, and see so many things. Wow......good, I am on it. She is just see so many things the two places she has been. It's been great. I won't give it up for the whole world. Like No.3 said, we didn’t have to go out to find a job and teach to get those hours. We have gained those hours through the program. It has been worth to me.

**MODERATOR:** ANYTHING YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT REGARDING FIELD EXPERIENCE?

**No. 3:** Specifically, on the basically level, my concern would be the driving distance to the field sites, and the financial burden that......gain us our gas money, it’s a very big concern.

**No. 1**: yes.

**No. 3**: The stipend is supposed to cover your gas money, but there was time that did not. And When I was in C, I have to pay 75 cents to pay the toll. That’s the only way I would get there in three hours, and I prefer to do that. I think that was part of the problem. Some of the experiences could be more. Although I wouldn’t give up C, it could be assigned with more awareness where we live, and what time, and financial burden that put on us. I think that was a major concern for everyone.

**No. 2**: I think I am kind of not there, because I centrally locate at the middle of everything. So whenever where I went, I was ok. The only farthest travel was B. Everything just.....if I have to come this way, I went to C, D. They are not far away. But E is the longest, I have to pass school to get there. Anything else didn’t bother me. I don’t have to drive longer than.......just like coming to school.

**No. 3**: I have to. Three placements are over an hour. For me, probably I am upset is that I am not aware the area when I came to the north Texas. I am from Texas, but I am from xxxx. I thought not being me at the campus would be near everything else, so I got an apartment here, which I will not do again. I will get an
apartment south. I think that’s part of the problem I have. I think this is the point
that near everything, but this is the point that far away from everything.

No. 1: yeah….

(End of Tape)
Individual Interview 1

PLEASE DESCRIBE THE FIELD EXPERIENCES YOU HAD IN YOUR TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM.

For each semester, I went to schools. I had…I think it was at least 22 hours a week, and different behavioral units and different school districts. My last two assignments, because my area was specializing in transition for EBD students, I was working cooperatively with vocational coordinators.

WHAT OTHER PLACEMENTS HAD YOU BEEN? SUCH AS CHILDREN’S MEDICAL CENTER…ETC?

No. Mine was in A, the B behavioral unit, and the C behavioral unit. I was in the behavior unit, also I did a little work with the transition with the D county. Then, the next one was in E county, cooperatively working with vocational, while I was working in the behavioral units.

DID YOU CHANGE YOUR PLACEMENTS SEVERAL WEEKS OR DO YOU STAY IN ONE PLACEMENT FOR A LONGER PERIOD?

I stayed…mainly… with… it’s like…half of the semester would be one location and the other half would be another location. So….It’s 7.5 weeks in one place, and 7.5 weeks in another place.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR TRAINING IN THOSE TWO SITES? DO YOU HAVE ADEQUATE TRAINING IN THESE TOW PLACES?

Yes, I really think it was very beneficial. Being able to stay in the behavioral units while not just going in to be a full-time teacher, but being a assistant, I can see different things, different methods they used, different strategies they used, behavior modification they had. As for as I am using it now, I work with life skill students, and I do have couple….I have a reading class, I have couple behavioral students there. They are not in behavior units, but they have emotional behavioral disabilities. It really helped me to recognize and, then, also, to apply the behavioral modification.

WHAT WERE YOUR DUTIES IN THOSE FIELD SITES? HOW DID THOSE DUTIES HELP YOU TO IMPROVE YOUR QUALIFICATIONS?

Some of the duties were actually to develop a lesson and to deliver the lesson to students that helped me with my instruction. Some of the duties I did, part of my classroom requirements but I performed them in the behavioral unit, to do the functional behavioral analysis. Actually going through all the steps while I was in
behavioral units. It really helped me to apply the knowledge I was getting from the classes. Like I said, I worked a lot with the transitioning, so some of the duties I had in vocational were doing the assessments, vocational assessment...doing survey with the students to find out, to help them. Doing a little counseling, too, help them to figure out what they wanted to do when they grow up.

THERE ARE MANY SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE CLASSROOM, SUCH AS BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS, COLLABORATION, SOCIAL SKILL TEACHING, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS, COUNSELING SKILLS, IEP PLACNNING, ASSESSMENT. PLEASE TELL ME WHAT KINDS OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN YOUR FIELD SITES THAT PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU TO MASTER THESE COMPETENCIES.

As far as behavior management skills, when I was in B, I really leaned a lot about the different kind of...to look at different kind of behavioral management system that can be set up, why they would be set up, and why the things would be done. It helped me understand where it was coming from, and what worked best with them. When I went to other schools, they used different methods and I asked them why, so I was able to do the comparison form one to another to another in different situation because what works for one age group may not work for different age groups. So when I work with one age group, I might apply there, but when I go to another age group, different behavior management system might be needed because of different motivation. Collaboration.....I think working in a cooperative helped me to see how there so many people that were involved with.... helping the students. Working with the diagnostician, the speech therapist, just all of the different people needed. It's just not one person who made the decision. It's a group activity. Social skill teaching....I thought those are very interesting. When I was in B, they actually had a system they were using, the all teachers had to use that. I saw some benefits to that. Another one would be seeing on-site supervisors using whatever they needed, in different system they needed. So I was able to see how they were using each of those. Vocational education....I was.....my on-site supervisor showed me.... There were different aspects to help students transitioning out. One of them was vocational education, the collaboration...working with them...trying to find out which school would be appropriate for students because some schools may not be appropriate for them. They would not accommodate them. The multicultural awareness....that is almost relevant in any place you go to. I think more than anything...it’s understanding to students itself...their background....where they coming from.....so.....and treating them fairly. Counseling skills.....I didn’t get to use a lot of my counseling skills to students. I got more from the classes, and I wasn't able to apply those. I would like to have more. In fact, my first... that was one of my first classes I took for my degree....I think...."why am I taking the counseling
class?” And that was one of the most helpful classes I had. IEP planning… I wish I would have more of that. We had… I though the program being used in C, they called it C program. They helped assessing the students, and then identified the IEP, write their IEP. I didn’t get whole lot of training in it. I was told about it. They gave me enough information for me to be able to search out on my own. And I understand the importance of that. Assessment…..like I said, that’s the part, in one of my field studying, I did get to see how they used in the class… assessment. That is really important for the teachers to understand. And I am binding my job now, because the assessment what she used was the basis to build what’s you are going to use in the instruction, what’s you’re going to use in measurement. So… having more information in that area is…especially taking into the consideration the emotional needs of this special interest group… because we have to look at how we present the material, and how much we present at the time, how we make it logical, and everything, so that goes to the instruction site.

DO YOUR FIELD SITE SUPERVISORS GIVE YOU FULL RESPONSIBILITY TO DO LESSON TEACHING? COULD YOU PLEASE DESCRIBE SOME OF THAT?

Yes, I was actually responsible for writing the weekly…a weekly lesson plan for social skills… then, delivering to the class. So I would choose… based on what I had seen… the students in the classroom… my on-site supervisor would look at it, and approve it, make change or suggestion to it…..then I would actually deliver it.

HOW OFTEN DOES THAT HAPPEN?

It was everyday. Some of the schools that I went to I found that was a class, everyday. They delivered, just like English, Math. They delivered that as a class. Hm… some I went to incorporated social skill as a mini lesson, maybe 15 minutes, some were 45 minutes. You know, a credit of the class. So…. it was everyday, I delivered that. I delivered math lessons. I delivered history, I also delivered a vocational class with them.

WHAT KINDS OF VOCATIONAL LESSON DID YOU DELIVER? TAKING KIDS TO THE JOB SITES, OR…?

For the vocational what I did was… I actually went and interviewed with the student… one of my supervisors… I went interviewing with the student, see what’s their answers were… complete their individual transition plan at the time. On another site I went to, specifically for the co-op for the vocational, I participated in. I didn’t plan or anything like that. I participated in the job shadowing where they had the coordinator. All the student came to the mall, they got the agreement from the stores, from the mall, and the students rotated in the stores to do their jobs, and I mentored a group of students. I did the mentoring on my own, but I didn’t coordinate it. At another one, we had a grocery store down the street, they
had agreed to …. and this is for EBD students…it was very big in the community, and they wanted to help the students. So, the cooperative had been set up, and agreement was for the student to come up there for couple of hours, once a week. I went with the students there, we went through the texts of their jobs, how to socially respond to different circumstances. They didn’t get paid, it was just giving them experience being in the job, being getting feedback.

HOW ABOUT MULTICULTURAL? DO YOU HAVE ENOUGH OPPORTUNITIES TO INTERACT WITH STUDENTS FROM DIFFERENT CULTURAL BACKGROUND?

It’s probably based on the location. Really, I didn’t see…..we have…there was some multicultural, some diversity there…but probably not as much as if you would have gone to . Maybe I would’ve gone to Dallas or…..but I lived further north, I tried…….I’ve already driven hour and half to get to somewhere. So, probably the most diversity culture I got was….it was an excellent experience. I was working in the juvenile justice center, because I was seeing people coming from all of the sides…boys…they were from 14 to 21, coming all over the Texas, so I probably saw a lot of different cultures there. And I did when I went to the behavior units in the school districts.

HOW ABOUT COUNSELING SKILLS? DO YOU HAVE ENOUGH OPPORTUNITIES TO PROCESS WITH KIDS? OR DOING SOME KINDS OF COUNSELING WITH KIDS?

Yes, I did. I did one-on-one with them at that time.

HOW WAS THAT? ANY DIFFICULTIES?

I think the biggest difficulty we had was that the student knew we were students, we weren’t full-time teachers yet. The students in the behavioral unit would use that and said that you were not a teacher. So, at the beginning going in, they liked to use that. We felt that we could…and trying to help the students, but the students didn’t always look at us for the help. They always look to the teacher. The teacher always said that you need to listen to Ms. xxx or whoever. You know whoever there from the program. So…it….by the end of the 7.5 weeks, the students would accept us as one they would like to talk to….yes…. there were difficult to get the relationship…..the trust….with the students there, because they have so many people. I thought it was very interesting to see….it helped me…..it helped me to understand how important it is…..upfront when you start working with the students. They needed to understand….you needed to calm….somehow working into your conversation you already figured because they didn’t see you as an authority figure when you first went in. Yes, it was a little bit difficult. They…..especially working with students with behavioral and
emotional disorder….they were a little bit skeptical…there were a lot of change
going on….they don’t like whole lot of change…so….it was a little interesting.

AND YOUR ON-SITE SUPERVISOR WOULD BE THERE WITH YOU ALL THE
TIME?

Yes. The liability issue, for me, not a certified teacher, not to be left alone with the
student. There was always have to be an employee from the school district there
with me. Now, getting a further into it….it’s not always have to be the teacher,
there just have to be someone from school district.

IS THERE ANY OTHER OPPORTUNITIES THAT YOUR SITES GAVE YOU
CHANCES TO PRACTICE OTHER THAN LESSON PLANNING?

Hm…..like I said, I couldn’t have the full responsibility because of the liability
issue. I just think it was really great to speak with the kids. First of all, I never
worked with the students with emotional and behavioral disorders. Also, I knew
my interest in transitioning…that I was interested in older children…and I have
been out of that….working with children at that age. So, putting me in the
classroom with children at that age really helped me to understand what I might
come up to against, what kind of things they like to pull, try to get away with. You
learned something new everyday. I think one of the best thing I learned was that
there is something that’s not that important. It may seem annoying…..or
something like that……but you have to stop to think…..is it that important you
have to try to correct that behavior….. or concentrate on something
else….because it maybe annoying to me…… but at the end……behavioral-
wide…..maybe annoying to me……but they maybe try to communicate something
to me. I just…..think being there is the best thing for Me. If I have just gone to the
school, taking a job like here, and not have that kind of background and
experiences about how they are thinking, how they are working……and actually
seeing it, working with them. I wouldn’t have been working full time as much
as…instead of ….as much as the first-year teacher.

COULD YOU PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR BACKGROUND BEFORE ENTERING
INTO THE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM?

I worked in the professional in the business environment for 16 years as a project
manager, a program manager, for educational service for ERICKSON. I have my
bachelor degree in business. I always wanted to be in education, but things
changed….I had to into business. I got laid off, I decided that I wanted to go back
to school…actually…I wanted to become a teacher, I wanted to get my teaching
certificate. I decided that I wanted to get my master while I was at that.
WHAT MAKES YOU DECIDE TO FOCUS ON THE VOCATIONAL?
I wanted to be proactive.....I wanted to be....my eventually role....I wanted to be
in the situation that I could be more proactive. I wanted to help the kids that have
been put into the behavioral units. I wanted to try to help the situation I have here.
I had life skill students, but I don’t have that many...I am able to help the other
teachers identify different ways they can deal with the behavior in the classrooms,
the behavior students. I do focus on life skills as skills you have to have when
you become an adult. So job skills, employee ability skills, things like that, that for
the general, tutoring that for the kids of EBD, that’s what I like to focus on.

SO YOU HAD YOUR GOAL SET BEFORE ENTERING INTO THE PROGRAM,
OR YOU MADE THE DECISION IN THE MIDDLE OF TRAINING PROGRAM?
No...I already decided before entering into the program. I think that’s why I got
selected for the program. I told the university professor that my kids came home
to me one day, and said he don’t understand why he has learn all that stuff, and I
said all I wanted to do is to teach kids skills that they know they are going to use
when they finish the schools.

SO YOUR PLACEMENT SELECTION IS A LITTLE BIT DIFFERENT THAN
OTHER STUDENTS IN THE PROGRAM BECAUSE YOU FOCUS ON THE
VOCATIONAL, RIGHT?
Yes.

NOT ALL OF YOUR TARGETS IN THE FIELD SITES WERE EBD, RIGHT?
No...when I was working in the co-op for the transition site of it....no...there were
any special kids. However, one of them I was working in was from the behavioral
units, and vocational, you know...vocational for the behavioral units.

MOST OF YOUR PLACEMENTS ARE IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS?
Yes.

THE PROGRAM PLACES YOU ON YOUR FIELD SITES BASED ON YOUR
INTEREST?
My last two placements, he really helped me to get me into places based on my
interests, transitional specialists for emotional behavioral disorders.
COULD YOU DESCRIBE THE MOST VALUABLE ASPECTS OF YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING THAT YOU CAN APPLY TO YOUR PRESENT WORK? WHY?

I think it’s just like I said.....being around these kids.....and seeing.....in the environment.....in those environments I get to see what kinds of problems that they encountered.....how we can help them either deal with it or how we can help the school avoid it. So this is probably most valuable.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE LESS VALUABLE ASPECTS OF YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING? WHY?

I can’t think of anything right now.....I just.....I can’t think of anything.

WHAT’S YOUR RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR ON-SITE SUPERVISORS AND UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS?

(students came in.........)

What kinds of interaction I had with my on-site supervisors? Great!! I had Ms. xxx. She is great. Oh...my on-site supervisor.....she is my university supervisor. My university supervisor was xxx. She really helped provide me with feedback. And this one time, I was really concerned about what was happening, and she acted between me and my supervisors at sites...there was just a situation I was concerned about. Something was going on. She was really great. I liked that. My on-site supervisors.....hm.....because I was so new to the transitioning....it was really hard at the transitioning sites...because.....it’s not like a classroom you had to go to everyday...you had a class and you had a lesson to deliver everyday. The transitioning part was going to different locations. I went to a lot of ARDS, which was great because I got to see a lot of interaction in the ARDs. But sometimes there was nothing to do, so it was a little awkward for them...and...other than that....my on-site supervisor were really great and gave me feedbacks.

WHAT KINDS OF COMMUNICATION DID YOU HAVE WITH YOUR UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS?

At the beginning, probably once every two weeks, or once a week. We met once a month as a group. All of us going to the program....once a month. They helped us, did the presentation....hm.....which that was interesting....because they would give us the topics that they would talk about....like we need to get ready to go for the interview....these things you need to do....or....like going through IEP.....you know....things like that....and what to look for when we go back to the sites.....go look for those things.....that was really helpful. I can’t remember how many times I
met with her. Later on, we didn’t meet that often…because….you know….be able to do it on my own.

BUT SHE WOULD STILL VISIT YOU IN YOUR FIELD SITES?

Yes.

HOW OFTEN?

A couple of times, there was just observation…where I actually developed the lessons and showed them the lessons. She came in and she watched me delivered it. She gave me feedback on it. Sometimes she would come and she would just talk to me…see how things are going. I do remember that I was in the classroom doing some work…something like that…..and she came….and got me out of the classroom……which I thought….with emotional behavioral kids….I wish there was some way that would not cause that much interruption for them because I was really concerned about that. You don’t want too much disruption, and I think if that can be done in a way where….if the person there before the class starts…or there is nice transitioning to it…then it’s a lot easier for the kids to act a little bit normal. When they see a new person there, they either tended to act out more, or sit down and get a little bit quiet. You can’t really see what’s going on.

WHenever you need your university supervisors, she would respond you right away to meet your needs?

Yes, right.

SO THERE IS A GOOD RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR SUPERVISORS?

I think we became friends. A good person, somebody I could talk to, and explained things to….and I think that’s important. I can get the most out of it.

HOW ABOUT YOUR ON-SITE SUPERVISORS? WHAT KINDS OF COMMUNICATION DID YOU HAVE WITH THEM?

It turned out this situation. We had on-site supervisor who was usually the principle, but the principle would turn the responsibility to the classroom teacher where we were assigned to, so we were responsible to report to the teacher we were assigned to……and you know……we were right working there together. They would help filling in something about the students, whatever. The on-site supervisor was more for ……go to…if we had questions or concerns that teachers couldn’t answer….or go to…..to hand in our weekly paperwork….the on-
site supervisor would want it. The evaluation….we did the evaluation, we would do evaluation two times while we were at each site of ourselves, and our on-site supervisor or teachers would evaluate us, and that we turned into the university supervisor. A lot of time the teachers would be my on-site supervisor. She would evaluate, but I would make sure that the person who was really assigned to my on-site supervisor would get that, the principle or whatever.

SO THE CLASSROOM TEACHERS PROVIDED YOU ENOUGH GUIDANCE?

Oh, yes.

YOU MENTIONED BEFORE THAT SOMETIMES YOU WORKED AS AN ASSISTANT IN THE CLASSROOM. COULD YOU DESCRIBE MORE OF THAT SITUATION? DO YOU FEEL THAT YOU ARE MORE LIKE A TEACHER IN THE FIELD SITES OR MORE LIKE A TEACHER ASSISTANT?

I would say that I would feel like it s really good when the teacher would turn over a lesson to me. I had a couple of teacher that would do that, they would go sit at the back of the room, there always had to be someone from the school in the classroom. Sometimes, there were activities that either needed to be split up, or maybe an individual student needed to have an assistant. For instance, I had one student that the teacher would say “ok, you deal with that. You have a lesson to give it to him. He has a doctor’s order to….when he gets tired….he can get up and walk around” Well….I would try to deliver the lesson to him…and just…..mentoring….I would just sit there and work with him. When he gets tired, we go for a walk. We walked around the school or something. That was the only time I didn’t have supervision. But that’s what I meant….by an assistant……she would assign me a student, and I would help them with certain texts.

WHAT KINDS OF FEEDBACK DID YOUR SUPERVISORS GIVE YOU?

I think, for me, I had been working in business so long. She gave me….it wasn’t critical feedback, but I think I was more mature than some people. I have been working for a long time. I think which she gave me was more….I would ask about a certain situation….how she handled as a teacher because I think …..are you saying my university supervisor?

BOTH

My university supervisor….I think it’s very important. She was an experienced teacher. She taught…..and she had the first hand experiences in the classroom and what’s goes on……so I valued her opinions. I would ask her…what if certain something happen…..Sometimes…..the teachers…..I didn’t want my on-site supervisors to……I didn’t want to ask them…because…I didn’t want them to feel
that I was questioning their methods because I was there to observe a lot too. So, I would ask my university supervisor, “why did this happen?” And I might go back to talk to my on-site supervisor.

HOW ABOUT YOUR ON-SITE SUPERVISORS?

I think …in most part….sometimes I feel like they think I was…..it just something to check off….you know… they didn’t have whole lot….I think……for the on-site supervisor…..I think it would pretty beneficial for them if they had training that would say….this is going to be expected…..these are objectives. In some cases, I thought it’s nice. I got to develop my own objectives. I think it would be nice if they had a couple of objectives. Maybe my university supervisor would say, “these were couple of things I wanted you to work on or accomplish.” I think that might be help. That might help a little bit. I think that can be in the category of least valuable aspect. I would have to come up my own objectives, and because I was new to it, I didn’t always know what I needed to be doing. So it would be good if I had somebody to say “ok, here is one objective we want you to accomplish while you are at the site.” That way it could be communicate to my on-site supervisor in the school, so they would know what to assess me again on.

SO DO YOU NEED TO DEVELOP DIFFERENT OBJECTIVES WHEN YOU GO TO DIFFERENT SITES?

Yes.

THEY HAVE TO BE DIFFERENT OR THEY CAN BE THE SAME?

They can be the same. But I think when you go to a different site, different sites have so many different things they can offer, they have the specialties in. For instance, one great behavioral management system, they could be the objectives, they could be the same for all the students in the program who are going through. When they go to the site, that’s something they have to focus on. You know, for instance, that particular one, maybe behavioral management, it is a really good behavioral management……the objective may be… to understand, to implement certain things. But…..me going into it…..while I was going to school……I don’t know all the things I need to look at.

DO YOU NEED TO FINISH YOUR OBJECTIVES AT THE FIRST WEEK IN THE SITES?

Yes. The first week. One of the site I went to….I think it was very good. I was interested in the transitioning…working in the behavior units. My on-site supervisors said “you come up the objectives regarding your interests…..what you want.” I don’t think they should develop all of them because we may have
certain interests. So, I would be able to come up objectives focusing on the vocational.....created vocational modules, delivered to students.....assessed it.....that's what I wanted to do. They may have one they want to do. They may want to do workshops or something.....so it would be good.

WHEN YOU DELIVERED A LESSON, HOW DID YOUR ON-SITE SUPERVISOR GIVE YOU FEEDBACK?

I think....when you first started out on a .......it is like.....you may be looking at them ......"Am I doing this right or not?".....because....one of the things for me.....never working with these students before....and not really knowing how.....adolescents...interacting and anyway.....I was afraid that I was really going to say something or do something that would make situation worse. I always looked to my teachers to ....."is it right?"..... or ....."should I do this different?".....or something like that.....probably a little bit more than later on in the program. So, I looked to them for ......telling me if I am making somebody mad here and they are going to blow up. You know....something like......give me some hints......something to going along a way. I think working with your on-site supervisor, some people had different experiences, I could talk to them and say ......this is what I feel comfortable doing ......I think......anytime...with the teacher can help build that respect from the students for you. It's beneficial. For instance, like I said in the first, when you first going there you are new to the students....going there....have teachers treating you like a professional.....so when you are giving a lesson.....on-site supervisor may have some kind of signals or something......and said let me talk to you without bring it to the students' attention. That would be really good.

DID YOU HAVE ANY SITUATION THAT THEY TREATED YOU NOT LIKE PROFESSIONAL?

I had one situation.....it was an aid....that treated me...like....it was bad...but I tried to be professional about it. The teachers there knew the situation, too, and they knew that it wasn’t me. It was the aid. It was not a good situation, and I knew that I had supports from the other side. Everyone....that was the only time......other than that.....they treated me as respect. It’s hard for them because they are teaching, too, and have someone else there....kind of hard...so...I tried not to be so much burden to them.

DID TEACHERS GIVE YOU ANY KIND OF SUGGESTIONS AFTER YOUR TEACHING?

Yes. Actually....they never really....for me....they never really had any suggestions. I asked them and they didn’t really have any. I supposed that it would be good if they had some kind of way saying .....you might take this into
consideration.....take that into consideration......it would be helpful to have more feedback on that.

**COULD YOU PLEASE GIVE ME ONE EXAMPLE OF EFFECTIVE ON-SITE SUPERVISOR YOU HAVE? AND WHY?**

I tried to think of ones I had. I think, probably the best was......when I was given the assignment, they said they needed to have lesson planned at this certain time and I was give the responsibility to deliver it in anyway, I thought. I wanted it.....as long as it followed the objectives.....and delivered it. While I was delivering it, the teacher stepped away from being the lead in the classroom, and put me in control. While she is still there, but she took the position not to be mainly.....and she supported me with the students. If they started to not follow my instruction, she redirect that.....I was the one that is the teacher.....they needed to look....they needed to follow my directions.

**HOW DID FIELD EXPERIENCES HELP YOU LEARN TO TEACH?**

I was getting to know what the differences the kids could do. I understand there were a lot of different ways to handle situation, and getting to see different situation in different ways. And having this happen while I was going to school, helps me.....then I had the support system there....ask the questions and find the knowledge I was learning.

**COULD YOU PLEASE DESCRIBE THE FIRST TIME YOU SAW THE SEVERE BEHAVIOR IN YOUR FIELD SITES? WHAT’S YOUR REACTION?**

Yes. My reaction for the first time I saw was that I didn’t want to be in the position where I was going to make the situation worse. I just stood there and I observed. I had a kid he was...bipolar...he went off on one end, and things was.....I could sit back and watch.....and the teacher just kept pushing it......pushing it. I knew she should back up, but....the teacher was in control of the classroom. Then the student went off and started to bang in head on the desk. He wouldn’t stop. The teacher asked him to leave the classroom...he wouldn’t......you know......I was just sitting there....and going...oh, my god....so....that was my very first time.

**WHAT WERE YOUR CONCERNS REGARDING FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING? WHAT SUGGESTION DO YOU HAVE THAT MAY BRING MORE BENEFICIAL AND PRACTICAL FIELD EXPERIENCES TO CURRENT PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS?**

I think the suggestion I have for the students is to take it seriously, don’t just go in and punch your time sheets or time clock...sitting in the back of the room...to watch what’s going on and are in puzzle while you are doing it. I think if you try to
apply what you are actually learning in the classroom and ask questions.... the concerns I had.....being in the situation were the students or not.....seeing us.....having an authority. I mean that was a hard thing to struggle with because I have no authority, I am giving the responsibility, but when it comes to the time the students blowing up, I have to realize that I need to step back. Concerns I had is I think that for some people, they think that is too much...to much to hassle. I think having the diversity....going to the different sites and seeing different location.....seeing how different people handle.... the different organization handle.....the situation...you started to see.....where the things worked where they don’t....Some people looked at it as it is a chore.....Oh....I already teach, why I need to have field experiences...well, even know there’s teaching .....while they are doing it.....I think it’s beneficial for you to go to different sites and see.....can’t address that anymore.

ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR THE PROGRAM?

For me.....coming to here the first year and working through it....I think the practical would be....actually to go through the steps....doing assessments with the students....I am talking about the realistic assessments...not the theoretical one. Maybe that can be an objective in the field experiences, but .....for instance....using something that teachers in the school are using for assessments....walk through the process.....doing the assessments for their educational goals, you write their educational goals, you develop the lessons to support this goal, and have it more realistic than theoretical.

ANYTHING ELSE?

No...can’t think of anything.

DO YOU WANT TO ADD ANYTHING ABOUT YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCES?

For me, the field experiences......they were really.....finding locations where I felt comfortable.....because I was new to transitioning.....I was put in the situation that I was the first one there...and I felt like.....sometimes....you fled like you are asking questions that the people there felt challenging.....there was a situation where I am going to the school....a master program in special education.....and I am coming in and ask all of these questions...and the people there were.....you can tell there was some tension there. I think, being in the field experience, you need to understand that you are studying theories, you don’t have practical experiences, and you just need to understand that maybe happen some time.....that you are there to learn...so....that’s it.

(End of Tape)
Individual Interview 2

PLEASE DESCRIBE THE FIELD EXPERIENCES YOU HAD IN YOUR TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM.

Sure. I was…I did several field experiences. Both original placements I was placed in….I was placed in the A program, which was the tremendous program. I felt very privileged and lucky to be here, and also be in the program. But they placed me in the middle school, English and social study room. The half way through the year, I changed form Middle school, English and social study, to middle school math and science. I also did the internship at the B for the short time in the summer.

IS THERE ANY OTHER PLACEMENT YOU HAVE BEEN THROUGH?

No. Just these two placements. These are two I actually did my internship.

HOW LONG DID YOU DO YOUR INTERNSHIP IN EACH PLACE?

I stayed in A for the entire year, and stayed in B about 125 hours. I believe so.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR TRAINING IN THOSE TWO SITES? DO YOU HAVE ADEQUATE TRAINING IN THESE TWO PLACES?

Absolutely. Being placed in the A, you know the principle is huge. She is the director here. She is the pioneer and leader in the field. She is just tremendous giving me trained. Making sure that I received the training I need. Also, with the doctoral students supervising the internship as well as the modules went along with it. Absolutely.

WHAT WERE YOUR DUTIES IN THOSE FIELD SITES? HOW DID THOSE DUTIES HELP YOU TO IMPROVE YOUR QUALIFICATIONS?

Some of the duties included with in the internship that were a little bit different for me since I was also a TA here. My duties included supervising the kids, helping them with the transition, doing lunch duty, also preparing lessons and instructions.

SO YOU HAD THE OPPORTUNITIES TO TEACH?

Yes, I teach. I did.

HOW DID THOSE DUTIES HELP YOU TO IMPROVE YOUR TEACHING?
They also exposed me to the wide varieties of issues that you did experience as a special education teacher, such as IEP, ARD committee, and a lot of things the general education teachers may not have experienced.

THERE ARE MANY SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE CLASSROOM, SUCH AS BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS, COLLABORATION, SOCIAL SKILL TEACHING, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS, COUNSELING SKILLS, IEP PLANNING, ASSESSMENT. PLEASE TELL ME WHAT KINDS OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN YOUR FIELD SITES THAT PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU TO MASTER THESE COMPETENCIES.

The best way to pick up all of these the way I did it was… Number 1...While I was doing the internship, I was also taking the classes. A lot of these classes were included such as behavioral management skills, collaboration, social skills. A lot of these classes I was actually had to attend while I was completing my internship. So I would do was I would study the material, be instructed on the material. If I had any questions, I could seek answers from the instructors. Then I had benefits, as an intern, working with highly qualified people I was working with. They would model these procedures and skills. So I was exposed to different avenues. I was instructed, I was studying, and they modeled for me.

SO YOU MEANT THAT YOU HAVE PLENTY OPPORTUNITIES TO DO A LOT OF ACTIVITIES, SUCH AS SOCIAL SKILL TRAINING, VOCATIONAL TRAINING...ETC IN YOUR FIELD SITES?

Correct.

COULD YOU GIVE ME SOME EXAMPLES OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES YOU ENJOY MOST FROM YOUR FIELD TRAINING?

In fact, in some classes, we have to actually come up social skill lessons. I presented to the rest of the class. You get exposed to it by directly instructing and you get to complete it, model it, and go ahead to give it to your college classmates. Then you turn around to give it to your kids. That’s really helps.

COULD YOU DESCRIBE THE MOST VALUABLE ASPECTS OF YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING THAT YOU CAN APPLY TO YOUR PRESENT WORK? WHY?

That’s a tough question. The information and the research I would say were the most valuable aspects to me because I still use all the information and all the research I did for the classes and internship. I still referred back to some of my
notes, still referred back to some of things I wrote down. I guess the research would be the best.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE LESS VALUABLE ASPECTS OF YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING? WHY?

The least valuable…sometimes with the some of the internship stuff in some of the classrooms. They were just over bounded, they were just busy works. I think that sometimes frustrated me. Sometimes I felt overwhelmed, crowded. So I think the busy work itself is the most difficult part, and I am not really happy with.

ANYTHING ELSE?

No.

WHAT’S YOUR RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR ON-SITE SUPERVISORS AND UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS?

Great communication. The university supervisors were available to you, you know, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. I think I didn’t have one that didn’t have cell phone number or contact number, or email, you know, the office number. It’s not just the supervisors there, the while staff in the office were always available to you. They also made you feel welcome. They didn’t make you feel that your questions were petty. That was really really nice.

WHEN YOU NEED SUPPORT FROM YOUR UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS, WOULD THEY PROVIDE THEIR SUPPORT RIGHT AWAY?

Yes. If it is very important, I would try to get in touch with that at that day. If it was something minor, I would make appointment with them. They are always accessible.

COULD YOU PLEASE TELL ME HOW OFTEN YOU MEET WITH EACH OTHER?

Some are oftener than others. Usually, probably, once or twice a week. Something around there. Oh, some are once a week. We had meeting once a week.

WOULD THEY COME TO OBSERVE YOU IN THE FIELD SITES?

Yes. Absolutely. They actually came to classroom to observe me teaching in the classroom, and working and interacting with the kids.
HOW ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH ON-SITE SUPERVISORS?

Great. Absolutely fabulously in two placements. They were very accommodating, warm, and negotiating.

WHAT KINDS OF COMMUNICATION DO YOU HAVE WITH THEM?

It was daily communication. It was also written evaluation that the classroom teachers provided. You know, I got daily feedback.

HOW OFTEN DID YOU GET FEEDBACK FROM PRACTICING TEACHING?

Sometimes you got feedback after the lessons. Sometimes, if they see something that needed to be addressed, they would interferer during the lessons to help you out.

WHAT KINDS OF FEEDBACK DID YOU GET FROM YOUR ON-SITE SUPERVISORS?

It was very encouraging, not critical at all. It was always very encouraging feedback.

HOW DID FIELD EXPERIENCES HELP YOU LEARN TO TEACH?

The field experiences were absolutely wonderful because…No. 1, they threw you into the middle of it. You are going to sink or you are going to swim. If you go to field placement, you start interacting with the kids. You will get the first hand experiences that you are going to deal with. During that time, you can decide “yes, this is something I want to do” or “no, I don’t want to be around these kids.” In this field, you really need to know that very quickly. The field placements were just fantastic. I can’t go on about it enough.

COULD YOU PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR BACKGROUND BEFORE ENTERING INTO THE PROGRAM?

I have a bachelor degree in xxxxxxx. I was a xxxx for a half of years.

WHAT MADE YOU CHANGE YOUR CAREER?

I was working in as a youth counselor. It was a residential facility for children with EBD or other disabilities. I found out this program through a friend, and decided to come.
WHAT WERE YOUR CONCERNS REGARDING FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING? WHAT SUGGESTION DO YOU HAVE THAT MAY BRING MORE BENEFICIAL AND PRACTICAL FIELD EXPERIENCES TO CURRENT PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS?

Lesson plans. Please make them do lesson plans.

DO YOU MEAN THE INTERNS?

For the interns. Incorporate it somewhere, somehow into the system. So it is not a choice. It is a must. Make them do that. It’s worth. Not just for one week, maybe a month worth lessons plans. Make them develop lesson plans based on the grades they are going to be teaching. You know, depending on the placement. For example, I got two 6th graders, a 5th grader, and one 1st grader. The 1st grader is on 1st grader level, he is one 1st grader text. The 5th grader is on 1st grader level. One of the 6th grader is on 3rd grade level, one is one 2nd grade level. Do the lesson plans, figure how to teach, figure out the text, incorporate it, put it in there.

WHO SHOULD HELP INTERNS TO DO THAT?

Both university supervisors and on-site supervisors. I know there were modules with internships. None of the modules are addressing this. That is a key element of teaching. Through the training from UNT, I didn't recall anyone that helped me to develop those.

ANY OTHER CONCERNS YOU WOULD LIKE TO TALK ABOUT?

No, actually. It was a really good program.

PLEASE GIVE ME YOUR LAST COMMENTS ABOUT FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING?

I often referred back to everything that was happened. I can’t recall anything in specific, but the entire experience is invaluable.

SOME PROGRAMS MAY ONLY PROVIDE INTERNSHIPS AT THE LAST SEMESTER, BUT THE TRAINING PROGRAM YOU WENT THROUGH INCORPORATING BOTH FIELD EXPERIENCES AND CAMPUS COURSEWORK. WHICH WAY DO YOU BELIEVE IS MORE HELPFUL?

I think the program that incorporate both field experiences and campus coursework is much better. Like I said, I was presented to the knowledge, I was instructed on it, I studied it, I went with the classes. I get to utilize every bit of it
that I learned. It is very encouraging to be exposed to all of the knowledge. There is a well resource out there, and then be able to turn around and apply it the next day. You know, it’s great.

(End of Tape)
Individual Interview 3

PLEASE DESCRIBE THE FIELD EXPERIENCES YOU HAD IN YOUR TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM.

I have been 1, 2, 3…. five different placements. My experiences were good. Good experiences. There are some better than others. Hm…. I got good experiences. Kids can be so different; even they have same code of EBD. They are so different. I went to my first one, it was wild. I’ve never seen kids acting like the way they did. I went to my next one. It was more structured. If they acted that way, they would be taken out the classroom to the escalation area. They were different, different placements.

COULD YOU DESCRIBE MORE ABOUT THE PROGRAM?

Yes. Hm… The first placement I went was self-contained emotional behavioral. A lot of kids come in. They have been a lot of good support, top setting; they have been hospital psychic units. The things came out from their mouth…. I just… wow… I never… and then I went to another place, it was more structured where you set everything in a digital world. If you said something inappropriate, you were taken out to what we called level 1 room, so you were not allowed to talk at all. First place…. They were different. Then, the third placement I went to, I would said it was my favorite place. It was a wild, too. If there were any words inappropriate, they would be taken out, they called level one teachers, they would come get them. The placement I was in, the teacher was wonderful. There were about 8 little elementary boys, the good teachers and a good assistant. The teacher is very firm, and also very loving. It was very structured and followed the schedule, so that’s a good experience for me to see, because the first place I went was wild, all over the place. Then, my next to last placement, it was very structured and good. It was just some of the adults. I didn’t agree with their tactics. It’s a lot of differences, a lot of levels.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR TRAINING IN THOSE SITES? DO YOU HAVE ADEQUATE TRAINING?

I believe it’s very adequate. It is intensive, especially the driving, drove all over the place. Some day… at one point, I drove one hour and half. That’s intensive.

WHAT KINDS OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES THEY PROVIDED TO YOU? ARE THOSE TRAINING HELPFUL?

The activities they provide….. at one place I went, she had younger boys, she knew….how to get them…. Not get them… she knew their interests were and what they were doing, she would separate work around them. One time, we had
dinosaur, not dinosaur, but dragon; there are many circles on it. If they did so many worksheets on math, they got colored in. There are so many colors, I can’t remember how many. Kids would have free time during math time. They could draw, chose something to do. I think it was very effective. These were good boys; they got so many colors in. I like some of those kids in the unit sets. I feel it probably in the right places if they weren’t in the hospital. Some are very severe. You know, there is not much you can do since you were an intern. You know, it’s hard; it’s much for the parents.

CAN I KNOW YOUR EDUCATION BACKGROUND BEFORE YOU ENTERING INTO THE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM?

Sure. I worked in a corporate field for a long time. I got my bachelor at my 24 from UNT. I went to the corporate world and hate it. I am not a corporate lady. Also, I worked as a nanny. I did that a couple times. I really like the children. So I started going back to UNT at night working on getting a certified. Then, I transferred to TWU. I thought I would get certified and went to teach. Only found out that I had another test I needed to take. I didn’t get certification like I planned. Plus I lost my job. All that time, I already thought of going back to graduate school. I found out about this preparation program. Actually, there was a flyer put on my mailbox at my school, but I was just going to take a couple of classes. You know, taking a couple of classes and maybe go to the graduate school later. I don’t know what happened. It took me the whole summer to decide whether to go full-time. I met with the professor who is in charge of the program. Make the long story short. I ended up going to full time and finished with a certification. Is this what you want to know?

YES, I JUST WANTED TO KNOW WHETHER OR NOT YOU HAD EXPERIENCES BEFORE ENTERING INTO TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS.

I have a year and half. I worked with kids in my early 20s in a public school settings.
My year and half really helped. I had to do a lot of restraining. I didn’t have to do restraining when I was an intern because we were not allowed. But those past experiences helped when I first entered into the internship site.

WHAT’S YOUR CURRENT TEACHING PLACEMENTS? MORE RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT OR LESS RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT?

Actually, I am a resource teacher in T. I traveled at two schools. I work with kids from 1st grade through 6th grade. Some of them can be ED. I have to pull them out for so many minutes and work with them in language arts, reading, writing…etc.
SO YOU FOCUS ON ACADEMICS?

Yes, I focus on academics.

WHAT WERE YOUR DUTIES IN THOSE FIELD SITES? HOW DID THOSE DUTIES HELP YOU TO IMPROVE YOUR QUALIFICATIONS?

Everything. In fact, do you know the principle at B, at one point, she made me carry a walkie-talkie myself. My duty was to teach, my duty was to work as an aid. My duties were different at different sites. At C, I actually got to teach reading everyday. I did a novel series with the boys. It was amazed that I could did it with these kids, but we got through it. Some of my duties were clear, I needed to work as a teacher, or the aids. Either way, it didn’t bother me. I knew the teacher and aid need to work together because aid is the teacher as well.

HOW DID THOSE DUTIES HELP YOU?

They help me especially in my organization planning, lessons. Also, it tries to help me when the second things came easy. When I started teaching….I hope I can put words to my intensive field experiences. It’s worth it. It helped me come in….not….gave me confidence. I work with half ED kids and half resource kids. Their behaviors can still be severe, but not as bad as it had been.

IF YOU HAVE A JOB IN MORE RSTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT, WOULD YOU BE MORE CONFIDENT TO DO THAT JOB BASED ON THE TRAINING YOU HAVE?

I think…no…at beginning, I will be nervous. Maybe it’s just me. After a while, I will be more confident. I may have point system or level system implement, but it will be a long road because you will have actually get the support from administrators and other teachers. I had a friend who is teaching in a behavior classroom, and I think they don’t have any point/level system right now, but they really need it.

DO YOU THINK THE TRAINING YOU HAD WAS SUITABLE FOR MORE RSTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT OR LESS RSTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT?

I think both. I haven’t tried most restrictive environment right now. My kids were in less restrictive environment. Of course, I think the training help me there. I also believe it will help me I the most restrictive environment.

THERE ARE MANY SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE CLASSROOM, SUCH AS BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS, COLLABORATION, SOCIAL SKILL TEACHING,
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS, COUNSELING SKILLS, IEP PLANNING, ASSESSMENT. PLEASE TELL ME WHAT KINDS OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN YOUR FIELD SITES THAT PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU TO MASTER THESE COMPETENCIES.

The behavior management skills were point system. If the kids in a certain level, they get to supervised their own to get certain points. At the A, that was my responsibility. Every 15 minutes I marked their sheets, or every 10 minutes. I had a timer, and that I had to do. I believed that worked. At the C, I was able to say that “this is needed to marked” or “this is inappropriate”. It is hard, because I just loved them. It would kill them if I had to get on to it. As for the collaboration, I collaborated with the teacher. At D, it’s hard, the teacher and the aid I was in were wonderful, but the outside system would try to come in and take over if the kid’s behavior is badly. It’s kind of stepping over the teacher. She was very young and new, and the aid was there for a while. That was difficult. I had hard time seeing that, just because I am older. As for the social skill teaching, at the xxx, that was one of my responsibilities as well. At the B, I did couple of social skill training.

DID YOU PLAN THE LESSON OR USE THEIR CURRICULUM?

I used their curriculum, and I planned the lesson as well. I did it all. I can’t remember the curriculum. Let’s see…. At the A, they used the skill streaming. As for vocational education, I wasn’t involved at all. I didn’t get training at that.

HOW ABOUT MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS? DID YOU HAVE ANY CHANCE TO INTERACT WITH STUDENTS WITH DIFFERENT CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS?

At the D, I had one kid. He was Mexican or Hispanic. I got to interact with him. I didn’t know he was involved in gangs or not, but I knew that he had to do community service. I don’t know what charge it was. I was able to interact with him. I had two at E, I just loved. One of them…when I first met, he was very angry. He lived at the foster home. Then he went softening, he was kind of sweet. And one of them was put in level one. He loved to read. When we did novel series, he was very into it. But my sites….mainly whites. I was surprised. As far as middle eastern, I don’t think we had many. There was one, I think his parents were from India, but I didn’t interact with him.

Counseling skills…..hm…. I didn’t really spent many time in counseling.

DO YOU HAVE CHANCES TO PROCESS WITH KIDS AFTER THEIR BEHAVIOR?
I didn’t. That’s the one area I wish I had. I didn’t get it. I think that may be something when they bring new students to the program. I had two classes, and I did a lot of IEP planning in class. As for the assessment, not as much as I would like it.

HOW ABOUT FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT?

Oh, yes. I did. I did it at xxx. I took the class under xxx. I chose the xxx to do FBA. It was very intensive.

SO, IT’S NOT FROM YOUR FIELD SITE TRAINING BUT FROM YOUR COURSEWORK, RIGHT?

Oh…I did it in my field sites, but for my coursework. They never require me, as a teacher, to do it, which I liked to. I need to practice. Oh… I still have my notebook that I did it.

WHEN YOU DID FBA IN YOUR FIELD SITE, YOU DID IT ALL BY YOURSELF OR SOMEONE HELP YOU, SUCH AS YOUR ON-SITE SUPERVISORS?

I did it all by myself.

OK.

There was another intern over there. We discussed it. But, Yeah, I did it all by myself. It was scary, but I got an A on it. So I guess I did it right.

WERE THERE ANY OTHER TRAINING ACTIVITIES THEY PROVIDED TO YOU IN YOUR FIELD SITES?

Let’s see. D, I just loved D. There wasn’t really specific training I got. I think I was really bounded with them. I really bounded with the teacher and the aid, and all the boys. The principle put me in all the situations. She was a wonderful mentor. She taught me a lot in the site, I really thought a lot. She asked me to carry the walkie talkie. I had some training, like CPR. She knew that, so she kind of working flexible with me. Because I am certified in CPR. She was more relaxed with me. I don’t know should I use the word" relax". She didn’t put me in bad situation. She will let me check the kids across the hall, or bathroom. She seemed to trust me, which I liked. I respect her. She seemed to respect me.

WHEN YOU WERE IN XXX, YOU HAD TO MARK STUDENTS’ BEHAVIOR EVERY 10 OR 15 MINUTES. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOU LEARNED A LOT FROM THEIR BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM OR THAT DUTY
OCCUPY TOO MUCH OF YOUR TIME SO YOU CAN’T LEARN SOMETHING ELSE?

I think it is a tough question. It did occupy too much of my attention. Sometimes I would forget, and then marked it. At the minutes I might forgot. That was the part of following through because I might be in lesson planning, dealing with a lot of kids. Sometimes I worked with kids one-on-one. It took away my attention from my kids or from what I was doing.

HOW ABOUT CHANCES TO DO TEACHING?

Yes, I taught social skills.

SO, YOU STILL GOT MANY CHANCES.

Yes, I did get to do that, and I did some one-on-one math with one of the boys. We did that when the days I was there. We would get together one-on-one.

WHEN THE KIDS WHEN OFF, DID YOU HAVE ANY CHANCES TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT?

No. I was the intern over there. In xxx, I would just get out of the situation. Let’s what she wanted, and at any place I would. I had one student in xxx. He got mad, threw aid with a clipboard.

COULD YOU DESCRIBE THE MOST VALUABLE ASPECTS OF YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING THAT YOU CAN APPLY TO YOUR PRESENT WORK? WHY?

I learned a lot in C. I got to see Ms. Xxxx how she was firm with kids. At the same time, she loved those kids very much. It was very effective, and the kids respect her. She did follow through well with discipline. I think about her as a mentor when I am in difficult situation with my kids. I worked in a very low social-economic environment. Both schools I work are low social economic. So..hm…the behavior my kids have because of their homeless, I tried….When I worked in xxx, Ms. Xxxx helps me. Be more empathetic with students. Ms. Xxx helped me different programs or different the way she used to teach or different teaching techniques. I used those and those helps me through what I am doing now.

HOW ABOUT THE BEHAVIOR?

I did some behavior system with my kids. I contribute it too all of my placements. I have a behavior plan now. I do colors. This is what I do. The first school I go to, it is for little ones. I do colors. Green is good; yellow is warning, and the red is
“you are in trouble.” If they are in red, they can participate…..I did….I gave them 10 minutes free time at the end of the class. I got that as a reinforcement time. I used that last 10 minutes. If they are on red, they have to sit on the desk and do nothing while the others are playing. So, I do that. In my afternoon school, I got older boys. I have three girls. Most of them are boys. I do the rest of the school does, we follow the behavior plan because they are able to do that. We have numbers; the behavior is about the numbers. EX, number 11 is the past behavior. I did that with them. I think that’s the school-wide behavior plan. They are able to follow it.

BUT YOU CREATE YOUR OWN BEHAVIOR PLAN IN YOUR MORNING CLASS.

Yes, I create it. Right.

HOW DOES THAT WORK WHEN YOU HAVE TO WORK IN TWO DIFFERENT SCHOOLS? YOU HAVE YOUR OWN CLASSROOMS IN TWO DIFFERENT SCHOOLS?

Yes, I have my own classrooms in both places. It works well than I expected. I think the hard part is the ages of the kids. I have all ages. I have 1st through 3rd in the morning. I also have 4th and 6th graders come in the morning because their reading levels are the same as my little ones. Then in the afternoon, I have 4th through 6th. I have reading programs so they can do it independently, like a reading lab. It is hard, but it’s worthy. Like I was out one day last week, next day, they said Ms.xxxx, and they hugged me. I guess I wasn’t so mean after all. The kids said “we didn’t like that sub.”

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE LESS VALUABLE ASPECTS OF YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING? WHY?

In the D program, I think it was difficult for me. I thought some of the kids…..I thought they treated them unfairly about the system. They have been there for years. It’s like they were in the middle of transition in the administrator. They, sort of, jump from high schools. It’s kind if taking over. I had hard time with that. And the driving. The long drive is very hard. I put it through, but it is very hard.

ANYTHING ELSE?

Hm…. I think the behavior part is hard. Behavior management is hard. I think even the teacher who works there. It really wears you down emotionally. I think what helps is laughter. It’s silly, but it helps.
WHAT’S YOUR RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR ON-SITE SUPERVISORS AND UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS?

Be honest. My first university supervisor was wonderful. The principle of A program was my first on-site supervisor. I loved her. She would always point to me my weakness as an intern. My university supervisor was wonderful. She would come up there. She came in, she evaluated me. My second one I never saw her. In B, I never saw here. My university supervisor. I saw her in the hallway once. I never got evaluated. Nothing. I didn’t know what to do. There was another intern next door to me. I saw them in the hallway talking. I gave her my evaluation form. I though she was going to come in and watch me teach, but she never came in there. I asked the intern. The intern apparently got to know her. She told me “oh... she didn’t like to come in and evaluate. She didn’t like to interfere or something.” Who evaluate me in my next placement....? Oh, we had a great relationship. All my on-site supervisor, we didn’t have problems. They were wonderful. University supervisor I had at D, she was also my supervisor at E. She was wonderful. She evaluated me. She came in for visiting occasionally to see how I was doing. And the summer one I had was wonderful as well. She actually worked one week there as a sub.

ONLY YOUR SECOND UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR WAS NOT SUPPORTIVE?

Yes. Actually, I talked to some of my friends in the program. I didn’t know if I needed to say something or not. I didn’t know what to do. I was afraid. I was blessed enough to have teachers to support me there on the sites. She never came into the classroom. She never emailed me, but she emailed another intern. I found out things from her. It was very weird.

ALL OF YOUR OTHER UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS WERE SUPPORTIVE?

Yes. I was really stressed out in the summer when I did my last internship. Because I took 12 hours, and tried to find a job. I also need to go to internship. I did 12 hours plus internship. The internship wasn’t counting toward my hours. I would call her did a friendly talking. She was always said “it’s ok. You are going to get through it.” She worked with me. She also helped me to get the job. I credited her for the job I have now. She used to work there. They knew her. She worked with all of us.

HOW ABOUT YOUR ON-SITE SUPERVISORS? YOU SAID THAT THEY WERE ALL GOOD. PLEASE GIVE ME MORE SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION.

XXX is wonderful. Ms. Xxx is awesome. My supervisor in D, she is good. She let me do what I want to do. But when she did my evaluation, she gave me very quickly. She gave me all 5s. I am glad that she gave me 5s, but I thought there should have some areas of improvement.
YOU WANT MORE IN-DEPTH INFORMATION?

Yes, I want more in-depth information, but she did it very quick. At B, the teacher I worked with was wonderful. This summer, I actually rotated in different classroom, and my supervisors were all good.

DID YOU HAVE ANY DAILY INTERACTION WITH YOUR ON-SITE SUPERVISORS?

Yes.

HOW ABOUT THE FEEDBACK THEY PROVIDED TO YOU? VERY HELPFUL?

Yes. Yes. Actually C is very weird. There was a guy, he would come in. He was trying to get the certification. He would come in for so many hours to get it. Ours were doing the reading. We did reading everyday. Then, he was doing level 1. They would go to him. All of sudden, he was going to teach reading. And I asked the teacher, I said “can I still teach reading?” She had been willing to help me. She said “oh, I don’t know. Let’s check on that.” I don’t know if she checks or not, because he just came in and did it. I just sat there. And that bothers me. I had hard time with that.

PLEASE GIVE ME SOME EXAMPLES OF WHAT KINDS OF FEEDBACK THE ON-SITE SUPERVISORS GAVE YOU.

It was very encouraging. Ms.xxxx, I had the notes you wrote on. She was a very effective teacher. I can’t remember all the words she said. Even the lady in the xxx. The principle was very complimentary me. It really helped my confidence. I really felt that I was doing well. It was very complimentary; I used it as one of my reference when I looked for the jobs. Sometimes in the program, I would get 3 or 4 at the beginning because I was learning. Then I will get 5 at the end.

HOW DID FIELD EXPERIENCE HELP YOU LEARN TO TEACH?

I think it helps me structure. You know, timer is a wonderful thing. It helped me the behavioral management, especially in the classroom. It helped. It helped me with the planning, academics. That’s why I liked so much about the field sites. They focus on the academics. They didn’t give them worksheets all the time. It’s hard to teach kids with ED.

ANYTHING ELSE?

No...
WHAT WERE YOUR CONCERNS REGARDING FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING? WHAT SUGGESTION DO YOU HAVE THAT MAY BRING MORE BENEFICIAL AND PRACTICAL FIELD EXPERIENCES TO CURRENT PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS?

I think more communication between the administrators and the program. For example, in the E, I think there wasn’t so much communication. I think the driving, but you can’t help it. We were so spread out so much. One of my concerns was when I was giving duties as an aid. I wasn’t able to teach when I was in E. She gave me the aid’s schedule. It was hard because I was there to learn to teach. But I was doing what the paraprofessional was doing. I guess, maybe more explanation to the on-site people what is expected of the teachers. I think maybe the program already gave the adequate explanation, but they didn’t read it. I really don’t have a lot to say about the concerns.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY COMMUNICATION?

It was in B. The aid came into the classroom and tried to take over in a subtle way. Hm… and there was a switch administration going on. We didn’t have an administrator. I just think maybe it was not a good time to be there. I don’t know how to describe it. Do you know what I mean?

SO YOU WANT THEM TO HAVE MORE UNDERSTANDING ABOUT FIELD SITE TRAINING AND PROVIDE MORE ADEQUATE TRAINING FOR INTERNS?

Yes, more adequate trainings, and more responsibilities because a lot of time I just sat there and it drove me crazy.

ANYTHING ELSE?

No.

ANY RECOMMENDATIONS OR SUGGESTIONS YOU HAVE FOR THE PROGRAM?

A lot of placement we went were self-contained classrooms or ED units. I have this suggestion. Maybe the program is already doing it. I don’t know. It’s just for me because I went to mainly self-contained sites. Maybe give interns more regular settings, such as public schools. I know some resource rooms in public school do not have level system. All placements I went had the point or level system, but not all schools have this system. I think it will be good for interns to experience the difference.

ANYTHING ELSE?
No.

PLEASE GIVE ME YOUR LAST COMMENT ABOUT YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING. ANYTHING.

It was very tough when I did it. But it’s worthy to get those experiences. I mean that you can do all the coursework, but you won't have experience on it. I think this program is good. I think it should be intensive. That's it.

(End of Tape)
Individual Interview 4

PLEASE DESCRIBE THE FIELD EXPERIENCES YOU HAD IN YOUR TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM.

Actually, I had several experiences. We usually spent 6 or 7 weeks at each. I did xxx summer programs. I did behavior unit at the co-op. I did a couple of elementary schools, the transition unites, kinds of like I am doing here. I went to xxx. I did.....it’s very good preparation. You got a lot of different kinds of programs, different strengths and help. That’s what I really found while working with different people, the strength.

HOW MANY PLACEMENTS DO YOU BELIEVE THAT MEET YOUR NEEDS AND HELP YOU IN YOUR PRESENT POSITION? WHY?

Mainly because they put you right with the students that you are going to work with, with experienced staff members to help guide you, so you got to interact with these students, to work with students, and observe them. I think being able to observe the interaction is the most helpful to me because, as being a teacher, you have a lot of factors to compare, to focus on. So you can become a little more adept. I actually saw the behavior and recognized the motivation, what maintained the behavior, what intrigued the behavior, that's a little bit automatic. That makes a lot easier. And…it’s just the variety of the program.

COULD YOU GIVE ME SOME EXAMPLES OF SOME SPECIFIC FIELD SITES THAT PROVIDED TRAINING YOU BELIEVE REALLY HELPFUL FOR YOU TO DO YOUR CURRENT JOB?

No really. I think each single of one is very valuable because you got a little bit different aspects at each one. You got to see different styles while working with them, and different point system and level system. You really got well around it. The only thing that I felt I need is I would like to spend more weeks in each place because by the time you really integrated into the program, or you got to work with students more, you got to move. Then you have to build relationship with the students again, the teachers. That's the only think I would like, but it’s difficult to do.

PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR DUTIES IN THOSE FIELD SITES?

Well, duties were to work with students behaviorally, to implement their IEP, to study their IEP, which was very helpful to see many different ways to do the paperwork. I had to plan, teaching plans, instructions, you know. I got to help create IEP, do functional behavioral assessment. I had to implement and learn at each site. They had different point systems or level systems, or behavioral
systems. I had to learn each one, and implement each one. It usually took about a couple of weeks. Some of them were easier to pick it up and did it in a couple of weeks, the others were more complicated.

SO YOUR FIELD SITES GAVE YOU MORE RESPONSIBILITIES OTHER THAN JUST OBSERVATION?

Yes, exactly. Usually at the first week you had to observe, and assisted the teacher to get prepare. But after that, you just kind of dialed right in. I think that’s one thing the teachers get appreciated that you were a little but more forward about that. Ask them what they would like you to do. Just go ahead interact with the kids instead of just sitting there and observing all the time. I felt I learned more through the interaction. I learned a lot from observation also. I think it’s a good balance.

THERE ARE MANY SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE CLASSROOM, SUCH AS BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS, COLLABORATION, SOCIAL SKILL TEACHING, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS, COUNSELING SKILLS, IEP PLANNING, ASSESSMENT. PLEASE TELL ME WHAT KINDS OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN YOUR FIELD SITES THAT PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU TO MASTER THESE COMPETENCIES.

Well, behavioral management skills in every site. You know, they really allow us to practice a lot. They did allow us to interact with the students and to learn their behavioral system.

PLEASE GIVE ME MORE SPECIFIC DESCRIPTION IN THIS AREA.

Ok. Well, I just started at the most complicated one in the A. It’s a very effective program. It took a lot of detail; I had a packet to read when I got there. I needed to know the behavior management system because of the levels. There were many requirements for each level; the consequences were always very clear cut. So I really need to know that very well because the students all knew it very well. They would be more willing to correct me, you know, once I got started. You marked every 15 minutes on their point sheets. You had to be able to do the warnings, and take 5s once their behaviors started to be escalated.

YOU HAVE FULL RESPONSIBILITY TO IMPLEMENT IT?

Yes, I did, and they encouraged that, those teachers. First, they would just watch and observe. They would explain it to…the exactly what. They had individually goals, they had general goals to start working throughout the class period or time period. Then, they would have individual goals they were meeting. So, they
really did explain that you have to fill out the point sheets to go home every single
day, to send to parents. And you had to calculate the percentage for the points.
That took me a week or two to learn all of that. But as I would learn the portion of
that, they would start letting me implement that portion and build on it.

HOW ABOUT FUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT? DID THE
CLASSROOM TEACHERS HELP YOU TO DO IT?

Yes. The first one, I was just kind of following along what she was doing. Then,
the next site, I actually did it.

JUST BY YOURSELF?

Yes. You know, which is good, she would check it over. Those kinds of stuff.

IS THERE ANY OTHER TRAINING ACTIVITIES THAT HELP YOU TO
PRACTICE OTHER SKILLS, SUCH AS SOCIAL SKILLS OR OTHERS?

Yes. A lot of sites, they actually taught social skills at the class for the whole
entire period, which I preferred. It’s a lot harder to fit right in, to make it as
specific and directed as they needed when you have to do it along with your
teaching. I think it’s valuable because they got to use it, but I think they needed
the direct time and then, incorporated it, and reinforcing it throughout the day with
the teaching. I prefer that...myself on the social skills. And I had to teach a social
skill class.

DO YOU HAVE TO PLAN YOUR OWN LESSONS?

Yes, I have to plan my own lesson.

HOW ABOUT VOCATIONAL EDUCATION?

I didn’t get a lot about that other than my class work. I think that prepare me very
well to understand what the purpose and all that kind of stuff. At the sites, I didn’t
get a lot of that because the most of sites I had been were elementary school.
They didn’t focus a lot on vocational.

HOW ABOUT MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS? HOW DID YOUR FIELD
EXPERIENCE PREPARE YOU TO TEACH STUDENTS FROM OTHER
CULTURES?

I think my class work did more than field experience just because…I wasn’t…
There were several field sites I did, I had some exposure to it. But not every field
site was multicultural. A lot seems to be... races and cultures to be similar, background more so.

YOU THINK THE UNIVERSITY COURSEWORK WAS MORE HELPFUL THAN THE FIELD EXPERIENCES?

Yes, I did.

IF YOU HAVE MORE EXPERIENCES TO EXPOSE TO IT, DO YOU BELIEVE YOU WOULD BE MORE CONFIDENT IN TEACHING STUDENTS FROM OTHER CULTURES?

Yes, that would help. Definitely.

HOW ABOUT OTHER SKILLS?

Counseling skills, I think that can be beef up a little bit. I think I am lacking the counseling skills.

HOW ABOUT YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE IN COUNSELING SKILLS?

Somewhat, I don’t know if I would call it counseling. We would process the behavior.

YES, SOMETHING LIKE THOSE, SUCH AS TALKING TO KIDS ABOUT THEIR FEELING AND BEHAVIORS.

Yes.

SO YOU HAVE EXPERIENCES ABOUT THAT?

Yes. I don’t know if I have counseling expertise. But as far as processing their behaviors.....

I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU HAVD ONLY BEEN ONE PLACEMENT FOR 6 OR 7 WEEKS. BEFORE PROCESSING WITH THE KIDS, MAYBE YOU NEED TO BE FAMILIAR WITH THE KIDS, OR HAVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE KIDS. HOW EARLY DID YOU START PROCESSING WITH THE KIDS IN EACH PLACEMENT?

That’s a difficult part. That’s what I am talking about if we could be there a little bit longer. Because the first couple weeks, sometimes these kids were very resistant. It’s hard to develop relationship. They have to develop the relationship first.
HOW LONG WOULD IT TAKE BEFORE YOU STARTED PROCESSING WITH KIDS?

You know, I would politely listen after a week or two. I think, after about four weeks, they took you more seriously. You know what I meant?

YES, AND YOU ARE ABOUT TO LEAVE.

Yes. I think we are making progress, and it’s time to leave.

YOU MENTIONED THAT YOU HAD CHANCES TO IMPLEMENT IEP, WRITE IEP?

Yes, that was frequently. We did it all the time.

DID YOU GET ANY CHANCES TO ATTEND ANY KINDS OF TRAINING PROVIDED FROM SCHOOLS OR DISTRICTS?

No. I learned things from the course work. You know, once I got to this campus, I discovered that I was the only one who knew how to do functional behavioral assessment. I was the only one that actually knew how to do one. I think that surprised me, just the preparation of the program. They asked me how to do the paperwork while I was the new one.

COULD YOU DESCRIBE THE MOST VALUABLE ASPECTS OF YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING THAT YOU CAN APPLY TO YOUR PRESENT WORK? WHY?

I think...being able to do the functional behavior assessment, to really understand the behavior, and had time to being out to be able to see that in daily basis in the field experiences. To see other people working with the students, and to really learned to see what they are doing was really good. And also to see their mistakes. Actually, I think you can be adequate in my opinion, but you can be adequately trained to do this with the field experience. I think that was the most valuable part of the program. We had opportunities to learn about documentation, the assessment of behaviors actually, the ABC observation. I think that’s, too. I applied it here, too. I discovered it, too, that I pull out some of the observation I had done and documentation I kept on, A lot of staff here said that I never saw something like that. Again, it’s valuable to evaluate the behavior and what maintained it, and how you could change it. It really is. And we got to do that in the field experience. And being able...really...the teachers were so good in involving it, and allowing us to...to...I meant they were responsible. They maintained a lot of responsibilities, but they allowed us to come in, and participate, trust us enough, you know, to be able to do the IEP, and the
functional behavioral assessment. You know, to work with children one-on-one, that's just invaluable. And at any time, if you have troubles, they would step right in, and guide you through it.

IS THIS YOUR FIRST JOB AFTER GRADUATION?

Yes.

YOU MENTIONED THAT WHEN YOU FIRST CAME HERE, THE STAFF DIDN'T KNOW A LOT, SUCH AS FBA. SO YOU BELIEVE THE TRAINING YOU RECEIVED FROM YOUR PREPARATION PROGRAM PREPARED YOU WELL FOR YOUR CURRENT POSITION?

Yes. I think it's probably when I first started how natural it was. But at the time I was afraid, I was on my own, I didn't have the teacher to supervise me. I was the one who was responsible here. I was afraid I wouldn't know what to do. It surprised me how natural it came after being exposed to that program in the field experiences. I think that's why. I think it takes time to develop those reactions, and to be calm, not to taking it personally, being able to work with the students, to process with them. Just have that continue to expose over the time. I think that what prepared me.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE LESS VALUABLE ASPECTS OF YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING? WHY?

I already mentioned that if we can spend a little bit more time at each site. I know that's difficult. Others may not be agreeing with me. I actually think it would be nice; because I understand a lot of people going through this program actually had have teacher certification before. I didn’t. I came from different background. So for me personally, I think it would be good to me actually, maybe require more lesson plans, and plan more lessons, and maybe a week that I actually have to be a teacher. Do you understand what I mean?

BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WHILE CLASS?

Yes, running the entire whole classroom. And the other think I would actually love was to be at the school the first day of the school because the semester usually starts a little bit later, to actually see how the teacher gets the classroom running at the beginning of the school. That would be valuable to me. To see how they set up those routines, teach the routines at the beginning. You know, you read about that you need to teach this, you need to do that. That makes sense, but how you do that. I would love to see that.

ANYTHING ELSE?
None that I can think of.

WHAT'S YOUR RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR ON-SITE SUPERVISORS AND UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS?

On-site supervisors support interaction daily. Very positive. Very encouraging. Not at all critical. They were very encouraging. They guided us appropriately, not critical. They just encouraged you. It was very positive experience. The university supervisors, of course, you don’t have daily contact with them, but they were there, they were supportive. You can call and ask. They would come by and visit.

HOW OFTEN DID YOUR UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS VISIT YOU AND EVALUATE YOU IN THE CLASSROOMS?

Formally, they would come a couple of times. Informally, they would come a couple of times. They would do formal evaluation a couple of times. Then they would just come visit to see how’s everything going, and ask me the questions. Those kinds of stuff.

THEY VISIT YOU ONCE A WEEK, TWICE A WEEK, OR…?

Usually about every two weeks. Well…they would always come the first week. Yeah, you can reach them all the time. Just one phone call away.

IF YOU NEED SOME SUPPORTS FROM THEM, WOULD THEY BE THERE FOR YOU? OR IT MIGHT TAKE LONGER TIME TO REACH THEM?

You can talk with them or email them for the supports. If you need more...for them to come out, they would usually come out the next day.

HOW ABOUT YOUR ON-SITE SUPERVISORS?

A lot of time, the things would come up, the behaviors. Sometimes they would actually have to deal with that, such as parents’ visiting. Then I would take over. So you kinds of have to be pretty flexible, and be able to step in and help the teachers, or help the students. You know, with the behaviors, the teacher may be busy.

PLEASE GIVE ME SOME EXAMPLES OF EFFECTIVE AND INEFFECTIVE ON-SITE SUPERVISORS YOU HAD?

That’s going to be hard because several of them are very good. I am going to get two of them. On of them taught me a lot about processing behavior. She was the
one that have me do the functional behavioral assessment. She was really clued in to what…to look what happened…let’s not be lazy……let’s go further to see what really caused the behavior, and what maintains the behavior, and what can we do. She was really really good. The next site I went to, the teacher was so subtle and quite. She dealt with the behavior very calm, and had the students taking accountability of their behavior, and had them responsible for apologize to do whatever they need to do. The class was so productive and quite. I really like her style.

IS IT IN ELEMENTARY?

Both of them were in elementary. So there was a lot of learning going on there. Just because of her particular style of dealing with behaviors.

HOW ABOUT THE INEFFECTIVE ON-SITE SUPERVISORS?

I learned something from all of them. That’s very fortunate. I learned something from single one of them.

HOW DO THEY GIVE YOU FEEDBACK AND HOW DO THEY HELP YOU TO IMPROVE YOUR CAPABILITIES?

When they feel they need to give me some suggestions, they would give it to me. Or a lot of times, you just needed to ask, then they would provide all kinds of suggestions, like what I would do with this. You know, I went to check on him, and he looked at me funny. How should I approach that? Disrespect? She happened to know that he was feeling comfortable with me, the particular student. But she didn’t tell me that. She said, “well, why don’t you just ask me?” So I asked. We worked through it. So they just kind of prompt, kind of the same way you do with your own students in the classroom. You kind of learn on your own, but they gave prompts to do it. When you actually worked on it, you can make eye contact with them, either a nod or …, kind of telling you to back off. You know, they give you little signals.

SO YOU WON’T FEEL NERVOUS?

No, you won’t feel that you are doing something wrong.

PLEASE DESCRIBE ANYTHING THAT IS UNUSUAL OR INTERESTING BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR SUPERVISORS?

I had one in particular. At the C, first, we all like…huh….she made us switch classes every two weeks. That wasn’t enough time…two weeks. But amazingly, I don’t know she coached all of those teachers or what, but they had us working
and involved the day one with those students. One of the particular that really help me to get my mind set for working with the students. First of all, safety. This class was for the profound. So we had to move a lot lift a lot. So safety is all, and she always reminded me. Always reminded me about safety, and how to do it, like where the gloves were. All that kind of stuff, because I was brand new. That was my very first field sites. For her to be able to involve me that quickly, and reminded me to do those things without my feeling, like I was a kid. I thought it was pretty amazing. And she helped me to remember… with working with those kids when you teach them. First, stay with them. It’s very difficult to change. At least for the elementary kids. She always made you thinking what was appropriate for the kids and the adults, like do you want them to come in and hug everyone, the degree of appropriateness. She always made me think what’s the best for the students. I think just have her first help set my whole perspective for the rest of the program. I am looking at what’s the best for the students in the long run, not what is cute right now or whatever.

**DID YOU HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO INTERACTE WITH STUDENTS WITH OTHER DISABILITIES OTHER THAN EBD?**

Most of them were EBD. Just that one summer program, they had one room for the students with EBD, and there were a lot of interns over there during the summer, so they put us all in different rooms. I got to be the severe profound preschool. They were most autistic. I enjoyed it.

**I KNOW YOU ALREADY TALKED ABOUT THIS, BUT HOW DID FIELD EXPERIENCE HELP YOU LEARN TO TEACH? DO YOU WANT TO ADD SOMETHING?**

Not really.

**WHAT WERE YOUR CONCERNS REGARDING FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING? WHAT SUGGESTION DO YOU HAVE THAT MAY BRING MORE BENEFICIAL AND PRACTICAL FIELD EXPERIENCES TO CURRENT PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS? YOU ALREADY TALKED A LITTLE BIT ABOUT IT. DO YOU WANT TO ADD ANYTHING?**

Not really. It’s truly a very good program. It was very difficult. It put us pretty fast through 12 hours for the full time, and the field experience. I would have done better with 9 hours, and maybe an extra day in field experience or something, four days instead of three days. So just that, the information would have more time to soak in. Because even a lot did soak in, I still have to do research or that kind of stuff, which is ok. I don’t know if that’s very practical, but I would just like to be able to absorb more information, and spend more time thinking and more time researching.
YOU MENTIONED THAT YOU DIDN’T HAVE ANY TEACHING EXPERIENCES BEFORE. COULD YOU PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR FIRST FIELD EXPERIENCE IN YOUR FIRST SEMESTER?

Actually, my first one was the severe profound. There were great, I enjoyed it. I was surprised because I heard that they can’t respond to you. That’s not all true. They may not be very verbal, but they were very responsive to you. And I was surprised that how well they did communicate, even though they couldn’t talk, and how quickly I got attached to them, because it was so neat to see that...interact with them, I was afraid I wasn’t be able to interact with them. I could remember seeing the high school, I mean they were grown man, they were huge, but their behavior will just..... I looked at them, I was shocking, I don’t know if I could ever do that. I am not strong enough, you know, to be able to manage them. I didn’t find out if I am able to manage them or not. I was intimated by that. I may not be able to handle this. That’s whole lot of things with the field experience, you do discover what you can or you can’t do. You get to know yourself very well, your patience level, and how much you can tolerate, how much you can work with these kids. Do you really care about them?

SO MOST OF YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCES WERE IN ELEMENTARY?

One high school, one middle school. C program, they moved us every two weeks, so it was elementary, then preschool, and then middle school. Just two weeks for each one. Oh, I had another high school.

ANY OTHER COMMENTS?

Not really. I think it’s very well around it. They sent you to so many different sites, which is very good. You got to see the more severe one, and more restrictive placement. You can actually see the difference of philosophies, how they work with them, which is very interesting and effective.

WHAT’S YOUR CAREER PLAN? TO STAY IN THE CURRENT POSITION OR WORK WITH STUDENTS IN THE MORE RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT?

Actually, I would like to go to more restrictive environment. Eventually, but I didn’t feel like my first year I should do that.

YOU THINKING YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE CAN HELP YOU TO WORK IN MORE RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT?

Oh, yes. Actually, probably it would be better for the restrictive environment.

(End of Tape)
Individual Interview 5

PLEASE DESCRIBE THE FIELD EXPERIENCES YOU HAD IN YOUR TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM.

My first field experience was in A, the behavioral adjust unit, middle school setting, 6 students with one teacher and one assistant in the classroom, and then, me. The other one was at the behavioral center at B, 6 students, one teacher and an assistant. They were in elementary age. Hm… Do you want to know about the program?

YES. PLEASE.

The A, the behavioral adjust unit was a special education co-op, surrounding the district, sent their students with special needs and behavioral disorders there. The A was a separate campus for students with emotional and behavioral disorders.

HOW DID THAT ARRANGE? DID YOU GO TO EACH PLACEMENT EVERY FEW WEEKS?

I did mine in one semester, I did my first half in A, and the second half of the semester in B. I didn't have…..I know some full-time students have to do field experience every semester, and I didn't have that. I am not on stipend, so I just went two placements in one semester.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR TRAINING IN THOSE SITES? DO YOU HAVE ADEQUATE TRAINING IN THOSE PLACES?

Yes, I did. I think The one thing I would think of …maybe a little bit in-depth into the different …It seems that the students come to the school so much different in diagnosis. And I think I have an umbrella on the different diagnosis, you know, I can research things in that if I need. But…maybe a little bit more common. I need something a little bit more in-depth on that. It will be good, and … No…I think I did pretty well. There wasn’t whole lot about setting up the classroom, and how the system was organized, but the teachers I worked with were really nice to share all their information. So, it gets to feel what kinds of person you would ask for that, it’s pretty good, but you’re more interested in personality, it would be more difficult.

HOW DID THOSE TRAINING HELP YOU IN YOUR PRESENT POSITION?

Talking to teachers and watch their interaction with students, something like that. I was able to…..even...at A, the assistant principle would stay. We would start a
conversation. He would stay late at night to kind of helping me working through different things that I had….believes I had. Then I go to school, and you know, I would see the interaction. We would start the conversation about that, and then kind of building a bigger knowledge base. So, for me, it’s good. I enjoyed myself the experiences.

COULD YOU PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR BACKGROUND BEFORE ENTERING INTO THE PROGRAM?

Sure. I was a certified deaf teacher, elementary early childhood certification also. I had been teaching special ed, regular ed, kind of everything. Then I had to quit and stayed home with my own kids for couple years. Then I pursued the EBD field.

WHILE YOU WERE IN THE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM, YOU STILL WORK AS A TEACHER?

No, I stayed home. I was a full-time Mom, and full-time students.

WHAT WERE YOUR DUTIES IN THOSE FIELD SITES?

Oh. Gosh. Everything I think. Let’s see. I got academic instruction, tutoring, social skill instruction, supervision students in transition. I don’t know, because I am a certified teacher or …I got to do everything. The only thing I didn’t get to do was that they always had to have another…like taking them to the cafeteria, whatever. They had to have someone on staff there for their liability purpose. That’s the only thing I didn’t do. I sat in the ARD meeting. I …..

YOU HAD FULL RESPONSIBILITIES, LIKE A TEACHER?

Yes.

COULD YOU DESCRIBE MORE ABOUT THAT? FOR INSTANCE, YOU NEEDED TO GO TO THE ARD MEETINGS; DID YOU NEED TO DO THE PAPERWORK?

I didn’t do it there, but I had done ARD paperwork at schools. I think that would be really hard for master program to cover, because every district uses different paperwork and they change so often anyhow. It would be nice…because it seems a long time I did my undergraduate. It would be nice if they would cover the timeline again, I would prefer to have a special ed log class. You know, it’s been changing. It would be nice to have the class in master program.
DO YOU BELIEVE THOSE DUTIES HELP YOU TO IMPROVE YOUR QUALIFICATIONS? WHY?

Yes, definitely. The teachers I worked at both sites were tough notch teachers, and I think that was really very beneficial.

THERE ARE MANY SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES ARE REQUIRED TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE CLASSROOM, SUCH AS BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS, COLLABORATION, SOCIAL SKILL TEACHING, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS, COUNSELING SKILLS, IEP PLANNING, ASSESSMENT. PLEASE TELL ME WHAT KINDS OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES IN YOUR FIELD SITES THAT PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU TO MASTER THESE COMPETENCIES.

On the sites I was visiting.....hm.....try to think. I did social skill lessons at one site. At the other site, they had their social skill lesson before I got there. No..... I am sorry. In A, she would ask me if I wanted to do language arts, math...etc. You know what, I take that back. In A, they had math program that I would call simple math, which is anything but simple. And she actually did take class period and had the kids show me how to do the math, and the way they figured it, so I did get some schooling in that. But other than that, no.

HOW ABOUT BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS?

Hm.....Pretty much that I would say, they showed me their behavioral management program, and how to use it. I did that in the A, they did have me marked the point sheets, and gave the warnings, those kind of things at nature. In B, the system is set up a little bit differently, and the teacher assistant did that. Not the domain that I was allowed to cross the line to. But we discussed how they ran the program. Through interaction with the teachers, I would ask the questions, they would kind of explain their philosophy, school's philosophy, but no.....not a lot of ..... 

SO YOU KIND OF PERFORMING THE JOB OF ASSISTANT IN THE CLASSROOM, OR..?

Yes. Some like that. The teachers....I was fortunate....the teachers I worked with were very skillful, very comfortable with their teaching. They didn’t mind letting me step in and help out. I was fortunate that I had really good experiences. Some of other people were not that fortunate. SO.....hm.....mostly I was sharing their philosophies and ideas. That was kind of reinforcement. There was one time when...in A, I told the teacher “they never act up until I leave, I must be great with this behavior modification.” She kind of laugh, she said, “you know, actually, I figured out that if they could only behave when I was there, I wasn’t really being
very effective because I was controlling their behavior instead of letting them do it.” So the example like that would be the learning moments for me, would be…just kind of new perspective.

ANYTHING ELSE?

I don’t think so.

COULD YOU DESCRIBE THE MOST VALUABLE ASPECTS OF YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING THAT YOU CAN APPLY TO YOUR PRESENT WORK? WHY?

I think getting the hands on, getting to be there. One of the teachers had taught for a long time, and she would be, in my opinion, a master teacher. So being able to see it in practice, because so many times you read it in the textbooks, all of those stuff at night. She really did implement very effectively. A is very love and logic base. And to see someone being able to adjust without breaking stripes, delivered, and watched the reaction, the exact way it was supposed to happen, and consistently. It’s very nice. I would say, just the sharing the ideas and philosophies, being able to look at the other perspective, and see…because a lot of time….what I found was that people who have gone school for studying and get their masters. They don’t actually get to the classroom, and that’s the problem.

(Someone interrupted)

Where were we?

THE MOST VALUABLE ASPECT OF YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE?

I really think it was the teachers being able to share their experiences, their expertise, and seeing the kids having the problem, and seeing the resolution of that, that was probably most valuable. You know what else? Seeing what other schools do when this happen or that happen. Here in our school, if a kid act out up here consistently and repeatedly, we send them home. Hm…..recently, one teacher said what would you do when you’ve been kicked; you just don’t want to be kicked again and again, a hundred times. You send the kids home. Knowing that other school, what they do and how they handle… that was very valuable. The interaction with the teachers there, seeing the kids being acting out, seeing how it was handled, and how it worked out, and the conversation about that. That’s probably the most valuable thing I got out the field experiences.

WHAT HAVE BEEN THE LESS VALUABLE ASPECTS OF YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING? WHY?
This is going to sound terrible. I have taught before. I know how to teach, and how to deliver an instruction. What I need to see is the behavior problems. I needed to see the escalation, the whole process from the beginning, and I really ….it might just be me, it might be because I got plenty teaching experiences. But delivery instruction was not beneficial for me. I needed to see the behavioral stuff. So, that would be definitely my least aspect.

YOU WERE A CERTIFIED TEACHER AND HAD PLENTY TEACHING EXPERIENCES BEFORE ENTERING INTO THE PROGRAM. EXCEPT TEACHING LESSONS, IS THERE ANYTHING YOU COULD THINKING OF THAT IS NOT BENEFICIAL?

Other than delivering instructions?

YES.

Hm…. I think even I am an experienced teacher, I think the other experiences were valuable. It’s hard, because we teach through academics. That’s how I do it. We use academics to teach social skills, to teach everything. I think I just need a little bit … maybe because the job I selected. I chose the units with the most severe behaviors in the city. I meant… my class is up to 8 students, 8 high school students, 8th, 9th, to 10th grade students. We have two teachers and one assistant, so we choose to work with the most severe behaviors. For me, anything that could prepare me for the behavior…hm…the students I have now, he has every diagnosis you could put on someone. Hm…being able to see some bizarre behavior, talk to people who are familiar with that, kind of help me. I tried to think how to say… I tried to have had…maybe some experiences. I went to the school settings…this school setting would have been…the kids end up in the juvenile justice system a lot of times. XXX would probably be a nice placement to…not necessary for a long field experience, but maybe a week or two. Hm…hospital settings…to do some observation. There are different….hm…in xxx, kids may go to the xxx center. I didn’t know there was a xxx center until I got here. You know, xxx, I heard the name, I heard people’s opinion, but I didn’t really….That would have been good. Ok. “This is your field experience, but I also want you to go...” you know…here is your field experience, but one week I want you to go to the xxx center, and I want you to go the xxx one day, and I want you to…… you know. Maybe because I am in a high school setting, but when there is disciplinary committee meeting, or there is manifestation, I need to know what’s out there. The one is Austin, xxxx, it’s a different alternative placement, I never know. I knew xxxx, because I taught in that district, but I didn’t realize that my district will send student there. So that would be something that’s missing. It may not be the right spot for that, but that’s my thought.
I AM JUST CURIOUS THAT YOU WERE A DEAF CERTIFIED TEACHER, WHAT MAKES YOU CHANGE YOUR MINDS TO BECOME AN EBD TEACHER?

Because one of my own children... for an unexplained...we really don’t know. He is a severely ADHD. He hit his head in the wall in school. Finally have him...he was medicated when he was very young, but finally when the teacher refused to help him. I have him being placed in the special education. Hm...because I am a special education teacher, I knew the law, and I found out they didn’t, even the people they were supposed. Hm... because of, in my opinion, a lot of him... I think the big part of it was the way his school chose to handle it, I think it escalated his problem, and they, finally, allowed the ED label to be placed on him...for the no other explained reason why he is not being successful in the school. And I just really had enough of them jerking my chain. Suppose he was the ED during the school year, but in summer while I applied summer school program, I asked who his case worker in that district was; they called xxx program. I asked who his case worker was in the summer to provide the service; they said that they didn’t do that in summer. So he must be miracle cured over the summer. That was kind of my point...you know what...not doing anymore...that’s why I got the ED...because it was wrong, it’s illegal. I was so convinced that’s illegal, and I just determined that it shouldn’t happen. I can do something to make sure that doesn’t happen.

WHAT MAKES YOU CHOOSE TO WORK WITH STUDENTS IN THE MORE RESTRICTIVE ENVIRONMENT?

I would rather work with the child that has reason being difficult. Not the one that’s just being difficult. That’s why I want to do. If the child has an alter state, and that’s why they are hard to deal with, then I don’t mind working with them. They are somebody I want to help. If you are just being a jerk because you want to be a jerk, you can do that somewhere else, because I can’t help you. I meant...seriously... so......hm...I also .....I am fortunate that my son has a good teacher, people who truly care about him, help him to progress to a much better place, to be able to remove the label place. I know what it's like as being a parent to live with that frustration. Everybody hates your child. I know what it’s like to be a teacher to teach that kid, you just not wanted to do it, and how frustrated that is. So I just figured that I really do have sympathy to understand both sides of table, and I think I am most effective here. I also really made a hard decision. There is one student, I think I was going to recommend him to go to the xxx, he is not going to be happy with me. He is not very happy with me now because I have been doing FBA, and in the process of doing that, he got himself into a bunch of trouble, because I have been able to check if he is in class on time. He is very angry with me. I really like him. That’s why, I don’t mind doing the hard thing, to try to make things better. That’s why I choose the most restrictive environment.
WHEN YOU DID YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE, DID YOU HAVE ANY CHANCES TO TALK TO YOUR PROGRAM TO EXPRESS YOUR PREFERENCES?

When I did mine, that was an option, they were available. The other option that would be available, it’s way too far away. I have my own children at home, the driving, so….I think my restriction have to do with…where I live, what was available, and who is willing. I don’t know if the program provides any chance to xxx, or xxx, or any of them.

WHAT’S YOUR RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR ON-SITE SUPERVISORS AND UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS?

Let’s see….University supervisor…ok…we have our meeting at university. I think it was supposed to be once every three weeks, maybe. I think that may be how it worked out. We had that meeting there, and she would come to the site, she visited…we visited for half hour maybe, something like that. “Do you have any question?” “Everything going good?” you know all that kinds of stuff. My on-site supervisors that were really….the most valuable part for me. That would be the…..It was more conversation, it wasn’t…"you need to do"…..you know. That was more conversation, more…sharing the philosophies and …that why they would occur, so more informal, probably.

WHAT KINDS OF FEEDBACK OR SUGGESTIONS DID YOUR ON-SITE SUPERVISORS GIVE YOU?

Mostly the feedback was “that’s a good lesson.” There was one time, I taught social skills. It was a game, then there was one morning, I came in, and she said “do you want to do this, social skill?” I said “ok. That’s fine.” And so, when we get the game out, I didn’t know how to play the game. So that’s the one I said “God, I wish I would known how to play the game.” She said “I know sometimes that happened.” That was pretty much my feedback. There wasn’t a lot “what would you do would be different...” or things like that. If I initiated that conversation, that would happen, but... At the second site, I was at the B, before I got there, they had two girls in the classroom, and the teacher told me that I can teach whatever I want, do a lesson or whatever. “If you want to teach what I have planned, that’s fine.” Those two girls I taught were very nice, very good. But I got way behind what I needed to teach because they obviously they were confused about the curriculum. And that was nice, because I was more interested in watching the escalation, and the de-escalation, and doing that, I was able to follow her sequence of what she wanted to teach, which was nice. I enjoyed that. The first site, she had what she wanted to do. The language arts were simple, language arts….we never went over how to do that. At that one, they marked point sheets every 15 minutes. It was like a tutoring kind of situation. With me taking over the
responsibilities of marking the point sheets, giving the warning, the more behavioral management than instructional.

WHAT KINDS OF FEEDBACK DID THEY GIVE YOU? IS IT LIKE AN OBLIGATION TO MAKE A CHECK MARK ON THE EVALUATION FORM, OR THEY GAVE YOU SOME VALUABLE COMMENTS?

Hm…. I didn’t feel that it was a check and go that kind of thing. But I did feel like, they have problem they would say something. But I felt like, especially in the first one, I was mainly do what the teacher said in the room. I would have to say “oh, what would you…no.. no it’s fine.” So …She was very good though. She was a very good teacher. I was very comfortable with the instruction delivery. I didn’t really feel like…. You know, I did remember agonizing though…the point sheets. And the finally the assistant said “do you feel like you did your best?” “Do you feel like you should have…?” And we went through the class like that, I would…. My parts is done, and I handed it to the teacher, and she had already figured out what she wanted to mark the points, something like that. I didn’t feel like the field experience was waste of the time. I do think it was very valuable, because it’s nice to go into a set up system. But that’s the one thing I noticed. Even in my undergraduate, when you did the field experience, you walked into the classroom that’s set up and ready to go. Someone is nice to hand you …here is your book, it’s kind of ….wow…what did they do, what’s their procedure. That part is kind of…. I think for a lot of people, that part is kind of something that’s never going to be figure out. So…

HOW ABOUT YOUR UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS? SINCE YOU ARE A CERTIFIED TEACHER, DID THEY PROVIDE ADEQUATE SUPPORT?

I think mine is kind of helpful. Because…I…asked her…this happened in the classroom one day…there was one thing happened in the field experience that I was really uncomfortable with. And it bothered me. And…I think …I am just wanted to go home, I was in the building when this was happening. And it was kind of funny because, later, the assistant at the school came over to me and just not sure I like locking the kids out of the building. She explained what they were coming from the school, and said they spoke to the parents. I just….but it’s still…I have problem with that. And my university supervisor was, I think she was the kind of person she kept the confidentiality, I really had a big problem with that, I worked through with her.. that she also could….you know, pull back and see the bigger picture, and help me understand what they would come from. I think she is very good because …….that was one of the stuff….I just locking a kid out of the building… and we have locking doors, but ……yeah…

HOW DID FIELD EXPERIENCES HELP YOU LEARN TO TEACH?
You know...I think of my students. His behavior is all learned behavior. Being able to see the interaction between the teachers and the student, then, kind of giving me confidence to come inside, and...you know..."that's great. Honey, but you don't have a seizure. Because if you have a seizure, you wouldn't be sitting there and telling me that you are having a seizure." Instead of going....."oh...what am I supposed to do now.. she says..." you know. Because I know what it looks like, and I know when you sit here and go "I am having a seizure." It's not a seizure, but ... watching the teacher interacting, kind of giving me the confidence to go ...not buying that. That's to me, especially with my students, he is almost 17, he has been a lot behaving....and ...the liable he is been given. I am not a medical doctor. I am not taking that he has all of these things wrong with him, but I tell you, that's not a seizure, because as soon as I told him that I am not going to do that, he stops. I don't know.....everyone who has seizure can just....oh...you know. So just the interaction, being able to see that... kind of give me....you know...it's ok to call it, and to speak very frankly with the students, and it works very well with this one.

ANYTHING ELSE?

No.......I didn’t really learn any tricks.

HOW ABOUT IEP, COLLABORATION...ETC? WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR FIELD EXPERIENCE PREPARE YOU?

I think the collaboration....watching the interaction between the teacher and the assistant, and in one situation, it was great. In other situation, that was great, but you could tell there was power struggle, and it turned out they had long history of figuring out how that’s going to work. And that’s something I have been concerned about. I had an interpreter, as an assistant.... people kinds of undermine what I was working with the students. If I was working independently, they would bring the surprise to the student. So that’s kind of areas of concern. This position will be two teachers and one assistant, hm....that was something I was interested in, I paid the attention to...because you saw... my teaching partner....we do...almost everything together. And we are both very strong people, so...fortunately for us to have same philosophy, and that works well, and I also see...other places...that don’t work so well. That was good to observe those...in the working... that was something...when I was interviewed for the job, I said I wanted to meet. First I would like to compare the philosophy, I wanted to sure that the program philosophy and my philosophy was matched. They did at the time. They changed their philosophy, they don’t now. I wanted to make sure the person I was teaching with.... Our philosophy was matched. That was her criteria also, she was hired. I was told about her name....to meet her. We met, and it was a perfect match, and we have been very successful.... We kind of offset each other, we got along so well, it wasn’t any....you know.....
Because your school district has a lot of students from other cultural background, do you have enough training to prepare you to interact well with the students from other cultures?

It’s interesting, our population tends to….. It’s not so much economic developed population, for the most part. It was always someone there that going to threw out. I am trying to think. I can’t think of…even in my other teaching experience, I had…no….I didn’t have any students…any Asia students…any ESL students. I am trying to think……no…Not in here. Not in my site. I know there must……no…..B had one…..I think the parents were both born here too. That’s really interesting, I haven’t thought about that. In schools, I am teaching now, we have…..in the behavioral… we have Hispanic students….but in my room, I am thinking about the kids that coming…the one here is…no…..the one is coming is not…no……That’s really…. I haven’t thought about that.

WHAT WERE YOUR CONCERNS REGARDING FIELD EXPERIENCE TRAINING? WHAT SUGGESTION DO YOU HAVE THAT MAY BRING MORE BENEFICIAL AND PRACTICAL FIELD EXPERIENCES TO CURRENT PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS?

I definitely would suggest, especially the EBD, like D; F is too far, probably, H….. If you can visit these places, it would be nice. So when somebody said….I would…..know….oh….. just to know the differences of the facilities these kids will go to, the detention center, as well as the hospital. My people would said….the consistent thing…J will keep you for 2 or three days and send you home…H is pretty much the same thing. That would be valuable information to have. I probably would have….I would love to go to the J. Driving an hour and half each way, and trying to meet the hours that required…..I know people who live close to me who did that drive, and not be able to count any of that time in driving on their hours, or the time they did at home working on things for schools toward their hours….kind of making them focus on the number of hours instead of what they did in the field experience. I know they have to put hour requirement there, but when you watch your hours so carefully, you worry about the drive here and there, it just kind of taking away the whole experience. It kinds of making you …… It’s a lot of valuable information but also a lot of busy work. The modules for the field experience were great examples, busy work, busy enough, hm…. I learned a lot, a lot I already believed in and a lot I already knew. It nice to have them reinforce for me. You know…what’s missing is the specific of the disabilities, but when I was standing here, and I have this student… I know he is acting… he is consciously choosing to be a jerk. His mother walked in, and said he is having a seizure. And he is pushing her that he is having a seizure. “oh…he
can’t stop himself for doing that.” But the next minute I stood next to her, he was able to have self-control. It would be nice to have …..the parameter of this particular disability. You know…..I don’t know if there…ok…here is a wonderful book that has all the disability info….you guys should buy that instead of the book I had we never used in the class. I know you can’t go over every disability, I know that. But…I got internet, I have been researching.

ANY OTHER CONCERNS?

But I really love to know if there were other placements available. That would be very valuable.

ANY OTHER THINGS ABOUT FIELD EXPERIENCE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE?

No… I enjoyed it. I really did. The people I did mine were very…come in….It’s nice. I liked mine. It’s a valuable thing.

(End of Tape)


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