A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF A MASTERS PROGRAM FOR TEACHERS OF

STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL/BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

Paulette C. Walter, B.A., M.Ed.

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APPROVED:

Lyndal M. Bullock, Major Professor
Thomas L. Evenson, Minor Professor
Lloyd Kinnison, Committee Member
Mary B. Estes, Chair of the Department of
    Educational Psychology
Jerry R. Thomas, Dean of the College of
    Education
Sandra L. Terrell, Dean of the Robert B.
    Toulouse School of Graduate Studies

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Educators today are faced with a worthy goal. Every student, including those with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD), must be taught by a qualified teacher. However, recruiting, training, and retaining quality special education teachers continue to confound the field. The purpose of this study was to determine if the completion of a NCATE/CEC (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education/Council for Exceptional Children) approved masters program specializing in EBD from a well-known university increased the confidence in knowledge and skills of special educators, the numbers of special educators, and/or the retention of special educators working with students with EBD.

The sample in this study was composed of 199 students who had completed the master's degree in special education who specialized in emotional/behavioral disorders from 1985 to 2005. Data were compiled from 80 students at a response rate of approximately 40%. Additionally, five respondents participated in face-to-face interviews. The data did not lend themselves to the quantitative analysis and thus pose a limitation to the generalizability of this study. However, combined with the qualitative analysis, the study provided a rich analysis of a program whose graduates stay in the field of special education providing services to students with EBD.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Teacher preparation and retention has been a frequent topic in the media over the last 20 years. The popularity of this discussion stems from the publication of *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence and Education, 1983). This document sounded an alarm that our schools were not appropriately preparing children to be effective citizens. It found fault with curriculum, expectations, textbooks, amount of time in school, and teaching. The editor of *Phi Delta Kappan* noted that thousands of articles submitted for publication used the phrase "tides of mediocrity" in opening paragraphs, a testament to the impact of this one report (Smith, 2003). One recommendation that continues to have an effect is that institutions of higher learning need to be held accountable for the quality of the teachers they prepare. School reform advocates and politicians, as well as educators, began the business of revising teacher preparation programs to reflect higher standards and expectations in the early 1980's (e.g., Goodlad, 1990; Hardman & Mulder, 2004), but they failed to take into account the changing demographics and the increasing numbers of students with learning disabilities much less those with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) or at-risk of developing EBD (Sleeter,1986). Goodlad (1990) remarked that steps needed to be taken immediately to improve teacher preparation for our changing student population, or we would find ourselves in a very different world bemoaning both our actions and lack of action. His words were prophetic as we now face myriad problems in teacher preparation and retention as described in current literature. Even more challenging is

finding qualified teachers for students with EBD (Billingsley, Fall, & Williams, 2006; Nelson, 2003).

<div align="center">Statement of the Problem</div>

The shortage of special education teachers has now reached critical proportions (e.g., Billingsley & McLeskey, 2004; Brownell, Bishop, & Sindelar, 2005; Brownell, Ross, Colon, & McCallum, 2005; McLeskey, Tyler, & Flippin, 2004; Menlove & Lignugaris/Kraft, 2004; Prater, 2005; Rosenberg, Boyer, Sindelar, & Misra, 2007). The passage of The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2002) and the subsequent reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA, 2004) have increased the potential for disaster for much of the public schools across the nation (Billingsley & McLeskey, 2004; Nelson, 2003). These laws do not offer the needed resources to meet the intended objectives but do punish the states that cannot (Hardman & Mulder, 2004). Worse is the situation for rural schools who are finding it virtually impossible to find special education teachers, much less those who meet the standards of "highly qualified" as stipulated by Congress (Hardman, Rosenberg, & Sindelar, 2005; Prater, 2005). How they acquire and retain highly qualified special education teachers specializing in EBD to teach the increasing numbers of students affected by this disability is at issue (Billingsley et al., 2006). What must be determined is: who are the people who will seek expertise in this field and commit to a career of teaching students with EBD?

The United States Department of Education (USDE, 2006) reported that 41,414 individuals (more than 10%) were not fully certified out of the 417,891individuals employed in special education positions. Only Connecticut, Iowa, Guam, and Northern

Marianas had all fully certified personnel in special education positions. If these trends continue, the promise of NCLB to provide every child instruction by a highly qualified teacher will not happen for students with disabilities, especially those with EBD (Rosenberg, Sindelar, & Hardman, 2004). The answer to how to supply these teachers has been the focus of the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). There has been considerable funding of programs using alternative certification models to reduce the special education teacher shortage (Brownell, Hirsch, & Seo, 2004; Rosenberg et al., 2007). There has been a proliferation of such programs turning out thousands of teachers: however, there remains a chronic teacher shortage (Boe & Cook, 2006).

As a background to the study, the review of literature examines the problem of the teacher shortage, how it came to be, and the issues that contribute to it. It looks at the problems of teacher quality including such issues as optimal training schedules, ongoing professional development, teacher induction, and the importance of teacher reflection of student diversity. The situations, needs, and the stressors unique to teachers of students with EBD are explored and how these contribute to the shortage of these specialized teachers.

<div align="center">Purpose</div>

Educators today are faced with a worthy goal. Every student, including those with EBD, must be taught by a qualified teacher. However, recruiting, training, and retaining quality special education teachers continue to confound the field (Boe, 2006; Edgar & Pair, 2005; Olivarez & Arnold, 2006). Special educators, most particularly those who teach students with EBD, leave the field at a greater rate than general education

teachers (Billingsley et al., 2006; Boe, Bobbit, & Cook, 1997; Boe & Cook, 2006; Edgar & Pair, 2005; Henderson, Klein, Gonzalez, & Bradley, 2005; Katsiyannis, Zhang, & Conroy, 2003). Every year, the number of children being identified as eligible for special education services is increasing. Research findings indicate there is a shortage of qualified special education teachers and one of the most severe is the shortage of qualified special education teachers for students with EBD (Billingsley et al., 2006; Katsiyannis et al., 2003; McLeskey et al., 2004; Rosenberg et al., 2004). Further, teachers of students with EBD have had low levels of training and certification throughout the history of the field (Gagnon & Leone, 2006). The purpose of this study is to determine if the completion of a NCATE/CEC approved masters program specializing in EBD from a well-known university increased the confidence of knowledge and skills, the numbers, and/or the retention of special education teachers working with students with EBD.

<div align="center">Significance</div>

In 2006, Olivarez and Arnold published the results of a study describing the demographic and personal characteristics of special education teachers who stayed in the classroom in South Texas. Their findings were consistent with national characteristics of special education teachers retained in the field. They called for additional research into demographics and other notable factors in an attempt to resolve shortages of qualified special education teachers. Billingsley et al. (2006) reported a dire and persistent shortage of qualified teachers of students with EBD. They called for more information regarding recruitment, preparation, and retention of these specific teachers particularly in regard to the development of teacher quality.

The present study analyzed the demographic and personal characteristics of special education teachers who graduated from a specific university program and stayed in the field compared to those graduates who left. It is significant in that it may justify increased OSEP grant awards to develop similar EBD masters programs aimed at increasing teacher retention and/or teacher confidence in skills and knowledge. Further, the issue of what contributes to a highly qualified special education teacher and what it takes to make this teacher stay in the field was examined. The teachers' perceptions of preparedness to teach students with disabilities are paramount to the successful achievement of these students. Nodding to the subjectivity of the responses, the study speaks to the background of the teachers who seek a graduate degree for teaching students with EBD, whether the teacher believed that he or she was ready to meet the needs of students with EBD, and whether the teacher will remain in the field. It is significant in that teacher preparation program administrators need to know what kinds of students make confident special education teachers and what happens to those teachers in the years following their graduation from those programs. These findings contribute to the body of knowledge of what works in making a successful special education teacher who will stay in the field of EBD.

Assumptions and Limitations

The main assumptions associated with this research were that sufficient numbers of graduates of the selected masters program would volunteer to complete the survey honestly and accurately and/or be willing to be interviewed. Also assumed was a sizable sample of graduates who had left the field of special education as per findings in current literature (Billingsley, 2004a; Billingsley et al., 2006). The second assumption is one of

the limitations of the study. Another limitation of this research is in the sample of teachers who have completed a master's degree of education with specialization in teaching students with EBD. It was not randomly selected but was based on convenience. Although, the findings may not be generalizable to the population of special education teachers specializing in EBD, they provide a rich source of information for program administrators to supplement or improve teacher preparation programs, professional development opportunities, and teacher retention prerogatives.

Research Questions

Three research questions guided this study:

1. What are the personal and demographic characteristics of graduates from the selected masters program specializing in teaching students with EBD who stay in the field of EBD?

2. What are the personal and demographic characteristics of graduates from the selected masters program specializing in teaching students with EBD who do not stay in the field of EBD?

3. What are the differences, if any, between the personal and demographic characteristics of graduates from the selected masters program specializing in teaching students with EBD who stay in the field of EBD and those who do not.

Definitions

- Alternative certification: a non-traditional route to teacher certification considered by NCLB and IDEA as an effective means to streamline the process of getting highly qualified teachers into the classroom quickly. Although requiring candidates to pass state licensure exams, alternative certification programs alter,

shorten, or waive coursework in pedagogy, educational philosophy, and practice teaching (Rosenberg et al., 2007). Alternative certification programs may be considered to be on a continuum from survival training to rigorous preparation with no agreement regarding definition (Rosenberg et al., 2004).

- Attrition: for the purpose of this study, attrition is leaving the field or transferring to another teaching or educational position outside of and with no influence in special education. (Billingsley, 2004a; Henderson et al., 2005).

- CLD: an acronym for culturally and/or linguistically diverse. Students with CLD compose 37.7% of the special education population and 38.0% of all public school students in the U.S. (Tyler, Yzquierdo, Lopez-Reyna, & Flippin, 2004).

- EBD: an acronym for emotional and behavioral disorders. Students with EBD comprise approximately 8% of students with disabilities, are predominantly male, disproportionately African-American, and identified later than most students with disabilities. They are considered the most difficult students to teach presenting challenges not only for their teachers but also for all school personnel (Billingsley et al., 2006).

- Highly Qualified Teacher: one who holds full state certification, not part certification such as emergency or temporary waivers or provisional basis (NCLB, 2002). Educators disagree whether a passing examination score in core academic subjects equals a high-quality teacher (Hardman & Mulder, 2004). In addition to having the appropriate certification, a quality teacher has experience, tested ability, and self-efficacy, with demonstrated excellence in professional activities as well as classroom practices (Carlson, Brauen, Klein, Schroll, &

Willig, 2002) and proficiency in all content areas they teach (Billligsley et al., 2006).

- Mentoring: a component of a teacher induction program whereby novice teachers are nurtured by an experienced teacher with proven skills. The experienced teacher serves as a role model who can teach, encourage, counsel, and develop a relationship with the novice teacher to prevent feelings of isolation, incompetence, and stress in the first years of teaching (Whitaker, 2000). A mentor (a) provides solutions for helping the novice teacher improve overall teaching effectiveness; (b) guides problem-solving and helps the novice teacher develop a teaching style that is comfortable and effective to student learning; and (c) serves as a navigator to help the novice teacher negotiate within the school environment (CEC, 2003).

- Retention: staying in the same or similar special education teaching assignment as the previous year. This definition includes those teachers who stay in their assignment but transfer to other schools or districts (Billingsley, 2004a). For the purpose of this study, retention will be considered as those persons who maintain a position in the education of students with EBD including classroom teachers, principals, special education administrators, special education doctoral students, and special educators in post secondary institutions or state and federal education agencies.

- Role dissonance: the divergence or mismatch between a special education teacher's daily experience and the belief about the role of the special educator or disparities between job design and job execution (Henderson et al., 2005).

- Special education teacher shortage: teaching positions left vacant or filled by a substitute because a qualified candidate could not be found (Boe & Cook, 2006; Carlson et al., 2002).

- Teacher induction program: a multifaceted program for supporting beginning teachers using a range of goals including (a) professional development, (b) mentoring by an experienced special education teacher, (c) protection from unreasonable workloads, and (d) reducing the isolation the stress and isolation experienced by many special educators new to teaching (Billingsley, 2004b).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review focuses on the major issues in teacher preparation. It

presents the teacher shortage and how it came to be and the issues that contribute to it.

Teacher quality is presented as to optimal training schedules, ongoing professional

development and mentorship, and the importance of teacher reflection of student

diversity. It also presents the rationale for the selection of the research design. Sources

for the review of the literature include books, journals, and electronic databases

available through university libraries in north central Texas. The electronic resources

used include the EBSCOhost databases including Academic Search Premier, the

Professional Development Collection and ERIC using the following descriptors to limit

the search: special education, teacher shortage, teacher preparation, teacher

preparation research, teacher retention, and follow up. The body of literature

encompassed pertinent journal articles from 2001 to the present. Additional articles

were used as primary sources.

Teacher Shortages

Not every state has reported shortages of special education teachers; however,

information from professional organizations suggests it is widespread (Muller &

Markowitz, 2003). Currently, several states are faced with an acute shortage. Even

more alarming are the predictions of increasing student population growth, large

numbers of burnt out special educators leaving the field due to lack of support and

dissatisfaction with working conditions, and fewer numbers of new teachers entering the

field of special education (Brown & John, 2000). Every year, the U.S. Congress has

allotted more than $90 million dollars to OSEP to improve recruitment and preparation of special education teachers (Brownell, 2005). Despite this investment, the chronic shortages appear to be increasing, not decreasing.

Policymakers, as well as politicians, propose solutions such as alternative certification to fast-track teachers with a core content background into the classroom. The rationale, coming from secondary teacher preparation, proposes subject mastery as more important than pedagogical training for high school students (Sindelar, Daunic, & Rennells, 2004). Feistritzer (1999) believed alternative certification programs had evolved into a viable solution when she gave testimony before the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. She estimated more than 80,000 teachers were in classrooms through alternative certification programs. With those numbers, one might think neither teacher shortage nor teacher quality would be an issue by now. Lessons are being learned about these programs. Quality programs that put effective alternatively certified teachers where they are needed most are extremely labor intensive and expensive for faculty and staff. (Brown & John, 2000; Tyler, Cantou-Clarke, Easterling, & Klepper, 2003) and, without considerable investment and time commitment, there will not be quality teachers to enhance student achievement (Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002). Thus, students in special education, most especially students with EBD, continue to suffer from a shortage of highly qualified teachers.

Background

The issue of teacher shortage as well as other concerns came to the attention of a number of private foundations in the 1980's (Holmes, 2001). Holmes reported that the Education Commission of the States' efforts to invite discussion of issues in teacher

education and quality uncovered a major issue that had, until that time, been overlooked. Many areas were developing major shortages of minority teachers, especially African-American, Hispanic, and Native American teachers. She adds that the shortages were due to rapidly growing minority populations and an influx of large numbers of new immigrants. Smith (2003) feels that the national attention paid to the education of children was a positive step toward solving problems. The criticism leveled at schools by politicians and businesspeople was considered segue to collaboration and support from the community to improve the education situation. Grant and Wong (2003) argue, "the 'performance chasm' in reading achievement between language minority learners and children whose first language is English is a topic for discussion by educators, policy makers, and concerned citizens in many communities" (p.386). Ogden (2002) however, questions why education is the only profession that allows itself to be run by outsiders. Doctors and lawyers do not let plumbers, car salespeople, or real estate agents sit on their governing boards. Although people may believe that having suffered as students in school makes for expertise in teaching, Ogden disagrees. He also disagrees with a popular stance that the fundamental problem is poorly prepared teachers who are unable to teach a rapidly changing student enrollment. He suggests that it is state legislation and society's denigration of teaching as a profession that causes teachers to leave the field and discourages quality candidates from entering. According to Ogden, public perception is the problem that has led to the crisis. Budig (2006) suggests it is more than perception in that teaching in K-12 public schools is one of the lowest paid professions at entry level in the U.S. and many 5-10 year veteran teachers are paid less than recent graduates with careers in other fields.

The numbers are troubling. The National Education Association (NEA) Department of Teacher Quality reported that 22% of all secondary school students take a class with a teacher who has no background in the subject taught (Dedman, 2003; Muller & Markowitz, 2003). According to Allen (2002), the state of Connecticut was noted for its abundance of teachers a few years ago but now is reporting shortages. Many factors have contributed to the shortage of teachers; some are obvious, some are surprising.

Brown v. Topeka had an effect on education in the U.S. far beyond the attempt to desegregate schools. Desegregation was supposed to benefit African-American students allowing them the benefits of a quality education in an integrated school. Unfortunately, the Brown decision failed to address the contextual effects on the structures associated with teaching diverse students in the same arena as white students. Instead of enjoying better opportunities, students of color were systematically referred to remedial and special education (Shealey, Lue, Brooks, & McCray, 2005). There was the sudden loss of a large force of African-American teachers in the years following the *Brown v. Topeka* (Holmes, 2001; Shealey et al., 2005). More than 38,000 African-American educators lost their jobs between 1954 and 1965, and the pool of African-American teacher candidates was reduced by 66% between 1975 and 1985. By 2000, 95% of the teaching force was white with more than one third of the student population comprised of people of color (Hudson & Holmes, 1994). The schools may have had to accept African-American students; but they did not accept African-American faculty. The legacy of *Brown* is that most public school students receive 12 years of education without encountering a single teacher with a minority background

(Hudson & Holmes), but it is only part of the teacher shortage story.

The women's movement and affirmative action led to women of all colors pursuing other, more lucrative opportunities that had previously not been open to them (Holmes, 2001; Tyler et al., 2004). Although there are many graduates of special education teacher programs, they have not helped to ease the shortage of teachers. Approximately 40% of special education teacher graduates do not enter the teaching profession the year following graduation, and 35% of the graduates are already teaching during their preparation programs (Boe, Cook, Paulsen, Barkanic, & Leow, 1999; Muller & Markowitz, 2003). Many graduates do not equal many teachers. Teachers retiring, student populations growing, and forecasts projecting a need for two million more teachers over the next 10 years (Budig, 2006; Jorissen, 2002) have caused a recruiting frenzy. As teacher shortages worsen throughout the nation, school districts are demanding that state certification boards take action to fill vacancies.

Recruitment

The enticement of individuals to the teaching field has been a difficult process. A number of different strategies have been suggested. Some have been practical and immediately effective. Others require the changing of a social paradigm and will take longer. One of the immediate strategies is forgiveness of repayment of student loans or outright scholarships for teachers who will agree to a specified engagement term with a school with staffing difficulties (Allen, 2002; Evans, Stewart, Mangin, & Bagley, 2001). Competitive compensation is a significant factor in immediate teacher recruitment. Even the most altruistic teacher may succumb to the lure of being paid what they are worth (Ogden, 2002). Bonuses bring quality teachers to urban and high poverty area schools

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where the minority population is twice as likely to be taught by non-certified teachers (Evans et al., 2001). Allowing retired teachers to return to work and to act as mentors to novice teachers without loss of retirement benefits has been especially helpful in staffing (Allen, 2002). Enhancing the professionalism of teachers is a long-term, long-time investment in teaching as a profession. White and O'Neal (2002) promote the idea of a teacher scholar whose status and compensation would be comparable to a doctor or lawyer. The doctoral degree, however, would not mean a move to teaching at the university level as it so often means now but a lifetime career in a public school.

One of the most effective recruitment strategies has been alternative certification. Alternative certification routes to teach first emerged in four states with critical teacher shortages. Virginia, New Jersey, Texas, and California developed programs that eventually spread to 41 other states (Berry, 2001). Universities have also entered the alternative certification business. In 2001, Holmes reported more than 125,000 persons have been licensed to teach through alternative certification. By 2003, the alternative certification programs of 46 states and the District of Columbia reported turning out approximately 25,000 teachers per year (Tissington & Grow, 2007). Alternative certification has been challenging and controversial in trying to develop quality programs that will allow a variety of individuals to start in a teaching position quickly (Lefever-Davis, 2002). Professionals seeking job changes, paraprofessionals wanting to move up, ex-military, and recent college graduates who had a change of heart or could not find a job are the usual candidates. However selfless the active self-selection of these alternative route candidates may be, their preparation is still less than preferable compared to traditional teacher preparation candidates. Alternative certification

programs appear to attract more members of minority groups and males than the traditional 4-year model in university teacher preparation programs (Holmes, 2001; Suell & Piotrowski, 2006; Tissington & Grow, 2007; Tyler et al., 2004). However, these good intentioned teachers often find themselves with an unreasonable workload. The responsibilities of the classroom, usually one of the most challenging ones, and the intense study involved in the evening or weekend education courses become overwhelming particularly without the support of an interested mentor. It is understandable why 15% of New York's alternative recruits terminated their contracts two months into the school year (Berry, 2001). The outlook for their students is worse (Billingsley & McLeskey, 2004). Laczko-Kerr and Berliner (2002) found a 20% lower achievement by students taught by emergency or alternatively certified teachers as compared to students taught by fully certified teachers. There are, however, quality programs for alternative route special education teacher preparation programs producing excellent teachers (Esposito & Lal, 2005; Feistritzer, 1999). The standards of teacher preparation programs vary whether they are 4-year or alternative entries (Poliakoff, 2002; Suell & Piotrowski, 2006). There are other forces at work sabotaging the success and the sanity of novice teachers. What is happening is that the least experienced teachers are placed in the classrooms with the greatest challenges and the greatest need for teaching expertise (Shepherd & Brown, 2003). What must be done to encourage these teachers to stay?

Retention/Attrition

Teachers want to feel successful, they want to enjoy their work, and they want to make a difference for students. The problem is that too many novice and experienced

teachers are not feeling that way. In fact, half of novice special education teachers leave teaching within five years (Darling-Hammond, 2001; Henderson et al., 2005; Herbert & Ramsay, 2004). Studies have shown that attrition relates to three factors: (a) age, (b) experience, and (c) certification (Billingsley, 2004a; Henderson et al., 2005). Other factors, such as school climate or work environment and collegiality, also figure prominently in teachers' intent to stay in the field (Henderson et al., 2005; Miller, Brownell, & Smith, 1999). Miller et al. (1999) also reported certification status, perceived stress, school climate, and age are the factors which determine who will stay and who will leave. Environmental or workplace variables related to attrition are (a) job dissatisfaction, (b) stress, and (c) burnout (Kaff, 2004; Singh & Billingsley, 1996). Kaff (2004) reported the three most frequently mentioned concerns of special educators leaving the field were (a) lack of administrative support, (b) classroom concerns, and (c) individual issues. Of the three areas, the lack of support was the reason for leaving given by 57% of exiting educators studied. Role-dissonance, the difference between teachers' expectations about their positions and the positions' actual requirements, was found to be the strongest predictor of the kind of stress that cause teachers to leave (Gersten, Keating, Yovanoff, & Harniss, 2001). What must be examined are the elements of support that will encourage special educators to stay in the field.

According to Allen (2002), "what works is never only a matter of a particular kind of policy or program" (p. 9). What does work in teacher preparation programs? The strength of the teacher preparation program to promote retention is not in its coursework. The most important consideration seems to be in the development of the field based experience (Gut, Oswald, Leal, Frederiksen, & Gustafson, 2003; Lovingfoss,

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Molloy, Harris, & Graham, 2001). The traditional student teaching experience as the culmination of the program has been found insufficient for preparing special education teachers for the variety of their roles in schools. The most effective traditional and alternative route to certification programs now extend the amount of time preservice teachers spend in the field-based classroom experiences (Prater & Sileo, 2002). In addition, the key elements for fostering a professional identity, as well as a multicultural understanding, are direct experience and sustained social contact (Groulx, 2001). Preservice teachers should have these elements in the field experience of their program. However, it is possible to acquire this learning through activities such as tutoring foreign students in English, volunteering at community service organizations and homeless shelters, or working with immigrant families. These powerful experiences have the potential to promote self-evaluation and self-discovery, to change mono-cultural perspectives, and to challenge misconceptions and stereotypes about families of different cultures (Groulx, 2001; Henderson-Sparks, Paredes, & Gonzalez, 2002). It is the maximum amount of hands-on field or student teaching experience coupled with a well-structured classroom experience that prepares the preservice teacher for the realities of the teaching environment and forestalls early exits from the field (Conderman, Morin, & Stephens, 2005).

Difficult or disorganized working conditions can produce high turnover of teachers (Jorissen, 2002; Wasburn-Moses, 2006). It is the little nuisances, such as supplies not available, copy machine not working, or unprofessional behavior, that make lesson delivery more difficult than it has to be (Kaufhold, Alverez, & Arnold, 2006). Structure and organization on which teachers can depend make a positive impact on

daily life and the school climate (Allen, 2002). Administration and the office staff play a large role in keeping teachers efficient in completing the myriad tasks that are the normal part of teaching in public school. Administration also provides the leadership in instruction. Learning to teach effectively is an ongoing process. Knowledge of subject matter deepens, inquiry is refined, and repertoire development is extended (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). When this leadership is absent, teachers will leave (Whitaker, 2000) and call it lack of support (Gersten et al., 2001; Kaff, 2004). Another issue in this genre affecting retention is when the new teacher's vision of good teaching is not consistent with school philosophy. Many new teachers encounter frustration when the concepts on which their training was based cannot withstand the demands of the school setting and theory cannot be put into practice (Cook, Fry, Konopak, & Moore, 2002).

Current literature (e.g. Billingsley, 2004a, 2004b; Wasburn-Moses, 2006; Whitaker, 2000; White & Mason, 2006) is filled with reports of the benefits of mentoring novice teachers as one component of a teacher induction program. One of the key benefits it provides is in retention of teachers, both novice and experienced (Kajs, 2002). Experienced, quality teachers find it reinforcing and revitalizing to mentor preservice teachers. The establishment of partnership systems with teacher preparation programs results in increased support for small group instruction, tutorials, and behavior support during direct teaching. The students benefit from increased attention as much the professional educator and the novice or preservice teacher benefit from the mentoring relationship (Nevin, Malian, & Williams, 2002). However, the development of a successful mentoring relationship must not be left to chance. The effective mentoring programs include components for (a) mentor selection, (b) mentor and preservice

teacher preparation, (c) support team, and (d) accountability (Kajs, 2002). A support

team or group provides a vehicle both for venting, sharing, and getting reassurance and

affirmation as well as an opportunities to share lesson plans or behavioral intervention

ideas (Bristor, Kinzer, Lapp, & Ridener, 2002), to review or develop students'

individualized education plans (IEP), and initiate the novice teacher into the community

of practice (Stanulis, Fallona, & Pearson, 2002; Wasburn-Moses, 2006).

Mentorship is usually considered during the first year of teaching but works

equally well for preservice teachers. In fact, a mentor relationship might prove more

beneficial than the usual cooperative teacher. Effective mentoring includes observation

and then, feedback on the session. The time commitment may seem like a hardship on

busy teachers, but is well worth the investment for the potential for increased mastery of

skills in relatively minimal time (Giebelhaus & Bowman, 2002). One of the reasons new

teachers leave is a lack of effective mentoring (Evans et al., 2001). Ideal mentoring

would begin in preservice and continue through the first five years of teaching at which

point the role would then change to mentor (Giebelhaus & Bowman, 2002). Wasburn-

Moses (2006) suggests dual mentoring. The novice teacher would be assigned both a

special education mentor to assist in technical knowledge, paperwork, unwritten policies

and administrative duties, as well as a general educator to assist in acculturation to the

school, collegial socialization, and development of collaborative relationships.

The time-honored way to maintain employee loyalty is through salary increases

and incentives. Many states and organizations support performance incentives for

teachers; that is, teachers would be rewarded for improving student achievement. Other

organizations support differential incentives where teachers are paid bonuses or are

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forgiven debt repayment for teaching in areas suffering from teacher shortages (Evans et al., 2001). It is not salary or incentives that have the greatest effect on teacher retention. Research indicates that teachers who are highly involved professionally are more likely to remain in teaching (e.g., Jorissen, 2002). Those teachers that feel they have autonomy and influence within the professional culture of schools and can positively impact the quality of teaching and learning regard teaching as a professional career and not merely a job (Johnston, Wetherill, High, & Greenebaum, 2002; Pearson & Moomaw, 2005). Moreover, it becomes imperative as teachers become the models for their students. Students need to see their teachers as professionals who matter in society. They need to see teaching as a career to which they can aspire. The key findings of the Study of Personnel Needs in Special Education (SPeNSE), however, found no empirical research linking student achievement to special education teacher engagement in professional activities (Carlson et al., 2002). However, Gersten et al. (2001) found that the extent to which administration provided professional development opportunities for special educators contributed to their reduction in stress.

Diversity

Organizations such as the National Education Association (NEA) are calling for a comprehensive agenda that will lead to a diverse teaching profession (Dedman, 2003). Teacher preparation must be revised to respond to student diversity and the failure in school of African-American learners (Townsend, 2002). Students of color make up approximately one third of the student population and yet only 5% of the nation's teachers are teachers of color (Heimbecker, Medina, Peterson, Redsteer, & Prater, 2002). It is a matter of supply and demand. Since our population of diverse students is

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increasing, we should be seeing a resultant increase in the number of teachers of color. However, the teaching force that these students experience is devoid of color as well as cultural connection and students cannot place themselves in this perceived environment (Groulx, 2001; LeCompte & McCray, 2002). The diversity is even more keenly felt in special education as it is plagued by ongoing overrepresentation of culturally or linguistically diverse (CLD) students identified for services (Obiakor, 2004; Prater, 2005). Ill-prepared teachers working in urban areas and large minority placements are actually counter-productive to the recruitment of teachers of color.

Some believe that teacher preparation programs do not properly prepare preservice teachers to work with children of color (e.g., Groulx, 2001; Obiakor, 2004). Townsend (2002) called for training that would increase teachers' repertoires of knowledge and skills that would facilitate academic as well as social success for minority students, enhance teachers' awareness of the perspective of cultural diversity, use effective instruction with culturally relevant curriculum, and promote positive and nonjudgmental interactions between students and their families with teachers. Obiakor (2004) agreed that it is competence in dealing with cultural diversity and not race that makes the difference. He stated, "Poorly prepared teachers tend to teach poorly" (p. 60). Immersion teacher training in the areas of need is effective and must be supported and funded (Groulx. 2001; Heimbecker et al., 2002). Preservice teachers living in the area where they will teach have an opportunity to become culturally attenuated to the population. This practice reduces the chance of mismatch in perspective and increases the opportunities for teachers to learn to effectively teach the nation's future teachers. Unfortunately, immersion programs still have drawbacks.

There are a number of voices (e.g., Nuñez & Fernandez, 2006; Shealey et al., 2005) saying the teachers who reflect the same cultural or racial aspects of their students have more impact on student achievement than their white counterparts regardless of their cultural competence. Dee (2001) refers to the above statement as conventional wisdom but it has not been corroborated by empirical research (Tyler et al., 2004). CLD teachers can act as role models and enable CLD students to envision themselves as competent, neither different nor inferior as they enter academia. But CLD students with aspirations to university degrees and teaching careers find themselves facing entrance exam requirements that preclude their entrance into higher education. If they do succeed in gaining entrance, they face resistance from family members who lobby for career selections more prestigious and lucrative than teaching (Tyler et al., 2004).

Billingsley et al. (2006) studied a sample of teachers of students with EBD compared to a sample of other special educators and found intriguing data. The teachers of students with EBD were disproportionately male, more racially diverse, and significantly younger with less experience than the other educators. The diversity among the teachers did not match the diversity among the students. At least it shows promise.

Teacher Quality

Most educators might agree that teaching students with EBD is challenging. Unfortunately, special education teacher preparation programs are likely to be generic in nature. Even less prepared to work with students with EBD are fast tracked entries from alternative certification programs. Research studying the characteristics of

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teachers of students with EBD reports high proportions of teachers entering their assignment without basic certification (Billingsley et al., 2006). One could question that special education is reverting to the past with teachers serving apprenticeships on the job rather than obtaining formal preparation (Gable, 2004). While programs like Teach for America may seem well-intentioned, as are the college students who have participated, its benefit for the neediest students is as deficient as the educational policy that sustains it (Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002)

Background

The Bush Administration's standards-based school reform movement, No Child Left Behind, had its foundation formed by a Children's Defense Fund subcommittee whose intent was to hold adults responsible for changing the lives of children (Townsend, 2002). The idea of providing quality teachers for students is worthwhile. However, the result has been a focus on child deficits rather than adult responsibility. High stakes testing made it politically expedient for teachers to funnel children with culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds into remedial programs and special education. However, these practices have brought teachers and the teacher preparation programs from which they graduate under the public eye and to the attention of state governments.

In 2001, Pennsylvania authorized testing of public school teachers on basic academic skills on a rotating 5-year cycle (Poliakoff, 2002). The purpose of the testing was to determine professional development needs. What became apparent were the consistent low scores of teachers who graduated from specific teacher preparation programs. Although these programs boasted accreditation by the National Council for

the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), their graduates tested below the norm. The idea is that quality teachers make a significant difference in the achievement of the students, and policymakers are concerned that there are thousands of teachers in the nation's classrooms who have inadequate knowledge in their content and little or no training in pedagogy (Allen, 2002). Many other states' board of educations, colleges and universities require a basic academic skills test to evaluate teachers or candidates prior to entrance into teacher preparation programs (Conderman, Katsiyannis, & Franks, 2001). Whether there is a crisis in the quality of teachers remains confusing since much of the research on teacher quality is conflicting (Boe, 2006; Diem, 2002; Prater, 2005). Nevertheless, by 2002, 35 states required teacher candidates to pass some form of the National Teacher Examination and 9 other states required passing grades on customized tests (Watras, 2006). There is no confusion when it comes to the money. States spend no less than one-third of their annual budgets for public school education and they want to see results for that investment (Chi, 2002).

Standards

As a result of voters' dissatisfaction with the quality of public school education, states are demanding accountability through new performance based standards for K-12 students. If the public demands higher standards of achievement for the students, the students must have teachers who can help them meet the expectations (Houlihan, 2002). It followed that various agencies and organizations developed standards for teacher preparation. The NCATE standards were revised (NCATE, 2002) and strengthened in 2002 to retain their reputation for excellence (Peck, Keenan, Cheney, & Neel, 2004). They relied on contributions from member organizations such as NEA and

the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC, 2002) for a thorough set of competencies for beginning teachers.

The NEA developed comprehensive recommendations to ensure not only teacher quality but to increase minority participation. They include:

- Develop recruitment strategies that will lead talented students to choose teaching as a career, particularly minority students.

- Ensure quality teacher preparation by requiring all teacher preparation programs (whether traditional or alternative) to be accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Require quality field-based pre-training components such as professional development schools and supervised internships.

- Develop support systems to help underrepresented groups meet high quality standards. Remove artificial barriers where they exist.

- Establish teacher-majority licensing boards in each state, and require consistent measures of quality based on licensing standards for both beginning and experienced teachers. Require all teachers to be fully licensed.

- Develop high-quality induction and mentoring programs to provide all new teachers a successful transition into the classroom.

- Provide high-quality, sustained, teacher-directed professional development.

- Establish incentives and support for pursuing advance certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

- Focus on retaining teachers in the classroom with a career that is rewarding both professionally and financially (Dedman, 2003, p. 41).

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The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC, 2002) also updated the standards for special education teacher preparation with options that provide flexibility for meeting diverse needs and a common core of values to ensure consistency and excellence in performance. The core professional standards include (a) foundations, (b) development and characteristics of learners, (c) individual learning differences, (d) instructional strategies, (e) learning environments and social interactions, (f) language, (g) instructional planning, (h) assessment, (i) professional and ethical practice, and (j) collaboration.

Other researchers have organized statements of knowledge and skill to enable implementation of categories necessary to effective special education teacher preparation. These categories include (a) foundation information, (b) general knowledge, (c) theory and knowledge, (d) screening and assessment, (e) behavior management, (f) programming, (g) field experience and practice, (h) parents, (i) evaluation and research, (j) consultation and collaboration, and (k) resources; however, central to the preparation of special education teachers are the general education requirements (Bullock, Ellis, & Wilson, 1998). As schools move to more inclusive settings, special educators must possess knowledge of general education curriculum and effective ways to adapt it and/or accommodate individual student's needs.

In order for collaboration in the field and development of an attitude of shared responsibility for all students, the field of education will have to make fundamental changes (Gut et al., 2003). One of the challenges faced by teacher preparation programs and by the teaching profession is how to become more research-based.

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Educational decisions are less likely made on the basis of research than on what is the current trend (Snider, Busch, & Arrowood, 2003). It is interesting to note that any other occupation, when seeking to raise standards of excellence, generally increases salaries and improves working conditions. In the teaching field, they consider lowering the entry standards to attract candidates (Holmes, 2001). If we want to attract candidates who are CLD, however, licensing tests create a problem. Campbell-Whatley (2003) reports that testing requirements are disincentives that discourage the very candidates we want to encourage. The decline of candidates with CLD is six times greater in states where licensing tests have been required. Further, a study of four graduated university students with CLD reported that these teachers, who had evidence of academic success, success in alternate forms of teacher assessment such as observations, and demonstrated attributes of good teacher characteristics, failed the competency exam (Hampton & Cashman, 2004). Prater (2005) questions the expediency of a one instrument of assessment as the teaching profession's gatekeeper as established by NCLB.

Exemplary Teacher Preparation Programs

One of the areas of greatest concern is the teaching of literacy. Maloch, Fine, and Flint (2002) listed eight features common to exemplary reading teacher preparation programs from research for the National Commission and Sites of Excellence in Reading Teacher Education (SERTE).

1. Each program is based on a clearly articulated institutional mission (e.g., preparing teachers for diverse classrooms) that provides a framework for establishing goals for the teacher education program.

2. Faculty members are committed to preparing effective reading teachers, and they allow that vision to drive their respective programs.

3. Because of a commitment to produce capable teachers and increase the number of minority teachers, high standards are set *for* admissions with multiple measures used for the selection, monitoring and support of candidates.

4. Each program has a strong emphasis on developing a congruent set of principles and practices for effective teaching using current literacy theory and best practices research (content).

5. Faculty use personalized teaching to support students' learning of content, and they model critical elements of teaching that they expect preservice teachers to use with their students.

6. Each program features apprenticeship opportunities, and well-supervised field experiences are closely integrated with course content. These programs provided preservice teachers over 150 hours of field experiences prior to student teaching.

7. Each program fosters the professional identity of preservice teachers within and across a variety of communities (e.g., preservice teachers, inservice teachers).

8. Faculty exercise autonomy (i.e., the act of being self-governed and having self-directed freedom) in their commitment to meet their students' needs and demonstrate creative approaches to teacher preparation. (pp. 348-349)

The most successful graduates from the SERTE programs continued their education by developing learning communities within their schools, maintaining contact with university associates, and developing further contacts through membership in

professional organizations. They sought multidisciplinary support for their students.

A number of leaders in the preparation of teachers (e.g., Capella-Santana, 2003; Cartledge, 2004; Coutinho & Oswald, 2005; Obiakor, 2004) are calling for a united front to face the challenges of teaching diverse student populations. A unified system of personnel preparation would enable all teachers to respond to the instructional needs of the individual student. Time honored practices of hoarding resources and protecting boundaries need to give way to the establishment of collaborative initiatives and the development of interdisciplinary programs (Grant & Wong, 2003). Collaborative preservice preparation for both special and general education teachers has been highly successful in programs located in Ohio and Hawaii (Gut et al., 2003; Jenkins, Pateman, & Black, 2002). Gut et al. (2003) suggest that increased teaming among higher education professions is critical when fielding programs that seek to teach preservice teachers the skills involved in collaboration and consultation. Ohio University had traditionally separated the teacher preparation field into general education and special education. In order to respond to changing demands in the schools, the university entered a partnership with an elementary school to design an integrated education and field experience program. This program required general and special education preservice teachers to work together in collaborative teams during field service at the elementary school.

The University of Hawaii at Manoa (UHM) has developed a school-university partnership program for dual licensure in elementary or secondary education and special education (Jenkins et al., 2002). Since the federal mandate to consider the least restrictive environment to the greatest extent possible, a program to build in flexibility to

meet the changing needs of Hawaiian public schools was needed. Teachers are licensed to work in inclusive settings as well as in separate or alternate facilities. Dual licensure strengthens the teachers' options for employment and greatly enhances the flexibility of the schools to respond to changing student needs. However, the content components of a general education teaching degree are extensive and combining any overlap in coursework is vital given the time constraints. For example, UHM was able to integrate a general education foundations course in curriculum and instruction with the special education classroom organization and behavior management course facilitating critical comparison of educational approaches and the corresponding philosophies (Jenkins et al., 2002). The Reaching American Indian Special/Elementary Educators (RAISE) program is another successful dual licensure program. Preservice teachers from Northern Arizona University and uncertified Native American teachers or preservice teachers from the area are prepared to teach in remote or impoverished areas with linguistically and culturally diverse (CLD) populations (Heimbecker et al., 2002).

Some educators argue that a four-year program is not enough to cover the general education content and the special education foundations and specializations. Responding to such arguments, the University of Maryland developed a 5-year, multi-categorical undergraduate program where up to 12 credits can be applied toward a graduate degree in special education. The increased time in preservice study allowed special educators to have the general education content foundation (Lovingfoss et al., 2001). The expansion of time in the field has a drawback in that it limits the numbers of hours of coursework within the traditional time frame. There is, however, general

agreement that preservice teachers need more time working in school communities

than the traditional semester of student teaching at the end of the preparation program

(Gut et al., 2003; Lovingfoss et al., 2001; Nevin et al., 2002).

The University of Washington (UW) and the University of North Texas (UNT)

have intensive model programs leading to a master's degree in special education with a

specialization in EBD (L. M. Bullock, personal communication, June 4, 2007; Peck et al.,

2004). Special education certification is an option for those students not previously

certified requiring additional hours. In addition to program content that incorporates

competencies of the core professional standards of CEC, these programs also include

the specialized set of items that relate to teaching students with E/BD. Field

experiences are at the heart of both programs. Full-time UNT students spend more than

20 hours per week in various placements where students with EBD are educated

including public school self-contained classrooms, alternative schools, juvenile justice

facilities, and hospitals.

The partnership of institutions of higher learning and institutions educating

students with EBD is a vital aspect of exemplary personnel preparation. These

agreements enable schools and institutions to participate in the structuring of a program

to prepare teachers to work in real situations, allow cross-institutional positions, and

facilitate the integration of committees for program decisions (Bristor et al., 2002).

According to Prater & Sileo (2002),

Partner schools ground teacher education in school practice and help university

students integrate inquiry, instructional theory, and practical classroom

applications. They also foster shared responsibility for enhancing the quality of

teacher preparation; collaborative curricular and instructional design,

implementation, and evaluation; and students' reflection regarding professional

knowledge, abilities, and values. (p. 326)

An arrangement between university and partner schools makes for a more powerful

curriculum because learning to teach has to be oriented not only in the intellectual but

also in the practical tasks of teaching and in the contexts of teachers' work (Feiman-

Nemser, 2001). However, both the program and the professional development school

must be consistent in teaching durable concepts that are acceptable in the larger school

arena. As teachers go out of the immediate area to find positions, they need to find

some consistency in teaching philosophies. It is the responsibility of the teacher

preparation program to be responsive to the teaching market and to prepare the

teachers to be effective in that market. It is the school, after all, where the new teacher's

competency will be evaluated (Cook et al., 2002).

Diversity

The increasing numbers of students with CLD pose a challenging problem to

realizing higher standards for reading achievement. There is a large gap between the

achievement in reading for these students and native English-speaking students. Grant

and Wong (2003) observe that literacy is critical for organizing and understanding the

future, as well as the past and the present and language minority children find no

support to overcome this linguistic barrier to success. Research suggests that second

language acquisition is best served by competency in the first language; however,

teachers working with language minority students have neither the time nor the support

to allow expression in anything but English (Capella-Santana, 2003). Pressure to

achieve acceptable standards might tempt schools to relegate the English-language learners to the *back burner* (Grant & Wong, 2003). Obiakor (2004) suggests this tendency to put the blame on individual students' differences as the cause for not achieving standards is racism. Grant and Wong feel that teacher preparation programs must do more than require a class or two to address diversity and multicultural information. Reading and special education teachers need to have the skills and knowledge to assess reading difficulties and to develop strategies for multilingual children with a wide range of abilities and behaviors (Grant & Wong, 2003). Further, the greater the contrast between the teachers' understanding of diverse cultures and the cultural or ethnic background of the students, the greater the probability the teacher might perceive the students' linguistic differences as behavioral deficits (Capella-Santana, 2003). Both situations, lack of skills or lack of knowledge, will hinder a teacher's ability to effectively teach students with CLD.

Extensive preservice field experience is an important component to meeting the instructional needs of students with diverse needs. Although it is critical to have multicultural education infused through the coursework of a teacher preparation program, it is the immersed field experiences with cooperating teachers that provide novice teachers with cultural relevance (Bristor et al., 2002; Capella-Santana, 2003; Heimbecker et al., 2002). Townsend (2002) observes that preservice teachers must be prepared with thorough knowledge of behavioral norms, values, and cultural experiences of students of African-American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American backgrounds. She further suggests a certification program in culturally responsive pedagogy that would include "training to enhance teacher awareness of their

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perspective of cultural differences, facilitate the use of academic and social instruction that is effective with diverse students, and promote positive interactions between teachers and parents of culturally diverse students" (p. 736). However, LeCompte and McCrary (2002) and Groulx (2001) disagree that white teachers might be able to transfer what they learn in intensive multicultural instruction and experience in order to teach culturally diverse students effectively; therefore, white teachers are not the best choices to teach students of color. Obiakor (2004) contends that all teacher preparation programs have an obligation to use divergent techniques to prepare all future educators to use divergent techniques to educate students with CLD. Nevertheless, there is a need to increase the recruitment of students with CLD and faculty with CLD in teacher preparation programs. Given the severe shortages in teachers of color, other options might be exercised. For example, the RAISE program facilitated cultural changes by bringing non-Native American preservice teachers to live, learn, and teach with Native American preservice teachers (paraeducators) on the Navajo reservation for the complete certification program (Heimbecker et al., 2002). Allowing an immersion experience for white teachers to begin to identify with cultural diversity is, at least, a step in the right direction for better understanding. The Navajo certified teachers also benefited culturally and were able to take what they learned about the white culture to their students on the Navajo reservation.

Curriculum is another area that may impede the success of the language minority student. Historically, American schools' curriculum has been based from a European-American perspective. Cultural minorities are acknowledged by celebrations such as Black History Month or Cinco de Mayo. These components are fragmented, limited, and

folkloric and negatively impact perceptions as to the potential success of minority students (Capella-Santana, 2003). Teacher standards call on teachers to prepare effective curriculum and teachers do. However, the teaching force is approximately 95% white and the curriculum that is developed reflects that statistic (Heimbecker et al., 2002). Time and more teachers of color are needed to improve the disparity between the amount of curriculum responsive to students of color and the amount of European-American focused curriculum. But it is outstanding teaching competence that will make the difference for our students with CLD in academics and behavior (Cartledge, 2004). Exceptionally competent teachers need to be in every color, from every culture teaching every student from his or her strengths.

<div align="center">Needs of Teachers of Students with EBD</div>

Teachers of students with EBD find themselves in an arena full of conflict. First, there is the crisis of teacher shortage. Teachers with little or no background in teaching and likely without benefit of certification find themselves thrust into the classroom with students with EBD. These teachers are likely not to stay in teaching (Brownell, Sindelar, Bishop, Langley, & Seo, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Tissington & Grow, 2007) unless they can find some help. Bullock (2004) described his own search for assistance:

> What I needed to do to be effective with middle school students who would (a) rather try to climb out the windows than sit in their seats, (b) clearly articulate their thoughts and feelings using the language of seasoned sailors, and (c) challenge why assignments were required and express that "you can't make me do this stuff" and much more. (p. 4)

Stempien and Loeb (2002) found the most distinguishing factor in the stress of teachers

of students with EBD is frustration; their job was not perceived as rewarding as compared to peers in general education. Second, NCLB (2002) requires that all teachers be highly qualified meaning that content knowledge is more important than pedagogy. The new teacher may be an expert in algebra and physics but that knowledge will not serve immediately in dealing with a class of students with EBD. Third, NCLB requires that all students participate in high stakes testing and teachers will be held accountable for student progress. Once again, the new teacher is wondering how his or her students will do on these assessments given the fact they have yet to complete required assignments.

New teachers of students with EBD are often in a quandary. They were not prepared adequately and they are not supported adequately; nevertheless, they are held accountable for student progress. The evidence that student achievement is linked to adequacy of teacher preparation and experience is emerging (Billingsley & McLeskey, 2004; Justice, Greiner, & Anderson, 2003; Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002) So lacking adequate certification or adequate preparation and with all the stress, poor working conditions, and low pay, is it any wonder that the teacher shortage is anticipated to get worse (Brownell et al., 2005; Center & Steventon, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2001; Hardman et al., 2005)?

Background

There has been considerable literature providing information about the shortage of teachers of students with disabilities in recent years (e.g., Boe & Cook, 2006; Brownell et al., 2004; Katsiyannis et al., 2003). There is, however, limited information about the serious shortage of highly qualified teachers of students with EBD (Billingsley

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et al., 2006; Henderson et al., 2005). We do know there is a disproportionate shortage of these specific teachers (Katsiyannis et al., 2003) and there is a higher rate of attrition for teachers of students with EBD than other special education teachers (Abrams, 2005; Billingsley & McLeskey, 2004; Katsiyannis et al., 2003). Teachers of students with EBD reported greater job related stress and role dissonance than other special educators (Cross & Billingsley, 1994; Henderson et al., 2005). Simpson (2004) reports,

> I hear from my students at the University of Kansas and from teachers and other professionals with whom I work that the demands of teaching, including paperwork, lack of administrative support, and so forth; the long hours and overcrowded classrooms that have become a routine part of the teaching profession; and the relatively poor compensation associated with a career in education increasingly make teaching a professional choice primarily for those with missionary zeal and masochistic tendencies. (p. 45)

The question is why this particular area of special education suffers the greatest in regard to adequate personnel supply.

Stressors: Negative Students

An obvious answer to the personnel issues lies in the nature of the students with EBD. Students with EBD present considerable difficulties for teachers and have been acknowledged as among the most challenging students to teach (Abrams, 2005; Billingsley et al., 2006; Sutherland, Denny, & Gunter, 2005). Frustrated by the negative behaviors of the students, fatigued by the stress inherent to teaching these students, and held accountable for their progress, many teachers in the EBD classroom suffer burnout (Billingsley et al., 2006). They either leave the EBD field or become ineffective

teachers (Abrams, 2005). Fewer qualified teachers equates to a greater number of unqualified teachers or ill-prepared substitutes teaching students with EBD; the same students who experience the least school success of any group of students with or without disabilities (Wagner, Kutash, Duchnowski, Epstein, & Sumi, 2005).

The history of reinforcement for both students and teachers contributes to the downward spiral. Behavioral research illustrates the reciprocal relationship between instruction and problem behavior (Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995). Students who act out to avoid or escape instruction are less involved in academic interactions with teachers who then provide less effective instruction. Thus the cycle produces negative effects on both students' learning and teacher effective instruction (Sutherland & Oswald, 2005). Students do not make adequate yearly progress, and the teacher feels increasingly incompetent. Teachers who feel overwhelmed by their students with EBD, who feel they do not have adequate training to teach these students, and who are inexperienced leave the field (Brownell et al., 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Fore, Martin, & Bender, 2002). Whereas students with EBD may be challenging to their teachers, they are not always the source of frustration of the teachers. Often there are other factors that cause special education teachers to leave.

Stressors: Lack of Administrative and Collegial Support

Strong administrative and collegial support positively impacts a special educator's decision to stay; while lack of support contributes to attrition (Kaff, 2004; Singh & Billingsley, 1996). The sense of isolation that novice teachers feel, as they face tiny classrooms, too many students, and inadequate materials and resources, is overwhelming (Gehrke & Murri, 2006; Schlichte, Yssel, & Merbler, 2005). There have

been consistent findings that positive working conditions predict lower levels of stress and, therefore, retention (Nelson, Maculan, Roberts, & Ohlund, 2001).

Teachers may perceive the poor working conditions as a direct correlation to administrative neglect not only of them, but of their students as well. In many cases, it is the attachment to their students with EBD that keeps teachers in the classroom despite the poor conditions. Regardless of how they felt about their students, lack of administrative support was the most reported concern of special educators who were leaving (Kaff, 2004). However, Singh and Billingsley (1996) found administrative support did not have a direct effect on the special educator's who taught students with EBD. However, administrative support directly affected job satisfaction which had the strongest effect on teachers' of students with EBD intent to stay. This confusing data leads one to the realization there are many components necessary to the feelings of job satisfaction that make teachers of students with EBD want to stay in that classroom.

Stressors: Role Dissonance

Many teachers feel overwhelmed by the multiple roles they have (e.g., Fore et al., 2002; Gehrke & Murri, 2006; Henderson et al., 2005). For example, they are to (a) schedule and supervise one or more paraprofessionals; (b) collaborate and consult with general education teachers in regard to curriculum with which they have no experience that includes literature, science, music, art, physical education, and etc.; and (c) change program philosophies without adequate preparation or training.

Hiring and/or managing support personnel generally are beyond the realm of experience of most novice special educators (Gehrke & Murri, 2006). Novice teachers often are frustrated as they try to train paraprofessionals in a job they barely know

themselves. If the paraprofessional is experienced, novice teachers occasionally find themselves relying too much on the paraprofessional. The way they always did it before may not take into account the individual students' goals and objectives.

The novice teacher, perhaps unqualified in his or her teaching assignment, is likely to be unfamiliar with the general education curriculum. When confronted by the general education teacher demanding adaptations for a student in the class, the novice teacher faces a predicament. A teacher in Gehrke and Murri's (2006) article asked, "How can you modify something you don't know?" (p. 187) Novice teachers do not know where to access materials or how to acquire resources (Kaufhold et al., 2006). Trying to gain access to a general education classroom for the student with EBD is another challenge for the novice teacher.

Changing paradigms are generally not in the novice special educators' repertoires. The novice teacher is at a disadvantage when it comes to convincing a general education teacher to welcome the student with EBD to the classroom. Leading the charge for access to general education curriculum for students with EBD is never a comfortable position in a school. Nor is finding that a program has been changed by administration and teachers no longer know what their roles or responsibilities are (Gehrke & Murri, 2006).

Other stressors in this area are frequency and number of meetings, relationships with students' parents, administrative duties, and school policies (Center & Steventon, 2001). The novice teachers are not prepared to wear so many hats. Confusion about their roles and the time allotment to perform them all can shatter the confidence of the

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novice teacher and lower the probability of the intent to stay in teaching students with EBD.

Meeting Needs

In the Henderson et al. (2005) study, teachers of students with EBD had the least number of years in teaching compared to other special educators. This lack of experience has an effect on teachers' perceptions of problem behavior. The less experienced the teacher, the more likely they were to rate student behavior negatively. More experienced teachers tended to be more positive about student behavior (Kaiser, Cai, Hancock. & Foster, 2002). More experienced teachers are also more effective teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2003). It is imperative that special educators of students with EBD be given the time it takes to develop that composed perspective and efficacy. There are two components that will ease the stressors and clarify the roles: (a) preparation in an exemplary program; and (b) provision of a longer teacher induction program including IEP assistance, trained mentors from both special and general education, and access to specific professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Gehrke & Murri, 2006). The problem is to make these vital resources reliably available to every special educator who would teach students with EBD. What is necessary is the kind of research that appeals to the mind and the heart of those who would fund for this kind of excellence.

Selection of Research Design

Since the late 19th century to the present, researchers have engaged in a debate as to the better methodology to present unbiased research (Onwuegbuzie, 2000; Tanner, 1998). Definitions of quantitative and qualitative research abound. One must

consider the source of the definition, whether a quantitative or qualitative proponent, before accepting the accuracy.

The claims of superiority of one methodology over the other are as numerous for one as they are for the other. Some claim that the quantitative is more precise; however, others claim that social context is so complex as to render numerical description imprecise (Schostak, 2005). Patten (2002) gives an oversimplified but concise definition of the two styles. She describes them as "quantitative research is research in which the results are presented as quantities or numbers (that is, statistics) and qualitative research is research in which the results are trends or themes described in words" (p. 168). At the risk of sounding quantitative, a better way to compare qualitative and quantitative research may be a table format comparing and contrasting the elements (Neill, 2006). Many contributors to Meloy's (1994) book would agree with Neill's comparisons. However, there are those who would not. For example, some researchers (e.g., Henwood & Pidgeon, 2003; Rennie, 2006) would not agree that in their qualitative study they did not know for what they were looking. One difference illustrated by Meloy is the infinite possibilities of qualitative research. A researcher must be careful to determine a stopping point for the study; the temptation to continue in analysis or refinement can be overwhelming. In contrast, quantitative seems so finite with its rules for ending the pursuit. Once the decision is made to reject or to not reject the null hypotheses, the research on the hypothesis is finished (Gay, 1992).

Another way to contrast between the methodologies is discussed by Reswick (1994). He states there are three major differences between the two styles of research; that is, (a) process; (b) tools; and (c) outcomes. The quantitative process is considered

linear with deductive thinking patterns. The experiment has isolation of data, definition

of parameters, and precise measurement of the relevant variables. The tools are

instruments, whether computer or numerical formulas with the data controlled and

matched in samples. The quantitative outcome is a truth test of the previously stated

hypothesis. Reswick describes qualitative research as a very different process. There

may be a general theory or, more likely, a problem to be solved but there is no definition

of system as the researcher gathers data. It becomes entirely possible to completely

redefine the model in response to the feedback. The qualitative tools are interview,

focus groups, questionnaires, and personal observation and participation. The outcome

is a theory grounded on data. The question then becomes is one methodology more

scientific than the other?

A relative newcomer to the debate might be tempted to say quantitative research

is more scientific that qualitative. The data are controlled and objective, system analysis

is efficient, and results are generalizable. However empirical quantitative research may

appear, there remains the fact that subjective decisions have been made along the way;

statistical significance depends a great deal on sample size, and small variances can

have huge effect (Onwuegbuzie, 2000). Verification, or reliability and validity, is another

debated area. Morse (2006) argues the qualitative research is about description and

meaning and not measurement as in quantitative inquiry. Reliability and validity,

therefore, take on a different character in qualitative inquiry. Although Morse claims that

qualitative inquiry is self-correcting, it may not meet the standards for research set by

the Department of Education (Odom et al., 2005).

Randomized classroom trials (RCT) have become the gold standard for research

funding. This methodology is clearly quantitative. Many doubt that this methodology will provide the effectiveness that is expected (Berliner, 2002; Odom et al., 2005). Some believe that RCT is the best thing that could happen to special education (Forness, 2005). However, scientific method is not defined by quantitative research. "Research is scientific when it employs the scientific method" (Reswick, 1994, p. 1). The elements of the scientific method, of good research, are replicability, validity, and reliability according to Reswick. Good research in the qualitative style is just as able to meet those requirements as a quantitative study. You may see more quantitative research in physical and biomedical contexts but qualitative studies have a place in that arena as well. In the same way, quantitative studies are valuable in social sciences despite the affinity for qualitative approaches. Many researchers suggest the use of both methodologies to support epistemological ecumenicalism (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Onwuegbuzie, 2000).

Program evaluation is necessary to justify expenditures for many service organizations. Executive officers and boards of directors want numbers and bottom lines. However, many program evaluation studies are very limited in their context and simply cannot maintain traditional quantitative research design. They can either (a) proceed solely with a quantitative approach with threats to validity, (b) use a qualitative approach which may not be appropriate to assessment of program outcome, or (c) combine a quantitative with a qualitative approach to facilitate the strengths of one methodology to overcome the weakness of the other (Dunnagan, Peterson, & Wilson, 1997; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Choosing the third option will function well for many situations. Educational researchers among others find themselves with small

sample groups, limited research budget, and a need to assess results only for those directly studied (Patten, 2002). Random samples are simply not possible, control groups may not be available or ethical, and personnel are not available to assist and maintain the objectivity of the researcher (Dunnagan et al., 1997). Nevertheless, the need for valid program assessment remains. Dunnagan et al. suggests the combining of the methodologies allows the qualitative results to validate the quantitative results enabling the researchers to identify changes due to the intervention. In addition, the sensitivity and specificity of the evaluation are enhanced by the use of the qualitative techniques in conjunction with quantitative techniques. Odom et al. (2005) state, "The history and tradition of special education research, when employing multiple methodologies, has resulted in the identification of effective practice" (p. 138).

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) formally define the class of research where the research methods, quantitative and qualitative, are combined or mixed in approach, language, concepts, and techniques into one study as mixed methods research. They feel that it is highly creative and expansive and does not limit the researcher. It allows a certain amount of eclecticism in following the research question. Patten (2002) suggests the more complex the question the more likely a mixed methodology will provide the better answer. Many researchers remain hesitant to incorporate qualitative methodologies in their research studies largely because of the popular belief that qualitative methods do not produce valuable evidence (Caspi & Burleson, 2005). However, some of the issues under study simply do not lend themselves to a quantitative tradition. For example, medical research is most often quantitative in nature. Investigations in alternative medicine therapies, such as the efficacy of

meditation as a therapeutic intervention, have been extremely difficult to quantify because of lack of control and the individualistic nature of the practice. Although few would dispute the benefit of meditation, they would disdain the standard of research for lack of placebo for control and question internal and external validity. Caspi and Burleson argue that a mixed methodological design will produce scientific answers of treatment safety, efficiency, and effectiveness.

There are two avenues of mixed methods research according Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004). There is the mixing of quantitative and qualitative approaches across and within the stages of the study referred to as mixed model. Mixed method is using quantitative phases and qualitative phases throughout the study. They believe that either combination can lend greater strength to a study and produce more knowledge to inform theory or practice and, therefore, increase the generalizability of the results. More insights and greater understanding of the issues comes from the stronger evidence provided by the corroboration of the two methodologies. As numbers can make narratives or word pictures more precise, so too can narratives and word pictures add depth and urgency to the numbers. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie acknowledge that mixed methods research has some weaknesses but those are, for the most part, external. For example, the researcher, who must be facile in both methodologies, may find it difficult to use both methods concurrently. Obviously, using two methods would add expense and time to a project. These weaknesses seem negligible compared to the potential for knowledge. The combination of methodologies will allow the contextual depth of word descriptions to balance the generalizability of the numbers into a comprehensive study meeting the needs of all stakeholders, not just the

budget minders (Dereshiwsky & Packard, 1992) or the doctoral candidates.

Olson (1995) begs for openness in epistemological viewpoints to allow users of research to have the fullest of opportunities for the pursuit of knowledge without having to declare allegiance to a specific methodology. Shadish (1995) suggests that it is an intellectually lazy way out to reduce the methodological opponents to stereotypical paradigms while Onwuegbuzie (2000) asks why researchers cannot get along. Quantitative approaches are one-sided; they show only one side of the picture. Dereshiwsky and Packard (1992) believe the thorough evaluation researcher will want a more comprehensive assessment that demonstrates balance with its validity and reliability. They recommend an inclusion of qualitative procedures. It is time to put forth the best effort for epistemological ecumenicalism. Researchers in the field have been combing methodologies for years even though they did not publish their results as such (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Onwuegbuzie, 2000).

Methodologies are simply a researcher's tools and one picks the best tools for the specific job. The diversity of people in all respects make the number-crunching of quantitative unthinkable as the only methodology to be used to explain the condition of special education teachers. Randomization is not easy in the world of special education where the question of ethics lends importance to every single story. If ideas and procedures are the two sides of a coin (LeCompte, Millroy, & Preissle, 1992), it follows that research is the coin with quantitative and qualitative representing the two sides. The coin has more value when the two sides are together. Just as when eating meat, both a knife and a fork are used. One or the other could be used alone, but the eating would not be as efficient and possibly not as enjoyable. Quantitative and qualitative

methodologies have emerged from their history of controversy to be combined. This combination provides greater power to researchers seeking answers to human problems. It may well be the best way to determine how we may recruit and retain the best teachers for students with EBD.

Summary

A chronic special education teacher shortage does not serve the nation's students with disabilities. The federal government has entered the arena to combat this problem with the passage of NCLB and IDEIA. It has done little, if anything, to help the situation, particularly for students with EBD. This review explored the literature discussing teacher preparation within the context of teacher shortages, teacher quality, and teacher needs. Although most authors agree on the problems, there are considerable differing opinions about solutions. We need more teachers. How we might find them is central to the debate between traditional teacher preparation and alternative certification. How good these teachers are is central to the discussion of quality. Whether traditional or alternative, the route to teaching must be provided with quality. What quality programming includes may be a point of agreement; however, the implementation of that program once more becomes the topic of debate. That debate leads us to the problem of teacher retention.

Teacher preparation programs, particularly those who specialize in EBD, have much to do to overcome the problems of teacher shortages, teacher quality, and teacher retention. The response must be governed in view of the changing demographics of the nation. Teachers must look like and teach to the diverse faces that present the current population. Teachers must have what they need to not only do their

job but also feel good enough about it to stay. Students with EBD must have better outcomes than they currently suffer. The best way to make that happen will continue to be the subject of much controversy and conflicting research. Nevertheless, it must be done.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

This chapter presents the purpose, research questions, selection of participants, data collection procedures, instrumentation, and data analysis procedures.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine if the completion of a NCATE/CEC approved masters program specializing in emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) from a well-known university increased the confidence in knowledge and skills of special educators, the numbers of special educators, and/or the retention of special educators working with students with EBD.

Research Questions

Three research questions guided this study:

1. What are the personal and demographic characteristics of graduates from the selected masters program specializing in teaching students with EBD who stay in the field of EBD?

2. What are the personal and demographic characteristics of graduates from the selected masters program specializing in teaching students with EBD who do not stay in the field of EBD?

3. What are the differences, if any, between the personal and demographic characteristics of graduates from the selected masters program specializing in teaching students with EBD who stay in the field of EBD and those who do not.

Selection of Participants

The participants in this study were graduates from the selected masters program

in special education specializing in teaching students with EBD. The names and addresses for 199 students who had completed the master's degree in special education who specialized in emotional/behavioral disorders from 1985 to 2005 were accessed from the university databases. Letters and/or emails were sent to each program graduate to invite them to participate in an online survey (See Appendices A & B). In all cases, anonymity was ensured. No names or other identifying information were used in data analysis or data presentation. Graduates participating in the survey were asked if they would be willing to be interviewed. If so, they provided contact information. Interviewees were informed of their rights prior to all interviews (Appendix C).

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection for this research took three forms: (a) the database review; (b) the online questionnaire where participants indicated their selected answers from a field by clicking on the corresponding button and submitting their answers electronically; and (c) interviews conducted with respondents selected from those who indicated a willingness to be interviewed. The database review provided the names and contact information for 199 graduates. 87 responses were counted by the online survey service. Upon further investigation, six of the response codes were duplicates. Eighty-one data sets were counted for a response rate of 40.7%. Two response sets were incomplete because the respondents exited the survey prior to full completion. Portions of those data sets were able to be used in analysis. Of the 81 responders, 54 were willing to be interviewed as indicated by the submission of their contact information. All data were compiled and subjected to both quantitative and qualitative analysis as appropriate to the nature of the responses.

Instrumentation

The database review identified the preparatory information including names with contact information, graduation dates, and Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores. Each contact was assigned a code which was used for the online survey to maintain anonymity. The on-line survey instrument used for the study was adapted from the instrumentation from the 1999 Teacher Education Follow-Up Study (Zelazek, Williams, McAdams, & Palmer, 1999) and the EBD Teacher Stressors Questionnaire (EBD-TSQ) developed by Center and Callaway (1999). Alterations from Zelazek et al. were to limit data to those pertinent to the research questions and to make the instrument more specific to graduates of the program being studied. Feedback from a pilot study suggested clarification of employment positions, the addition of a certification type, and clarifying directions and responses to the EBD-TSQ. The survey was formulated and data compiled through an online service, *Survey Monkey.* The service provided both a summary of all responses as well as a spreadsheet with responses in numerical form. Finally, questions for the interviews explored characteristics of graduates of the masters program, their satisfaction with the program, and their affinity for the field of teaching students with EBD (Appendix D). During the interviews, it became important to clarify whether the graduate had been a full-time or a part-time student. Full-time students participated in a number of different assignments for field experience. The part-time students had intensive internships during the summer. Conversations were recorded and transcribed (Appendix E).

Data Analysis Procedures

The database and the survey provided the data to function in a quantitative

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analysis. However, the data collected provided an unexpected opportunity for the researcher. They told a compelling story with a rich emotional component for qualitative analysis. However, the data did not lend themselves to the quantitative analysis and thus pose a limitation to the generalizability of this study. It is the qualitative analysis that provides the characteristics of a program whose graduates stay in the field regardless of previous experience, certification, age, gender, GRE scores, and etc. It is here that we need to base further research.

Quantitative analysis

The online survey service provided the organization and summarization of the data collected as to the personal and demographic characteristics of the graduates from the selected masters program specializing in teaching students with EBD. The data were presented in two forms: (a) tables with frequency distributions and percentages describing the personal and demographic characteristics of graduates of the program for use in qualitative analysis, and (b) Excel spreadsheets in actual values as well as in numerical values easily transferrable to an *SPSS* data file for computer statistical analysis. The individuals were then divided into two groups on the basis of those who stayed in the field of EBD and those who did not, a categorical dichotomy to answer research questions one and two. However, the numbers of individuals graduated from the program who left the field were fewer than what was expected based on current literature (Billingsley et al., 2006). Descriptive statistics were used to describe the basic features or profiles of both the graduates who continued in the field and those who left.

Chi-square was used to investigate whether distributions of the categorical variables or characteristics of graduates who stayed in the field (stayers) differ from

those who did not (leavers) and to allow for replication and testing for combined

statistical significance (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 1996). Other analyses were t-tests for the

variables presented as percentages. All analyses were conducted in order to determine

if there were factors to be identified that are central to the question of who leaves and

who stays.

Qualitative analysis

The study of life experiences of individuals from the perspective of the

individuals' interpretations and understanding of their environment, life history research,

is a frequently used approach for studying teacher development (Gall et al., 1996). The

five structured interviews each lasted approximately one hour. Responders were asked

the same open-ended questions (Appendix D). Responses were recorded and

transcribed (Appendix E). The data collected from the interviews were examined and

response themes categorized for interpretational analysis. Recordings were destroyed

at the completion of the study.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

The present study was conducted to examine the characteristics of the graduates

of the specified masters program who stayed in the field of special education teaching

or providing services to students with emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD) as

opposed to those who left. A survey invitation was sent to 199 persons who graduated

from the masters program between 1985 and 2005. The invitations were personalized in

hopes of increasing response rate (Pearson & Levine, 2003). Valid responses were

received from 81 graduates with two data sets partially completed. A total of $n= 81$

responses to the survey were received which provided approximately 40.7% response

rate. This percentage is considered average among email surveys where there is a

tendency for recipients to hit the delete without ever opening the email (Sheeham,

2001). However, one data set had to be eliminated upon examination as the respondent

had not answered enough of the survey for an accurate representation leaving a total of

$n = 80$ or approximately 40.2% response rate. Another data set had the majority of the

survey completed before the respondent exited; therefore, the last portion of the survey

has a total of $n = 79$ or approximately 39.7% response rate.

Thirteen dependent variables were selected from the data collected to compare

what was deemed to be the most important characteristics of teachers of students with

EBD. These variables and the independent variable are defined as:

Independent   In/Out   Stayers or leavers in the field of teaching or giving
                                 services to students with EBD

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<u>Dependent</u>

Categorical	Gender	Male and female
	Age	Nine age range categories
	Ethnicity	13 categories of ethnicity
	Teacher Preparation	Five categories of teacher preparation programs
	BA Field	Eight categories of major subjects from the graduates' bachelors degrees
	Certification	Teachers entering the program were grouped whether they were certified or not certified
	Teacher Self Concept	Five categories of how competent teachers felt
Score	Years Since	The number of years since graduating from the program
	GRE	GRE Scores
	Academic Preparation	The perceived feelings of competence or incompetence graduates felt in core curriculum, special education issues, and learning theory: the higher the score, the greater the feeling of incompetence
	EBD-TSQ	A stress analysis – the higher the score, greater the stress
	MA Courses	Satisfaction with course work – the higher the score, greater the dissatisfaction
	MA Field Experience	Satisfaction with field experience or internship – the higher the score, greater the dissatisfaction

These dependent variables were subjected to the appropriate analysis in relation to the independent variable to determine which characteristics were significant to those graduates who stayed in the field, the first research question, and to those who left the

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field, the second research question.

Quantitative Analysis

The purpose of the quantitative analysis was to determine the personal and demographic characteristics of both the stayers and the leavers and the differences, if any, between the two groups. The researcher was expecting a larger number of leavers than what was found. While equal group size has long been preferred (Gall et al., 1996), it is not necessary (Schulz & Grimes, 2002). The difficulty with a population with considerable variance within and extreme inequality between group sizes is that it may cause unequal variance. Such unequal variance may cause the appearance that the two groups were from completely different populations despite coming from the same pool of graduates (Witta, 1996).

The organization and summarization of the data collected as to the personal and demographic characteristics of all of the graduates were gathered from the database review and is presented in tables with frequency distributions and percentages. The categorical response information selected for the dependent variables was cross-tabulated and is presented in the tables following.

Table 1 shows the breakdown of gender in response in terms of percentages and actual counts with cross-tabulation results of stayers and leavers.

Table 1

Gender Response Cross-Tabulation

	Percent	n	In	/	Out
Male	23.5%	18	17		1

Table 1 continues

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Table 1 continued

Female	76.5%	62	57	5
	Answered question	80		

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The distribution of ages is displayed in Table 2. The responses represent the
current ages of the graduates.

Table 2

Age Range Cross-Tabulation

_____

	n	In	/	Out
25 years or under	2	1		0
26 – 30 years old	13	7		0
31 – 35 years old	15	15		2
36 – 40 years old	21	22		0
41 – 45 years old	10	10		0
46 – 50 years old	13	13		2
51 – 55 years old	4	4		1
56 – 60 years old	2	1		1
61 years or older	1	1		0
Answered question	81			

_____

Table 3 represents the graduates' ethnicity distribution. As expected, the majority
of the graduates are white females.

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Table 3

Ethnicity Cross-Tabulation

_____

	Percent	n	In /	Out
Native American or Alaska (AS) Native	1.2%	1	1	0
Black or African-American (not Hispanic)	9.9%	8	7	0
Asian	2.5%	2	2	0
Hispanic or Latino	2.5%	2	2	0
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0	0	0
White/Caucasian (not Hispanic)	80.2%	65	59	6
Native American / Alaska Native & White	1.2%	1	1	0
Black or African-American & White	0.0%	0	0	0
Asian & White	0.0%	0	0	0
Hispanic & White	0.0%	0	0	0
Native American/Alaska Native & Black or African-American	2.5%	2	0	0
Asian & Black or African-American	0.0%	0	0	0
Hispanic & Black or African-American	0.0%	0	0	0
Answered question		81		

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The responses presented in Table 4 were somewhat surprising to this

researcher. The percentage of teachers from the traditional 4-year teacher preparation

was greater than expected. It is interesting to note that the leavers were all from the

traditional 4-year teacher preparation programs. Not one of the alternatively or

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emergency certified teachers left. Again the small group of teachers who left make this interesting but not significant.

Table 4

Initial Teacher Preparation Program Cross-Tabulation

_____

	Percent	*n*	In	/	Out
Traditional 4-year	66.2%	53	47		6
Alternative Certification (non-university)	16.3%	13	13		0
IMPACT	12.5%	10	10		0
Emergency Certification (no formal preparation)	5.0%	4	4		0
Answered question		80			

_____

The areas of concentration for the graduates' bachelor degrees were also varied. The number of categories was reduced by grouping similar specializations together into just seven categories (Table 5).

Table 5

BA Field Cross-Tabulation

_____

	Percent	*n*	In	/	Out
Special Education	17.5%	14	12		2
Education, Kinesiology, etc.	30.0%	24	23		1
Psychology, ABA	10.0%	8	8		0
Rehabilitation, Sociology Juvenile Justice	5.0%	4	3		1

Table 5 continues

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Table 5 continued

Math, Science, Music	10.0%	8	8	0
English, History, Foreign Language	15.0%	12	12	0
Business, Law, Service Industries	12.5%	10	8	2
Answered question	80			

The survey tabulated all the different types of certification held by the

respondents. The analysis, however, was based on a simple yes – no for certification.

Table 6

Certification Cross-Tabulation

	Percent	*n*	In / Out	
Non-Certified Personnel	15.0 %	12	11	1
Certified Teacher	85.0%	68	63	5
Answered question	80			

The last of the variables in the categorical analysis is the teacher self-concept.

This is a subjective opinion of the graduates as to how good of a teacher they felt they

were. The results are in Table 7.

Table 7

Teacher Self Concept Cross-Tabulation

	n	In / Out	
Exceptional Teacher	31	30	1
Above Average Teacher	35	30	5

Table 7 continued

Average Teacher			10	10	0
Below Average Teacher			1	1	0
Inferior Teacher			1	1	0
	Answered question	78			
	Skipped question	2			

_____

Chi-square analysis was run on the variable distributions (Table 8). None of the results were statistically significant. We were unable to determine any of the categorical variables as characteristic of the graduates who stayed in the field and, therefore, unable to answer the first research question. Nor could we answer the second research question as to the characteristics of those graduates who left the field. Thus, the answer to the third research question is: There are no differences in the areas of gender, age, ethnicity, BA field, teacher preparation, certification, or teacher self concept between the graduates who stayed in the field and those who left.

Table 8

Chi-Square Results

_____

Variable	*df*	Significant	*P*-value
Gender	1	no	.72
Age	8	no	.21
Ethnicity	6	no	.96
Teacher Preparation	3	no	.35

Table 8 continues

Table 8 continued

BA Field	6	no	.27
Certification	1	no	.91
Teacher Self Concept	5	no	.53

Once again, the difficulty with the small group of leavers in a small sample became apparent in the first analysis selected for the score data, an independent samples *t*-test. The *t*-test is used for testing differences between two means of two independent groups (Runyon, Colemen, & Pittenger, 2002). In comparing the stayers and leavers in regard to the years since graduating from the program, the analysis did not meet the Levine's Test for Equality of Variances. In checking for normality, the variable, *years since*, was so positively skewed and variances so unequal, it gave the appearance of two different populations. It was decided to conduct the Mann-Whitney *U* test, a non-parametric test to do a group comparison for the variable, in hopes of correcting the difficulty in variance. Even with correction, the results were not significant (Table 9*).*

Table 9

T-Test Results

Variable	Levine's Assumption	Significant	*P*-value
years since	not met	no	.35
years since corrected	not met	no	.35

Table 10 shows the variances of the data with In/Out, and EBD-TSQ variables

negatively skewed and years since, MA Courses, and MA Field Experience positively

skewed. The variances were so unequal that it appeared as if the data came from

statistically different populations.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics

_____

	N	Mean	SD	Variance	Skewness		Kurtosis	
						Std.		Std.
Variable	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Error	Statistic	Error
In/out	80	1.08	.27	.07	3.29	.27	9.04	.53
GRE	80	960.13	148.27	21983.53	.03	.27	- .29	.53
EBD-TSQ	80	52.64	14.45	208.72	- 1.15	.27	2.78	.53
Satisfaction	80	22.96	1.00	99.96	- .48	.27	.90	.53
MA Courses	79	1.65	.75	.57	1.07	.27	.88	.54
MA Field Experience	79	1.65	.80	.64	1.04	.27	.33	.54
Years Since	80	7.96	5.10	25.99	1.18	.27	.81	.53

_____

Looking at the raw data clarified the information. The group of leavers was too small in

an already small sample. The inequality between the groups created problems for the

analysis. Further, the characteristics were so varied among the graduates, it

confounded attempts to narrow the profiles of stayers and leavers. Nevertheless, the

quantitative analysis was continued.

The *t*-tests were run on the selected variables to compare the means of the two

groups. Although the one variable, years since, could not be corrected to meet Levine's

Assumption of Variance, the other variables submitted themselves to the analyses

without the difficulty previously encountered. The analyses, however, produced mixed

results (Table 11).

Table 11

T-Test Results

Variable	Levine's Assumption	Significant	*P*-value
GRE	met	no	.38
Academic Preparation	met	no	.09
EBD-TSQ	met	no	.16
MA Course	met	yes	.02
MA Field Experience	met	no	.65

The significant findings for MA Courses were somewhat puzzling. It indicated that the

leavers rated their course work very highly. It would seem to be suspicious that those

graduates who had left the field would rate their course work so highly. However, this

finding was also affirmed in the qualitative analyses. In order to determine the

magnitude of treatment effect of this finding, the Cohen's *d* (Cohen, 1988) and effect

size were calculated for MA Courses as well as the other variables despite the lack of

significance using the means and the standard deviations formula. The rationale was

that a large effect size would indicate a need for more study (Table 12). The effect

sizes, at best, were on the small side of medium. Nevertheless, these values may

increase with an increased sample size through combination of follow-up studies of

other graduate programs.

Table 12

Effect Size Results

_____

Variable	Effect Size	Cohen's Standard
MA Courses	.43	medium
MA Field Experience	.11	small
EBD-TSQ	.25	small
Academic Preparation	.41	medium
GRE	.22	small

_____

With regard to the third research question, we can say that graduates who left

the field rate the program course work significantly higher than those who stay.

This finding would seem to have little impact on the body of knowledge.

Qualitative Analysis

Grounded theory is a research method that lends itself to educational issues

where data is systematically gathered and analyzed to develop a theory (Myers, 1997).

In the study, five interviews were conducted. As these data were collected, the

researcher noticed patterns emerging and began the process of coding repeated

characteristics. The interviews were structured and all participants were asked the same

questions in almost the same way. As a result, themes became evident: (a) little

teaching experience, (b) motivation, (c) ambition, (d) significance of field experience, (e)

networks, and (f) commitment.

Little Teaching Experience

Initially, the interviewees were asked to describe the level of teaching experience

upon entering the graduate program. All five respondents entered the program quite early in their teaching careers. The longest tenure was three years, and two of the respondents came directly from undergraduate with only student teaching and substitute teaching in their repertoire. The survey data also supported a characteristic of new or recent to teaching with 16.3% of the respondents coming directly from undergraduate studies and 27.6% coming from outside education or unemployment. A combined total of 43.9% of the respondents were new to teaching while 50% of the respondents entering the program came with teaching experience. Both stayers and leavers entered the program with the same characteristic of little experience in teaching indicating that there is no difference in the teaching experience of those who stay in the field and those who leave.

Motivation

The question of what motivated the respondents to enter the program was very interesting. Three of the respondents felt drawn to working with the EBD population while two were drawn primarily by the funding for tuition. The survey respondents also indicated the 43% felt the call while 22.8% were attracted to the funding. In examining the 13 respondents who had noted other reasons for entering the program, four would fall into the category of being called and one was attracted by the funding. The adjusted rates would be 49.4% were called to the field while those motivated by funding were 24%.

It is also important to note that 12.7% felt they were not adequately prepared for their teaching assignment. It would seem to this researcher that those teachers could have just as easily transferred out of the position. They, instead, pursued the program to

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learn their craft. One interviewee felt "called to work with this population (EBD)"; another "became so fascinated with…EBD." It must be pointed out that the call or fascination is a great deal easier to answer with funding available. One may infer that, without the funding, the call may not have been answered at all.

Ambition

When the interviewees were asked what they hoped to gain from the program, they each hesitated before answering. The obvious answer was a master's degree but there was much more emotion in the answers after some consideration. Reducing the data from this question finally produced a key characteristic of graduates from the program. They are ambitious. They wanted to "further my career" or "make a difference." These women were on a mission for themselves as well as their students. In each case, there was a search for information, a desire for knowledge that would impact students. However, embedded in the thoughts of wanting to help students was a drive to further a career.

The questions that covered the impact of the program on attitudes toward teaching and career aspirations also reflect ambition. For attitudes on teaching, the interviewees indicated that the program enabled them to be better teachers or, as one interviewee said, "to recognize a really good teacher," and, therefore, to love teaching. Even the respondent who had left the field felt strong emotion for how the program had grown the potential and the desire for a career of teaching. She said, "I loved it!" All agreed that the program furthered their careers while clarifying their ambitions. As one interviewee said, "… that program made teaching be what I always wanted it to be." Each interviewee noted that the masters enabled her to go where she wanted to be

whether it was in the classroom, in administration, in a district, or in higher education

Significance of Field Experience

The most important aspects and the most meaningful or significant experiences of the program were definitely the field experiences. All interviewees talked about the field experience or the internship as the most significant contributor to the respondents' feelings of competence. That was corroborated in the survey data with 53.2% of the respondents indicating that the field experience was very significant in contributing to success as a teacher. An additional 31.6% indicated it was significant. Some of the interviewees spoke of placements that were "most beneficial,", "fabulous," "priceless" or "perfect." They agreed the experiences were just what they needed.

The program's course work was also indicated as very significant to success by 49.4% of the respondents. Of particular interest is the very significant rating of the coursework from those who left the field. Indeed, it was the only comparison that resulted in statistical significance in the quantitative portion of this study.

How the program helped the respondents work with culturally and/or linguistically diverse (CLD) students was not as great a concern to the respondents as opposed to working with students with EBD. In the survey, 69.6% of the respondents rated the program excellent for preparing teachers for students with EBD, while 49.4% rate the program good for preparing teachers for students with CLD. While the interviewees did not remember issues of CLD being emphasized in the program, it is important to remember that the interviewees graduated from the program prior to the response to the increasing number of immigrants to the public school system.

Networks

A benefit of the program highlighted in the interviewees' responses was the development of networks. This aspect was not covered in the survey. It was included in various responses to different questions. The importance of forming a network of support and having a forum to develop ideas and strategies was frequently cited as a major factor in the feelings of competence. As one interviewee said, "It gave me the opportunity to get feedback on my ideas and strategies." Another said, "…there was no question that was too stupid to ask." The professors and the other students became a resource for the respondents. Many have maintained relationships with professors and doctoral students who taught classes and supervised field experiences as well as fellow graduates. Having the opportunity to develop these supportive relationships was considered vital to their success and longevity in the field. In the words of one interviewee, "And I cannot tell you what great benefit that was because we didn't have to be afraid to bring up anything …we didn't have to feel stupid about asking something we didn't understand because it would not get out anywhere!" The recommendations for others to enter the program also were categorized with networking.

Commitment

The questions about the first year of teaching and specific difficulties encountered led to stories of situations that could have caused a teacher to leave the field. Yet, it was those situations that prompted the respondents to look for avenues to improve and eventually enter the graduate program where they found the answers for their need and difficulties. One interviewee said, "I knew what I wanted to do" and another stated, "I always want to be with the kids." The flavor of strong character,

ambition, and a sense of adventure was interwoven in the words of the interviewees. All these women gave evidence of strength and endurance in the face of adversity.

Four of the five interviewees are committed to a career in special education and to serving students with EBD. The one interviewee who left the field maintained that there was a possibility of her return to the field. Her reasons for leaving were tied to family commitments although the situation was somewhat vague. She left the field shortly after getting married. She found that she could not handle the emotional commitments of working with students with EBD then going home to the emotional commitments of a husband. There was an impression that the stress was more on the personal side than the professional side. Also mentioned were the financial aspects, or lack thereof, in an educational career. The interviewee who had left the field left the researcher with an impression of intense material need. It would seem that if money matters, the commitment is not to teaching.

Summary

Three research questions were addressed. The personal and demographic characteristics of graduates from the selected masters program specializing in teaching students of EBD were extremely varied regardless of whether they stayed in the field or left. There was no significant characteristic that would define or predict who would stay or who would leave the field. The purpose of the study was accomplished in that the completion of a NCATE/CEC approved masters program specializing in EBD from a well-known university does increase the confidence of knowledge and skills, the numbers, and/or the retention of special education teachers working students with EBD. People from very different backgrounds, with varied demographics, academic or

professional experience, were able to succeed in teaching students with EBD through this program. The characteristics demonstrated by these teachers that helped them successfully complete the program were motivation, ambition, and commitment. The fact that they were inexperienced did not impact them negatively in the pursuit of a career in special education. The most important aspects of the program that helped these teachers in their drive to succeed were the excellence of the field experiences and the opportunities to network.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

The research questions that guided this study have been answered in Chapter

IV. The quantitative portion of the study may not have found statistical significance in

determining the personal and demographic characteristics of those graduates who stay

in the field and not much for those who left. It does address the purpose of the study:

the completion of a NCATE/CEC approved masters program specializing in emotional

and behavioral disorders (EBD) from a well-known university increases the confidence

of knowledge and skill, the numbers, and/or the retention of special education teachers

working with students with EBD. Also, quantitative analysis may be used to help instruct

and limit the qualitative analysis in the development of the theory. The data gathered in

the online survey provided a rich background for the face-to-face interviews. The

examination of that data provided a framework upon which to build the answers to the

research questions. As often is the case in qualitative research, these answers beg

more questions.

Findings

The quantitative portion of this study, indicated by the lack of statistical

significance, found great variance in the personal and demographic characteristics of

the graduates of the program who stayed in field as well as those who left. Investigation

of each of the selected variables pointed to a variety of backgrounds and situations.

Examination of the demographic information of the two groups did not render a

profile for either the stayers or the leavers. It was interesting to compare the findings to

those of Billingsley et al. (2006). For example, 17 out of 74 of the graduates who stayed

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or 23% are male (Table 5) which approached the findings of Billingsley et al. The majority of the graduates were female (78%). Gender was not a significant factor between the groups. Billingsley et al. found the mean age (42.31) of teachers of students with EBD to be younger than other special educators. This study found the mean age range to be between 36 and 40 years. However, youth did not seem to be significant factor in who left the field. In fact, older age was indicated in the cross tabulation as being more likely a factor for leaving the field although it was not statistically significant. Billingsley et al. found a greater proportion of African-American teachers in the EBD sample (15.1%) than in the other special educator sample (10.8%). This study's proportion of teachers of African-American ancestry combined to be only 12.4% but all stayed in the field. Hispanic graduates of the program proportioned to 2.5% as opposed to Billingsley et al.'s 4.45 %. The proportion of teachers of Asian descent was 2.5% which matched the 2.32% in Billingsley et al. Race did not appear as a factor as to who stayed or left.

This study also collected data on marital status and numbers of children living in the home. Sixty point five percent of the respondents were single or divorced and 69.1% had no children when they entered the program. Those factors point to the youth of those who would teach students with EBD.

Teacher quality indicators are certification and advanced degrees (Billingsley et al., 2006). This study found that 85% of those entering the graduate program were already certified with 66% coming from a traditional 4-year teacher preparation program. Although traditional 4-year programs may be preferred over alternative certification programs (Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002), they do not prepare teachers for teaching

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students with EBD (Billingsley et al.). An interesting finding in this study was that teacher preparation had no significance as to who stayed or who left the field. It must also be noted of the 34% of the respondents who completed the program with alternative or emergency certification, not one left the field. The undergraduate degrees of the respondents were varied. The greatest proportion (30%) came from regular education with special education next at 18%. A variety of non-educational degrees were the background of the rest of the respondents. Interestingly, the educational background was a not significant factor for stayers or leavers. The survey results and the interviews of this study indicated that respondents rated the field experience (63.5%), support received from professors (55.7%), and course work (53.2%) were very strong in overall quality.

The effort to measure which of the teachers was highly qualified in their positions before and after the program was confounding to the effort to keep the data collection instrument concise. A subjective question was used in keeping with the Zelazek et al. (1999) study which asked respondents to rate themselves. It was interesting that in all 16 categories, the mean of respondents indicated they were adequate in core curriculum areas; strong in multicultural perspectives, learning theories, child development, and assessment/evaluation of students; and, finally, very strong in special education historical and philosophical development, contemporary special education issues, classroom management techniques, and legal/ethical responsibilities of special education teachers. Feelings of competency are not the same as an endorsement or certification. Those feelings, however, could easily influence a confidence in taking the state test for that certification or endorsement. It is remarkable that academic

competence rating, although not significant to stayers and leavers, was higher for those who left the field.

Another result was the fact that GRE scores, a gatekeeper for most graduate programs, was not significant to those who stayed or left the field. Considering the range of scores was from 640 to 1280, it was worthy of note that the mean GRE of stayers was 955 and the mean of leavers was 1011. Perhaps other means than high GRE scores should be used to determine who may enter graduate school.

It seemed that teachers who graduated from the program were quite satisfied with their teaching positions. Data were expected to show more dissatisfaction but that was not the case. Despite the importance of job stress in removing teachers of EBD students from the field, the data showed no statistical significance in separating those who stayed in the field from those who left. Considering that a neutral score would be 68 with higher scores indicating greater stress, one might expect to see higher scores for those graduates who had left the field. However, the mean score of those who left (61) was only nine points higher than those who stayed (52). Not only were both scores on the satisfied side of neutral, but there was not the disparity that might have been expected. Teachers who graduated from the program seem to manage their stress well. Furthermore, the interview with the graduate who had left the field indicated that the greater stressors were experienced from the personal life rather than the teaching role.

Implications

The findings of the study imply that successful teachers of students with EBD who graduated from the program have a variety of characteristics. So too, the graduates of the program who have left the field have a variety of characteristic not distinguishable

from those of the graduates who stay. What may be considered confounding is that so few of the graduates of this program have left the field. It would certainly indicate that this program more than adequately prepares its graduates for a lifelong commitment to the role and responsibilities of teaching students with EBD. The field experiences and the collegial support from the program were major contributors to feelings of competence of the interviewees. The implication is the quality of preparation of teachers of students with EBD is the greatest factor in the retention of those teachers.

Recommendations

The potential for further study is considerable. First, additional studies of other programs could be combined with this study. Using combined data may provide the two groups with a larger group of leavers, thereby resolving the problems of assumptions of variance. With larger samples, we may be able to discern some telling characteristics between the stayers and the leavers.

Another potential is within the comparison of the field experiences. In both the survey and the interviews, the quality of the field experiences appeared to be a major contributor to individuals' perceived competence. We know from literature how important field experience is in preparing teachers who stay (Gut et al., 2003; Lovingfoss et al., 2001). We need to insure that more if not all programs provide the kind of field experiences that truly prepare teachers for the realities and the practicalities of teaching students with EBD.

An area that was discovered in the interviews, the forum for discussion and/or the network support, must be further explored. It appeared to be a significant advantage for the interviewees. Are the university-based support systems an area that should be

extended? Could these needs be met through school district mentorship programs or are the aspects of these relationships unique to the university system? There are many questions to ask as to why this camaraderie was so compelling for the participants. For example, is the issue of anonymity a substantial factor in being able to ask for assistance with a troubling issue?

Even more compelling would be a comparison between groups. The question is whether other programs produce teachers who stay in the field at rates of 93%? Given the literature stating the shortage of teachers, we must study the programs that are producing teachers who stay in the field. The best programs will prepare graduates to not only stay, but also succeed and excel. These are the teachers who will make a difference in the lives of students with EBD and their families. Therefore, we need to examine these programs and replicate them. Then we will solve the dilemma of the shortage of teachers for students with EBD.

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT FOR SURVEY

My name is Paulette Walter and I am a graduate student in the Technology and Cognition Department for Special Education at the University of North Texas. I am conducting an online study that examines the effects of graduating from the UNT Masters program in Emotional/Behavioral Disorders (EBD) on teacher feelings of competence, satisfaction, stress, and intention to remain in the classroom or within the field of education. The purpose of the study is to determine if the completion of an approved masters program specializing in emotional and behavioral disorders from UNT will have increased the competencies, the numbers, or the retention of special education teachers working with students with EBD. It is significant in that it may justify increased Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) grant awards to develop similar masters programs to help reduce the teacher shortage by virtue of increasing teacher retention.

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked complete a survey that will take approximately 15 - 20 minutes to complete. Participation in this study may not have any immediate direct benefit to you; however, it will contribute information needed by policymakers to understand factors responsible for career decisions made by teachers of students with E/BD. Your responses may help provide information necessary to develop effective retention policies and practices and inform pre-service and in-service trainers of issues that need to be addressed in an effort to improve teacher quality. Those participants who do complete the survey will be eligible for a drawing for a $50.00 PayPal Gift Certificate.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. There are no foreseeable risks involved in this study; however, if you decide to withdraw your participation you may do so at any time by simply leaving the web site.

Your name will not be used in this study so your responses will be anonymous. All research records will be kept confidential by the Principal Investigator. No individual responses will be disclosed to anyone because all data will be reported on a group basis. If you have any questions about the study, please contact Paulette Walter at (972) 762-6265 or Dr. L. M. Bullock, Department of Technology and Cognition at (940) 565-2937.

This research project has been reviewed and approved by the UNT Institutional Review Board. Please contact the UNT IRB at 940-565-3940 with any questions regarding your rights as a research subject.

By clicking below, you are confirming that you are at least 18 years old and you are giving your informed consent to participate in this study. Your invitation code is XXXX. Enter your invitation code and then proceed with the survey.

Click Here To Enter Study

APPENDIX B

ONLINE SURVEY

A Follow-Up Study of a Masters Program for

Teachers of Students with Emotional/Behavioral Disorders

Please read each statement and select your response for each item.

1. I am _____male   _____female

2. Age range which _best_ describes yourself.

        _____ 25 years or under
        _____ 26 to 30 years old
        _____ 31 to 35 years old
        _____ 36 to 40 years old
        _____ 41 to 45 years old
        _____ 46 to 50 years old
        _____ 51 to 55 years old
        _____ 56 to 60 years old
        _____ 61 years or older

3. How would you _best_ describe your ethnicity?

        _____Native American or Alaska Native
        _____Black or African-American
        _____Asian
        _____Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
        _____Hispanic or Latino
        _____White or Caucasian (not of Hispanic origin)
        _____Native American or Alaska Native AND White
        _____Black or African-American AND White
        _____Asian AND White
        _____Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander AND White
        _____Hispanic or Latino AND White

4. What was your marital status prior to entry in to the graduate program?

        _____single
        _____married
        _____divorced
        _____widowed

5. How many minor children lived with you prior to entry in the graduate program?

_____

6. What is your current marital status?

_____single
_____married
_____divorced
_____widowed

7. How many minor children currently live with you?

_____

8. What was your salary prior to entry in the graduate program?

_____Less than $20K
_____$20K - $25K
_____$26K - $30K
_____$31K - $35K
_____$35K - $40K
_____$41K - $45K
_____Greater than $45K

9. What is your current salary?

_____Less than $20K
_____$20K - $25K
_____$26K - $30K
_____$31K - $35K
_____$35K - $40K
_____$41K - $45K
_____$46K - $50K
_____Greater than $50K

10. Which _best_ describes your initial teacher preparation program:

_____Traditional 4-year teacher preparation
_____Alternative certification program (not university based)
_____IMPACT
_____Emergency certification (no formal teacher preparation)
_____Other. Please explain_____

11. What year did you receive your initial teacher certification?   _____

12. What certification(s) did you hold prior to entry in the graduate program?

_____Elementary
　　　_____Elementary Self-Contained (Grades 1-8)
　　　_____Generalist: EC-4
　　　_____Pedagogy & Professional Responsibilities
　　　_____ Bilingual Generalist: EC- 4
　　　_____ Bilingual Education Supplemental: EC-4
　　　_____ English as a Second Language Generalist: EC-4

_____Special Education
　　　_____Generic Special Education (Grades PK-12)
　　　_____Special Education: EC-12
　　　_____Special Education Supplemental
　　　_____Deaf and Hard of Hearing
　　　_____Braille
　　　_____Visually Impaired
　　　_____Gifted and Talented Supplemental
　　　_____Special Education Specialization
　　　　　　Please explain_____

_____Elementary/Secondary
　　　_____Generalist: 4-8
　　　_____ English Language Arts & Social Studies: 4-8
　　　_____ English Language Arts & Mathematics: 4-8
　　　_____ Science: 4-8
　　　_____Mathematics/Science: 4-8
　　　_____ Bilingual Generalist: 4-8
　　　_____ Bilingual Generalist
　　　_____ English as a Second
　　　_____Mathematics/Science: 4-8
　　　_____ Bilingual Generalist: 4-8
　　　_____ Bilingual Generalist Supplemental: 4-8
　　　_____Gifted & Talented Supplemental: 4-8
　　　_____Technology Applications: EC-12
　　　_____Art: EC-12
　　　_____Art: (All-level)
　　　_____Music: EC-12
　　　_____Theatre: EC-12
　　　_____Health: EC-12
　　　_____Pedagogy & Professional Responsibilities: EC-12
　　　_____Physical Education: EC-12
　　　_____Master Mathematics Teacher

_____Master Reading Teacher
_____Master Science Teacher
_____Master Technology Teacher

_____Elementary/Secondary

_____ English Language Arts & Reading: 8-12
_____ Social Studies: 8-12
_____ History: 8-12
_____ Mathematics: 8-12
_____ Science: 8-12
_____ Life Science: 8-12
_____ Physical Science: 8-12
_____ Chemistry: 8-12
_____ Physics/Mathematics: 8-12
_____ Mathematics/Physical Science/Engineering: 8-12
_____Technology Applications: 8-12
_____Computer Science 8-12
_____Human Development & Family Studies: 8-12
_____Hospitality, Nutrition, and Food Sciences: 8-12
_____Dance: 8-12
_____Pedagogy & Professional Responsibilities: 8-12
_____Pedagogy & Professional Responsibilities for Trade & Industrial Ed.: 8-12
_____Speech: 8-12
_____Technology Education: 6-12
_____Family & Consumer Sciences, Composite: 6-12
_____Agricultural Science & Technology: 6-12
_____Business Education: 6-12
_____ Art (Secondary)
_____French: 6-12
_____German: 6-12
_____Latin:6 -12
_____Spanish: 6-12

_____ Administration/Assessment/Related Services Certification
_____Superintendent
_____ Principal
_____ Reading Specialist
_____School Counselor
_____ School Librarian
_____ Educational Diagnostician

13. What certification(s) do you currently hold?

_____Elementary
      _____Elementary Self-Contained (Grades 1-8)
      _____Generalist: EC-4
      _____Pedagogy & Professional Responsibilities
      _____ Bilingual Generalist: EC- 4
      _____ Bilingual Education Supplemental: EC-4
      _____ English as a Second Language Generalist: EC-4

_____Special Education
      _____Generic Special Education (Grades PK-12)
      _____Special Education: EC-12
      _____Special Education Supplemental
      _____Deaf and Hard of Hearing
      _____Braille
      _____Visually Impaired
      _____Gifted and Talented Supplemental
      _____Special Education Specialization
             Please explain_____

_____Elementary/Secondary
      _____Generalist: 4-8
      _____ Engl",ish Language Arts & Social Studies: 4-8
      _____ English Language Arts & Mathematics: 4-8
      _____ Science: 4-8
      _____Mathematics/Science: 4-8
      _____ Bilingual Generalist: 4-8
      _____ Bilingual Generalist
      _____ English as a Second
      _____Mathematics/Science: 4-8
      _____ Bilingual Generalist: 4-8
      _____ Bilingual Generalist Supplemental: 4-8
      _____Gifted & Talented Supplemental: 4-8
      _____Technology Applications: EC-12
      _____Art: EC-12
      _____Art: (All-level)
      _____Music: EC-12
      _____Theatre: EC-12
      _____Health: EC-12
      _____Pedagogy & Professional Responsibilities: EC-12
      _____Physical Education: EC-12
      _____Master Mathematics Teacher
      _____Master Reading Teacher
      _____Master Science Teacher

_____Master Technology Teacher

_____Elementary/Secondary

_____ English Language Arts & Reading: 8-12
_____ Social Studies: 8-12
_____ History: 8-12
_____ Mathematics: 8-12
_____ Science: 8-12
_____ Life Science: 8-12
_____ Physical Science: 8-12
_____ Chemistry: 8-12
_____ Physics/Mathematics: 8-12
_____ Mathematics/Physical Science/Engineering: 8-12
_____Technology Applications: 8-12
_____Computer Science 8-12
_____Human Development & Family Studies: 8-12
_____Hospitality, Nutrition, and Food Sciences: 8-12
_____Dance: 8-12
_____Pedagogy & Professional Responsibilities: 8-12
_____Pedagogy & Professional Responsibilities for Trade & Industrial Ed.: 8-12
_____Speech: 8-12
_____Technology Education: 6-12
_____Family & Consumer Sciences, Composite: 6-12
_____Agricultural Science & Technology: 6-12
_____Business Education: 6-12
_____ Art (Secondary)
_____French: 6-12
_____German: 6-12
_____Latin:6 -12
_____Spanish: 6-12

_____ Administration/Assessment/Related Services Certification
_____Superintendent
_____ Principal
_____ Reading Specialist
_____School Counselor
_____ School Librarian
_____ Educational Diagnostician

14. What was your position or employment prior to entry in graduate program?

_____Undergraduate Student
_____Employed outside of Education
_____Teacher

       _____Lead Teacher/Department Head
       _____Campus Administrator/Principal
       _____District Support Personnel
       _____Program Coordinator

15 What is your current position?

       _____Teacher
       _____Lead Teacher/Department Head
       _____Campus Administrator/Principal
       _____District Support Personnel
       _____Program Coordinator
       _____Program Administrator
       _____Special Education Director
       _____Consultant
       _____Doctoral Student
       _____Professor
       _____Other
       _____Employed outside of Education
        What year do you leave education?_____

16. Were you working with students with EBD prior to entry in the graduate program?
       _____No
       _____Yes. In what capacity?_____

17. Were you working with student with CLD prior to entry in the graduate program?
       _____No
       _____Yes. In what capacity?_____

18. Are you currently working with students with EBD?

       _____No
       _____Yes. In what capacity?_____

19. Are you currently working with students with CLD?

       _____No
       _____Yes. In what capacity?_____

20. Thinking back, which of the following best describes the principle reason you enrolled in the EBD Masters program?

        _____I did not feel adequately prepared for my teaching assignment.
        _____The program was funded and I would not have to pay tuition.
        _____I could not find a job in my field with my Bachelors degree.
        _____My school district required teachers to pursue a Masters degree.
        _____I felt called to teach students with EBD.
        _____Other. Please explain _____

21. Do you feel you are (were) a(n)

        _____Exceptional teacher
        _____Better than average teacher
        _____Average teacher
        _____Below average teacher
        _____Inferior teacher
        _____Other. Please explain _____

22. On a scale of one to five, how would you rate your academic background in each of the following areas?

Key--- 1 = very strong; 2 = strong; 3 = adequate; 4 = weak; 5 = very weak

        _____Mathematics
        _____Social studies
        _____American History
        _____Natural sciences
        _____Humanities
        _____Multi-cultural issues and perspectives
        _____Non-Western philosophies and cultures
        _____Special Education historical & philosophical development
        _____Contemporary special education issues
        _____Theories/principles of how students learn
        _____Child/adolescent growth and development
        _____Social and political roles of schools in America
        _____Classroom management techniques/procedures
        _____Legal and ethical responsibilities of special education teachers
        _____American Literature
        _____Assessment and evaluation of students

23. On a scale of one to five, how would you rate the overall quality of:

Key--- 1 = very weak; 2 = weak; 3 = adequate; 4 = strong; 5 = very strong

_____Your teacher certification program
_____Courses in your graduate program
_____Field experiences in your graduate program
_____Advice/support you received from field experience supervisors
_____Advice/support you received from your professors
_____Advice/support you received from the departmental adviser
_____Advice/support you received from your campus faculty
_____Advice/support you received from your campus principal
_____Advice/support you received from your assigned mentor

24. To what extent have your graduate classes (not including field experience) contributed to your success as a teacher? (Check one)

_____Very significant
_____Significant
_____Moderate
_____Insignificant
_____Very insignificant

25. To what extent have your field experiences contributed to your success as a teacher? (Check one)

_____Very significant
_____Significant
_____Moderate
_____Insignificant
_____Very insignificant

26. How would you rate your preparation to teach students with emotional/behavioral disorders (EBD)? (Check one)

_____Excellent
_____Good
_____Average
_____Weak
_____Poor

27. How would you rate your preparation to teach students from culturally or linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds? (Check one)

_____Excellent
_____Good
_____Average
_____Weak
_____Poor

28. Which BEST describes your plan for the next school year? (Check one)

_____I will be returning to the same special education classroom as last year.
_____I am transferring to a similar assignment in another school.
_____I am transferring to a different special education assignment.
　　　　Please describe_____
_____I am remaining in the field of EBD as a
　　　　_____PhD student
　　　　_____Professor
　　　　_____Consultant
　　　　_____Administrator
_____I am transferring to general education.
_____I am leaving the field of education.

29. On a scale of one to five, please indicate your level of satisfaction in your current position.

Key--- 1 = very satisfied; 2 = satisfied; 3 = neutral; 4 = dissatisfied; 5 = very dissatisfied

_____salary/fringe benefits
_____quality/level of administrative support
_____level of personal challenge
_____methods used to evaluate your teaching performance
_____your sense of professional autonomy/level is discretion
_____general work conditions
_____intellectual stimulation of the workplace
_____geographical location
_____opportunities for professional advancement
_____level of support from parents and the community
_____level of support from administrators and colleagues
_____interactions with colleagues/students

30. EBD-TSQ: Thinking about your time in the public school classroom, please describe your experience on a scale from **zero to three**,

Key--- 0 = Satisfied   1 = Neutral   2 = Dissatisfied

_____number of meetings I have to attend
_____amount of time I spend on paperwork
_____amount of administrative support for my program
_____amount of respect from general education teachers
_____amount of parent involvement
_____amount of parental support for discipline procedures
_____number of subjects I must teach
_____number/variety of disabilities my students present
_____demands for documentation
_____skill level of my paraprofessional
_____being responsible for legal requirements, e.g. confidentiality
_____school-wide discipline practices
_____being observed by administrators
_____amount of classroom space for my program
_____parental expectations for their child's school performance
_____parental goals for their child
_____motivation of my students
_____the use of my class as a detention room
_____having my schedule changed often
_____violent behavior by my students toward me
_____students who try to manipulate me
_____having to collect data on my students' behavior
_____students who are disrespectful toward me
_____parents who argue with me
_____having to supervise extracurricular activities
_____being in an isolated classroom
_____frequent turnover of students in my class
_____level of compassion in my students
_____coordination between agencies serving my students
_____the school politics involved in my job
_____good order in my class

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERVIEW

My name is Paulette Walter and I am a graduate student in the Technology and Cognition Department for Special Education at the University of North Texas. I am conducting interviews that examines the effects of graduating from the UNT Masters program in Emotional/Behavioral Disorders (EBD) on teacher feelings of competence, satisfaction, stress, and intention to remain in the classroom or within the field of education. The conversations will also explore teacher perception on quality of pre-service preparation and ongoing in-service training and their impact on career decisions.

Information obtained from the participants will be kept strictly confidential and used only for research purposes. Contact information will be securely stored and used only to disseminate information regarding interview meeting time and location. The interview meeting will last approximately one hour and discussions will be audio-taped to record all information exchanged. On completion of the interviews, the audiotapes will be transcribed to provide data (information) for analysis. Once the data has been analyzed all audiotapes will be destroyed.

No identifying information will be attached to the responses. You have the right to skip answering any question you choose not to answer during the interview. There are no foreseeable risks involved in this study; however, if you decide to withdraw your participation you may do so at any time by simply exiting the venue of the interview. If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Paulette Walter at telephone number (972) 762-6265 or the faculty advisor, Dr. Lyndal M. Bullock, UNT Department of Cognition and Technology (Special Education), at telephone number (940) 565-2937.

This research study has been reviewed and approved by the UNT Institutional Review Board (IRB). The UNT IRB can be contacted at (940) 565-3940 with any questions regarding the rights of research subjects.

By participating in the interview, you are confirming that you understand your rights as a research participant and voluntarily consent to participate in this study. You understand that participation in this study is completely voluntary, and your refusal to participate or your decision to withdraw at any point during the interview will involve no penalty or loss of rights or benefits. The study personnel may choose to stop your participation at any time.

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEWING ROUTE

1. Describe your teaching experience level prior to entering the graduate program?

2. What motivated you to enter the masters program for EBD?

3. What did you hope to gain from completing the program?

4. What were the most important aspects of the program for you?

5. During the program, what experiences were the most meaningful or significant to you?

6. How did the program help you with working with students with EBD?

7. How did the program help you with working with students with CLD?

8. What impact, if any, did the program have on your attitude toward teaching?

9. What impact, if any, did the program have on your career aspirations?

10. Describe your first year of teaching.

11. Were there specific difficulties encountered in your first year of teaching?

12. Did the graduate program answer any of these needs or difficulties?

13. Will you stay in the classroom or in the field of special education? Why?

14. Would you recommend the graduate program?

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW

Interview I

DESCRIBE YOUR TEACHING EXPERIENCE LEVEL PRIOR TO ENTERING THE GRADUATE PROGRAM?

Answer: Yes. Before I entered the program, I taught, uh, High School Content Mastery, I taught, um, Life Skills Series and I taught kindergarten deaf-ed and, uh, half-day, in first through third grade deaf-ed, half-day, for a year and I had been teaching three years in a self-contained first through third grade room before I entered the program.

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO ENTER THE MASTERS PROGRAM FOR EBD?

Well, um, I knew that I wanted to, in the next two years, leave the classroom and go into administration. And then do a masters to get started doing that. And I ran into a mom of a child with autism at a, um, PECS conference in Fort Worth, and she told me about the money that was available for the program; and it was a good way for teachers, poor teachers like myself to get a masters degree with little, little money, and so that was a great motivation.

WHAT DID YOU HOPE TO GAIN FROM COMPLETING THE PROGRAM?

Well, I wanted to further my career and I also, after I finally chose a path, because my initial desire was to go with, uh there were different paths you could choose and one of them was autism and autism spectrum route and I originally wanted to do that but after I became so fascinated with, uh, um, EBD then, um, I had hoped to have my promotions and my career, um, center around children with emotional and behavioral disorders and especially after doing my internship at the Gainesville State School and that's something that I've always thought about returning to the state school type-setting or a setting, uh, with, oh, severe, more severe emotionally behaviored kiddos.

WHAT WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM FOR YOU?

Oh, oh the most important aspects were my social skills classes, um, those were, oh, worth their weight in gold. And they were so much, um, extensive and so many different types of skills programs and also, uh, I can't remember the exact course name. . .but it was, oooh, through the principal of an alternative campus in Dallas or Fort Worth or somewhere, a blonde haired lady that just opened our eyes to the fact that were other administrative positions out there that were not necessarily on a typical campus which was all we'd been exposed to at the time. And then another really great part of it for me were the, uh, field trips that we did with Dr. Fitzsimons, now Dr. Hughes, going to the prisons, going on death row and going down to the, uh. . . Oh, what was it called, it was a halfway house anyway or going over to the one over here in Justin or the one in Northwest ISD, I don't know the exact little town, but to see in that all these kids were

residing in all these different places and still needed to be educated and more than in just typical settings. And that was just passed to me, it was like an admin I'd not been in before. Uh, let's see, what else was really, really good . . .I think just the networking, the going to school with people that were in so many different fields and in so many different areas was just invaluable and being exposed to people who came not just from a special ed, the kind of narrow minded background like myself but there were people in all different fields. And, uh, I'm trying to think of what other stand out courses there were . . . Oh gosh Dr., er, oh what was her name. . . gee I don't even think . . . I think she is at TWU but anyway the assessment class and was, you know, . . . uh yes, Dr. Pemberton! And that was just phenomenal for us to uh get at least a base knowledge of testing and even as, you know, somebody who happens to be principal just to be able to better explain testing and scoring and that type of thing. And then there was also one more and then I'll hush. There was a Maymester class that we had that was, oh, it was off, three to eleven . . . it's been awhile you can tell since I went through. When you go to Maymester at night, I can almost see, it was this principal from somewhere on the other side of Fort Worth. He, uh his class gave us I guess a lot of background in each of these specific diagnoses in each of the criteria, or each of the categories, um also a lot of practical, real-life stuff as far as PT, OT, you left with a real understanding of what related services were and why some kids got one service and why some other kids didn't and things that were always kind of foggy or cloudy before; he really cleared it up during his crash course.

HOW DID THE PROGRAM HELP YOU WITH WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH EBD?

Again, the social skills course I think helped tremendously. And it helped us realize that a scenario you could set up and have a Mac through a player or recite things but it's just to honestly work on social skills that is was not a cute little lesson or a social story necessarily or a kind of scenario that you could set up and have a nice fair play or recite things but it's that on the spot all day long, constant social skills training at, at the time of each incident I think is something that really stuck with me. And also, uh, a couple of the courses that I took with Dr. Hughes - Dr. Fitzsimons and some of the required readings in there sort of stuck, a good foundation for understanding all the different types, and not all of them, but and a broader understanding of different types of emotional disturbances and different, different, different types of mental illness even, and also just for an understanding of gang culture, current local terms, and general rotten kidness, you know, for those kids who have kind of gone astray and are with drugs. So I think just in the exposure, being in the smaller town, I don't think we had that broader view of EBD and I think a one of the biggest things I think I left with was an ability, especially after my internship at the state school which I just wouldn't trade for a million dollars probably one of the best parts of the whole program was learning to separate the behavior from the child and I think you know that was probably one of the most critical things are I left with because before that when I taught first through third self-contained several times I had behavior kids in there and kids that even have come to this program (Challenge) and it is very, very hard to like them, not, not to love them because you just can't help but love them after you been with them for awhile but to truly like them,

sometimes it was very, very difficult for me as I was able to a to learn through a lot of things in in, in the class is to separate, you know, the behavior from the child and stuff when you can remember the child with these huge, tremendous differences.

HOW DID THE PROGRAM HELP YOU WITH WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH CLD?

Well, I can remember having to do some readings and having to get more culturally aware and . . . I don't know, I don't know that any class work really prepares you for that. I don't know that other than building relationships with people that are actually diverse, and I don't know that anything really teaches you to deal with that. And it's kind of, kind of like, to me, it's like reading a book on marriage and so you think you can know what marriage can be like but until you get in there and do the hard work to build a relationship, uh, you're not really prepared even if you think you are. And it is the same thing to me with some . . . you know, I can sit and listen to inservice about Hispanic families and about the culture and all these kind of things but until I build relationships with kids and parents who are from Hispanic families, I don't think I have a true appreciation or truly respect their beliefs and in, uh, perhaps they gave me some parameters, at least, and guidelines maybe some, some insights that we wouldn't have gleaned but again I think that it's just, it's just something you have to do with real experience or it's not the actual people.

WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, DID THE PROGRAM HAVE ON YOU ATTITUDE TOWARD TEACHING?

Hmm, now that's an interesting one. I think for me, especially going through my principal internship right now, I tend to think of things more from administrative viewpoint. I have never been a truly gifted teacher, teaching never really came naturally, I never was one of those like others that had, like a teachable moment, you know, could just feel when kids were ripe for all that good stuff. But I can recognize a really good teacher, and I can see, and appreciate, ha ha, really good teaching. And I think, again, it goes back to more of that compassion and understanding of loving kids despite their issues and I think as far as teaching it gave me the tools to look past the behavior, the things that were driving me insane and what I thought were the real issues and seeing that those are just an aside to the actual person themselves. I think it gave me more maybe more compassion as a teacher. I think that also gave me, um, a stronger conviction that I needed to be more consistent and they needed better parameters. I think that, um, I think that, you know, one day I might let kids get away with more than I would another day. And I think that program, I think the program really equipped me to, uh, realize that in teaching, I would actually get better results if I was the same person every single day, expecting the same things from them every single day, and requiring the same things every day; so possibly having some parameters, and having some boundaries and things of that nature.

WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, DID THE PROGRAM HAVE ON YOUR CAREER ASPIRATIONS?

It gave me my masters that I that are really was seeking. It also has given me a real leg up when I go for interviews and, because I consulted with a past principal when I asked her which route to choose. Which, I don't remember it seemed like there were four or seven, TBI, autism, different ones you could choose and I called her up and I said I don't know which way, my heart's telling me autism, I love dealing with them she's very wise and she said that's all well and good but she said you'll see that on each campus you may have two to three kids with autism and you're dozens and dozens with EBD and she said you got to go with EBD, hands-down, if you want to be marketable. And I have seen that in interviews and had that feedback as you know this really gives you a strong edge over other candidates, having this background with students with EBD. That's where most principals, at least that I have talked to feel the weakest is in dealing with the students who are so supremely challenging and also, and you know this from being here (at Challenge), we are seeing them just younger and younger. We've never seen this many kids just coming in and are being referred or people are already looking, trying to slap a label on them. so it's led to a lot of frustrated teachers, a lot of frustrated principles, and so that's been some really good feedback is it that experience and my internship too, even though it has been with regular kids, has been you know a real asset and a real boon to the interview process for having, you know, no administrative experience but to have that edge in dealing with behavior, you know.

DESCRIBE YOUR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING.

My first year of teaching was kind of weak. I graduated in December which is kind of a hard time to get a job and my degree was in deaf-ed and I loved sweet, little, adorable deaf children and that's I wanted to do with my life and the position that came open then was a man who was the transition specialist, what it used to be back, back then. As the CM teacher at Simon High School, I only had to have classes half a day and then I'd work down in the Life Skills room and help them because they could always use an extra pair of hands. Back then, this was the old days - this'll date me, the push was make sure these football players pass so they can play. So that's what I tell everybody I did, my first year of teaching was make all the big burly of all players pass their core subjects could make sure they stayed eligible to play football and other sports. That's what I did.

WERE THERE SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN YOUR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING?

There were! I came from a really small town, I grew up in a tiny little town, graduated in a class of 26. I had never gone to school with a black person in my life. It wasn't until college that I didn't, you know, was around people of other color, other you know, I just believed everybody was white, you know, like I was. So I would say 95% of my class was not and so it was a real culture shock and I also very young and they took me for a ride, they've really, really just used and abused me. It was just horrendous and I was totally ill-equipped. I had done my student teaching in a kindergarten with the deaf up at the state school in Tulsa, Oklahoma with the sweet deaf. So I was completely

unprepared and thought it would be a lovely idea that somebody in college had said oh when you get your first classroom, have the kids decorate one of your walls or one of the boards. Let the kids decorate it, it's called like a graffiti wall so the kids can feel like they're a part of it and you can make a connection. So I did, I put up black paper and I got this chalks in all these colors and there was this graffiti wall and things up there until the assistant principal came in and told me what they all stood for, what they were short for, an abbreviation for, I had no idea what I was standing in front of a classroom and teaching in front of every day, day in and day out. So it was a real learning curve, there really was, I was very, very naïve, very young thrown in with a crowd of people that I wish I already had my masters EBD before I met those hooligans! I don't know that may have even been the start of where I, you know, became fascinated with kids with autism, kids with emotional disorders, you know the kids. I've always been partial to the underdog to kids that were not quite expected, you know, to pass, the kids at the bottom. Maybe that's actually how it happened, I don't know.

DID THE GRADUATE PROGRAM ANSWER ANY OF THESE NEEDS OR DIFFICULTIES?

 Yes! I wished I had been better armed, better equipped when I took out on my journey and, needless to say, I didn't stay there. And as soon as the deaf-ed place came in the very next year I was gone like greased lightning. But there were many things and, with the courses that I did mention earlier that stood out, I certainly don't mean to minimize, you know, the other courses that I had, other readings that we did that opened our eyes to things we had never even heard of. So many things I think I could've understood other people better and I think I don't know which question it was, and I think I may have misled you some on the dealing with other culture is similar because the one thing that the program did to you and not so much for cultural diversity but for socioeconomic diversity. I think we got great exposure to learning about kids who have lower incomes, the added pressures that they have, they added challenges they face, and being sensitive to little things that perhaps, like going through the free, reduced lunch line every day and everybody knowing they needed free and reduced lunch and how that may lead to some of the behaviors you see. And to behavior of the little students that you didn't even think of before as being related to, to poverty or, you know, to different socioeconomic class. And that probably actually tied in with, with different cultures and different, different backgrounds and so, in that respect, I think there was a lot of education I learned that I wished I'd had before I set out on my prep.

WILL YOU STAY IN THE CLASSROOM OR IN THE FIELD OF SPECIAL EDUCATION? WHY?

That is my true hope, uh, always. And I already know my someday when I grow up I want to be a neato director of special ed. Then that we always teased Dr. Hughes in class and wouldn't, you know, if she would just move on, we're waiting for her job - which we're teasing because she works way too hard, ha ha. But that is my sincere hope. I think once, especially if you're in special ed, once you fall in love with that population and they needle their way in, worm their way into your heart, you can't

forsake them. And I think I really developed a philosophy going through that program, that, you know, 90% of kids or whatever the little triangle was, 85-90% of kids are going to be fine regardless of the teacher they've got, regardless of the quality of education of teacher, whether highly qualified with, or what just through sheer osmosis those kids are to be fine, they're going to survive, they're going to be okay, so I don't have such a heart, I don't think, for the regular ed, mainstream kind of kiddo, it's the kid that does have all the additional challenges, all the obstacles in their way, and who hasn't had a fair shake, who have the hard luck stories, they have my heart. The last interview that went on, in a small town, they were talking again about the program and how well-equipped I was going to be for the type of students that they had and see every day. And while I was waiting to go in for the interview, a boy bolted, had run from class and was out the door. My first instinct was to jump up and we've got to keep this kid safe. But I looked down at my feet, my heels and I looked around to see what everybody does. But, uh, they took me in to my interview and they said, "OK, you had the chance to see some of our difficulties. What would you have done? What's the first reaction?" I credit the program and all the exposure I got, and all of the insight and all of the experience of listening to Dr. Coburn and Dr. Fitzsimons. You learn more from listening to real live stuff and especially anything that they've done and, in an end, may have been a mistake or something they had to learn from to me is just the most valuable thing they can offer us. To say, you know one time I was so dumb I tried this and, oh my gosh, you wouldn't believe how many of the things I did with kids with EBD was trial and error and some of it you try, and you know, that was a really bad idea so I kind of deserved what I got. . . I'm so far off the subject. . . And what was the question? I'm sorry! (It sounds like you are going to stay.) Yes, that's right! That's what we were talking about! That is my hope. As an assistant principal, that is a lot of, like or not, they can call it what they want, that's a lot of your responsibilities that I've seen is dealing with the students and their behavior, the tardies, and the sped referrals, and the this and that. And again, that calls upon our population, so yeah. . . that's my heart's desire.

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THE GRADUATE PROGRAM?

I would and have many, many, many times. Stick everybody in it! Absolutely! I mean I it was invaluable, it was meaningful, and it wasn't . . . I never took a course that I thought – this was a waste of my hours like I did in my undergraduate work. I never had a course that way. You may have courses that you may not like the prof as much or maybe didn't you appreciate the assignments as much, or I had an online class where I thought Dr. Bullock must have lost his mind. We had so much work, it's ungodly! And in a class like we get your point! But we're not the main cause of this insanity. There were these course things that we critiqued each, each time at the end of the semester, we would let them know what they could improve on, let them know what we think. But there was so much, I remember Dr. Rademacher and. . . I cannot tell you how much I learned and how amazingly invaluable it was. And like I said, it wasn't so drawn out, you didn't feel like, you didn't get so many additional hours or they were just trying to load you up with hours or dragging out any further than what you needed. You got what you needed, you know, you got everything you needed and you left fully equipped to face, you know, whatever you might come across. And again I'm, I know the internship is only a small part in at the very end, but I'm telling you it was one of the most valuable

portions of it. You know, I was into it like everybody else, I had to put my kids in daycare. It was a significant sacrifice for our family with three kids and all that. But it was so important for me to see the whole and be immersed in . . . predominantly with EBD and just see all the different things that encompassed from the sexual predators, to, you know, just the petty acts, the kids who could groom you before you'd even realized you've been groomed, you know, and just the brilliance of some of them, you know, just the diverse backgrounds, again the different, cultural experiences that I got to, to be around. . . But anyway, I thought it was just a tremendous program. I have referred and referred to several, several people. I've made some great friends through the program, friends and I still have, built some relationships in, you know, networking that I think will, will carry me through the years, you know, through my educational career .

WERE YOU IN THE PROGRAM FULL TIME OR PART TIME

Part time.

SO YOU WORKED FULL TIME WHILE YOU WERE IN THE PROGRAM?

Yeah! I started in, Oh gosh, I think I finished Dr. Bullock's program in 19 months, I think. I just whizzed through just as fast as they would, you know, let us do it. Um, heavy, heavy summers, heavy summers! Some days you never got out of the pajamas - kind of summers, um, never fed your kids! Fix yourself something; I've got to do this online stuff! But yeah, I did, I think I started in January and then graduated in August of the next year. Yeah, it was 19, 20 months. So yeah, I did the summer internship.

Interview II

DESCRIBE YOUR TEACHING EXPERIENCE LEVEL PRIOR TO ENTERING THE GRADUATE PROGRAM?

I came straight from my undergrad so had no teaching experience other than my students teaching of the time: Elementary students with autism and 2nd grade gifted.

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO ENTER THE MASTERS PROGRAM FOR EBD?

I like the fact that EBD students, uh it still encompassed autism at that time, that was the big draw. The study of autism had just started being weeded out of the EBD program and I knew that Dr. Bullock would let me … would approve my studies on autism.

WHAT DID YOU HOPE TO GAIN FROM COMPLETING THE PROGRAM?

Well, obviously, a degree, huh, that was, you know, the strong point of the program. Basically, I walk out with a Masters degree, uh, and the experience. I knew that there is a great intern program and a great experience for students from this program.

WHAT WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM FOR YOU?

Oh the internship, I really liked the internship! And, um, with the camaraderie with the people within the program as well as the professors.

DURING THE PROGRAM, WHAT EXPERIENCES WERE THE MOST MEANINGFUL OR SIGNIFICANT TO YOU?

Then I go back to the internship. I did my internship uh one of them was in Irving with an elementary class of kids with autism but I ended up with . . .they reassigned the teacher in the middle of the year and I took over the class. So that was a great timing, the right place at the right time. And my other internship was a summer program at Cumberland Children's Home and we set up a summer program.

HOW DID THE PROGRAM HELP YOU WITH WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH EBD?

I didn't ever work directly for students with EBD but my building in Irving has some, uh two or three classes for students with EBD and, um, I guess it helped me to have a better understanding of expectations for those kiddos, um cause I was a brand new teacher and had never, um had pretty much only been up on autism and having the experience from the program gave me a little more hands-on as well as just, you know, a cognitive idea of expectations from these kids.

HOW DID THE PROGRAM HELP YOU WITH WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH CLD?

I don't know that it wouldn't made much of a difference. I don't remember much about a class on cultural and linguistical differences in the program. I don't really think I took a class in the program. Probably did. Haha!

WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, DID THE PROGRAM HAVE ON YOU ATTITUDE TOWARD TEACHING?

Oh I think it was a huge boost I, I wasn't ready to go in the classroom even though I know my entire life I wanted to be a special ed teacher I just didn't have the confidence and um, I decided a couple of more years of education under my belt and that the staff was behind me and that internship made all the difference in the world as far as being able to just step into the classroom and, and do the job which I really wasn't sure what exactly I wanted to do. I knew I wanted to teach; I knew I wanted to do special ed. and somewhere in there autism came into play and so this kind of got me right where I wanted to be and placed me literally in the classroom.

WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, DID THE PROGRAM HAVE ON YOUR CAREER ASPIRATIONS?

Well, they, they kept telling me: Why don't you get the Ph.D., why don't you get the Ph.D.? which I was out to do and then I took statistics, which I'm taking this semester. But I definitely think it set me up for the potential to get my PhD even though I let it lay low for about 10 years. Um, I knew I wanted to go back to UNT because I had such a great start there. So it kind of laid the groundwork for my academic career, and for my teaching career, I don't know that it got me working with children autism, I think that would be the main track and how I ended up on that track.

DESCRIBE YOUR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING.

My first year of teaching, I had six children with autism and a teaching assistant who had been in the classroom for a good ten years, who could have been my mother. I fit in perfectly with her kids, I was like the one in the gap of time where she should have a kid but she didn't. So she took me and as her own so I really had a struggle with making the class for my own and that it is the only program for kids with autism in the district, the only classroom. The teacher who'd been there was very strong and everybody knew her. She went to a private place to work with another student who needed more individual attention. So that first year was tough, it was real tough trying to figure out the legalities of education and personality, how do I handle this woman trying to mother me not letting me do what I know I'm supposed to be doing with these kids and how do I get her to follow my instructions and that was something I did pick up was dealing with the teaching assistant and I love her and we got along great. But I think it was almost a disservice because we got along too well as like as a mother-daughter team. But the kid part was real easy, it was natural. It felt very much like that's where I was supposed to end up. It was good first year!

WERE THERE SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN YOUR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING?

Uh?

I GUESS YOU HAVE ALREADY ANSWERED THAT QUESTION.

Right, right!

DID THE GRADUATE PROGRAM ANSWER ANY OF THESE NEEDS OR DIFFICULTIES?

I think that there probably was, it's been a long time, I probably had some class on collaboration and working but, because I was a full-time student but I took that job in the middle of my last semester. I was able to go to my professors and say okay how do I calm this woman down a little bit, how do I get control of my classroom and they were able to, to help me with that. So I think that would be that the biggest way was having someone to go talk to. I was new in Dallas and there were people who had been there and done and set up the classrooms. And I think that helped tremendously having someone to talk to.

WILL YOU STAY IN THE CLASSROOM OR IN THE FIELD OF SPECIAL EDUCATION? WHY?

I plan to stay in the field of education, definitely. I am not sure in what capacity; I'm trying to figure that out right now. Um, I think I'm looking towards special ed administration, um, probably within the next couple of years. I'm looking at job changes next year trying to get me ready for that but I always want to be with the kids. And the closer I get to be to the kids the better, which is probably why I haven't stepped too far out of the classroom so far and still have lots and lots of hands-on with the kids. I taught summer school last summer and. . . whew! I said, "Who the hell stays in this?" I like having one kid at a time. I have been spoiled by this. So I don't think I would go back to the classroom at this point, but I will definitely stay in the field of special education whether it administration or are maybe even a professor at some point. We'll see what happens there.

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THE GRADUATE PROGRAM?

Definitely! I did. I recommended it to a lot of people. And I've run into people across DFW that were not in my program but a couple of years behind me or a couple of years before me. And I say, "Oh, you know Dr. Bullock?" Everybody knows Dr. Bullock. So, yeah, I have recommended it and continue to recommend the University's education program as a whole to people as recently as yesterday.

Interview III

DESCRIBE YOUR TEACHING EXPERIENCE LEVEL PRIOR TO ENTERING THE GRADUATE PROGRAM?

Prior to entering the graduate program I had taught in a substitute capacity both public and private schools and had done my student teaching at Skyline high school and that was all.

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO ENTER THE MASTERS PROGRAM FOR EBD?

I was unable to find a job teaching regular ed. I heard about the special ed program from my neighbor and decided to look into it. Then I decided to go ahead and give it a try; I didn't have a clue if I'd even like special ed.

WHAT DID YOU HOPE TO GAIN FROM COMPLETING THE PROGRAM?

After I got into the program, I realized that I had just fallen through cracks until I got where always supposed to be. Within two weeks of the first class that I took in this program, I was assigned to a special in locked psychiatric unit. Within a week, I was in love with the kids, I was in love with the program. I liked the idea of having diagnostic personnel right there on hand to where, not only did I get to teach academics, I also got to help with their emotional states and things that came up, if I wasn't equipped to answer them, there were people that I could ask their advice and they would tell me. And I really felt like I was making a difference, and that's what it all boiled down to for me. I wanted to make a difference and I realized this was the place that I could with these kids who were so hard to be with, and so hard to teach the regular ed teachers couldn't deal with them.

WHAT WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM FOR YOU?

There were several important aspects: the first one would be the internships that Dr. Bullock sent me on. They were absolutely priceless, they were perfect, every one that he sent me on, except the very last one, was highly beneficial. And I still draw on things to this day that I learned in those programs. Another thing was the professors. I had one professor, I was called him I am my main professor. I don't know if he really was or not; I imagine Dr. Bullock really was. But it was Dr. Callahan and Dr. Callahan I had for least one course every semester that I was there. One time I had him for three courses, ha ha ha. There was, with all of the professors, there was no question that was too stupid to ask, there was nothing that we would were not allowed to discuss and, in this is very important, it was always understood stated, verbally or not, whatever we discussed in the classroom stay in the classroom. And I cannot tell you what great benefit that was because we didn't have to be afraid to bring up anything we knew that we were all like sworn to secrecy it would get out anywhere, and we didn't have to feel stupid about asking something that we didn't understand because it would not get out anywhere! Um, so the things that were most important to me of this program: first would be the

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practicums that I went on, then would be the professors; and I think after that I would have to put all the peripheral things, we went to conferences, we had one course where we actually got to explore all the diagnostic tools and programs and games that diagnostician shoes when they evaluate students. And we went to every, or I, went to every meeting that I could. If it even got vaguely mentioned, I went to it. And a lot of times I just sat there and listened. ut I don't think there was even one that I did learn something from.

DURING THE PROGRAM, WHAT EXPERIENCES WERE THE MOST MEANINGFUL OR SIGNIFICANT TO YOU?

What experiences were the most . . . I'd have to say it was the internships, the placements that I went on, and the people that I met when I was there, both staff and students. I met students there that I would never have believed I would ever be in a capacity to come in contact with just by being a teacher. I mean I would have thought that I had to be a psychiatrist or psychologist or a nurse to get to know some of these kids that I did. And I like to think that being in this position has helped somebody, you know, I'd like to think that I did. I remember one time I had a particularly hard year, and my husband told me if I helped just one kid in one year, that I had done a good job. And I thought, "Whoa, that I really did because I helped more than one, I know I helped more than one." Um, I've forgotten the question . . . Well, that was it that was it! and then there are staff people unfortunately I don't have contacts with them anymore, they've all moved on. But for a long time after I left Baylor there were people that, you know, I stayed in contact with and that we talked professionally and, you know, privately which is wonderful so it have to be the people.

HOW DID THE PROGRAM HELP YOU WITH WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH EBD?

I think the main thing that the program taught me about these kind kids was that they're not any different from anybody else or just more. They're more, they talk more, they swear more, I think they feel more. They are absolutely just like everybody else and, as soon as I got that which you know was really pretty quick, than the rest of it just fell into place.

HOW DID THE PROGRAM HELP YOU WITH WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH CLD?

The cultural differences aren't hard for me. I'm real open the cultural differences. I really like to know about them and usually we can get into discussions about how what they believe in how they dress and what's important to them is different from what I believe and why and where they come from it's all very interesting because it's like that I don't think that that I have any problem getting across that it's fine to be different. I actually like things that are different . . . In the program we talked a little bit about those kind of differences. I think I got some of it from the program, most of it just kind a comes naturally to me. So I don't remember that be in a standout thing about the program so

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as far as the linguistic differences go, I don't speak another language fluently. I can understand a lot of Spanish but I can't speak it out loud back to people. And I haven't had much interaction with kids who were, who spoke a different language than what I do, so I don't know about that . . .

WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, DID THE PROGRAM HAVE ON YOU ATTITUDE TOWARD TEACHING?

Oh, you know, that program, that program made teaching be what I always wanted it to be. When I did my undergraduate teaching, and I found out that teachers don't make up their own lesson plans, I was completely destroyed. I just hated it that you had a canned package that you had to teach every year, you had to teach this, this six weeks and this this six weeks, and if you got behind, your department chair would come down on you. And it was like, why don't they just have a robot in here, you know, if that's all they want, somebody to deal out Shakespeare this six weeks, and you know, other people the next six weeks. It was horrible and I just couldn't stand it. I did it; I did my student teaching so I did it. But when I got into Dr. Bullock's program and learned about all the things, . . .the unwritten curriculum. Nobody talked about that until we got to Dr. Bullock's program; I'd never heard of that. You know it was a whole new world. All of a sudden I could really be the kind of teacher that I wanted to be when I was 13 and decided I wanted to be a teacher. It was like I can actually touch other parts of their lives that it had to stand up there and deal out by rote some kind of grammar lesson or something. I could deal to what they needed and still stay within the boundaries of what they are supposed to learn every year. It gave me so much more leeway. It just, it just made it be what I wanted teaching to be. It was like I fell through a crack into heaven. Ha, ha, ha!

WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, DID THE PROGRAM HAVE ON YOUR CAREER ASPIRATIONS?

It completely changed my career aspirations, completely changed them. I wanted to be a teacher, then I wanted to be a department chairperson, then I wanted to be a principal, then I even wanted to be like a supervisor principle not superintendent, but you know even higher up. And I wanted to be in charge of people and teach all these teachers how to teach. When I got into special ed., I realized I didn't want to be any of that. That's what I did when I worked in the business world. I didn't want to be the boss of adults anymore. I wanted to be in there with the kids every day. I wanted to talk to kids. I wanted to hear what they had to say. I wanted to see if I could give them some values that maybe they'd never heard before so at least they'd have the choice to pick. I wanted to make sure they had enough to eat if they were in my room. I wanted to, I just wanted to just . . . almost mother them, you know? I just wanted to make a difference in their lives. Before, it was what I wanted to do but I didn't know that that was what I wanted to do. I thought that I would have to be over teachers to be able to affect kids that way. Well, if I had gone ahead and done that, perhaps I would have affected kids at some point and maybe even a broader spectrum of kids than I do now. But I know now the ones that I see, I know I make a difference in them, in their lives. And I know that

they remember me and I remember them and that's what it's about. I guess I've made the aspirations bigger, but with a smaller number of kids.

DESCRIBE YOUR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING.

My first year teaching was scary. Ha, ha, ha! I was at the Baylor psychiatric unit, it was a locked psychiatric unit in downtown Dallas and we had the kids who literally had tried to commit suicide, or had tried to kill somebody, or had done something to get themselves in that kind of a locked 24/7 under watch environment. And I was there from like seven to four every day and we had classes that lasted 45 minutes to an hour. I had the history classes to teach, of all things, not the English. And I had four classes to teach in the morning, then we had lunch. Then in the afternoons we went to, oh, I don't remember what they called them, but they were staff briefings and the doctors came and the physical therapist, and the . . . therapist and everybody else all came. We sat around a great big conference table and everybody contributed so we could all get together on the same page for one kid. And then it would be another kid, and then it would be another kid all at this meeting. And if we weren't doing that, we were going out into the hospital and doing stuff for kids who were not in our program. That was another good part. Sometimes we just went and read to them, you know, because they wouldn't see people. Some teachers at the hospital went to the Ronald McDonald Center and talked to parents and stuff like that. I didn't do that, I wanted to stay where the kids were. It was very different from anything that I had ever experienced and it was really neat to be involved with medical personnel and, like I said before, to get to know all the different aspects of the kids and all, all around. It was also neat to get the input thing.

WERE THERE SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN YOUR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING?

The only specific difficulties that I remember was that sense of not knowing for sure exactly what to do or say when something new came up. Um, it would be the same sort of difficulties you would have in the first year of any job. Um, I don't remember it being a big deal because there were four other teachers there and a principal and whatever I didn't know how to do, I'd ask and they just told us. So no, I don't remember other than new job jitters. . .

DID THE GRADUATE PROGRAM ANSWER ANY OF THESE NEEDS OR DIFFICULTIES?

Oh, that was my first year teaching not my first year teaching after the graduate program? You see, my very first year of teaching was after the graduate program because I was not able to find a job before I went to the graduate program. So yeah, the graduate program really answered any questions that I would have had but I didn't know what they were. Ha, ha, ha! I didn't know what they were. The first year, let's see, it happened in the first year of teaching after I finished the graduate program, everything was so fresh in my mind from the graduate program. And I still had books and books of notes; I still had all my text books. And if I had a question that I didn't think they

answered adequately up there at Baylor, I went back to my notes and reread them. In fact, I reread my notes a lot, thinking back on it now. I really did because, after I got into the field, a lot of stuff that I had just written down because I knew it would make sense one day, did start to make sense so I went back to reread it so I could really get it. So yes, I would say the graduate program answered questions. Even today, it still answers questions.

WILL YOU STAY IN THE CLASSROOM OR IN THE FIELD OF SPECIAL EDUCATION? WHY?

I will absolutely stay in this program, in this field of special ed. The only thing if I were going to change anything, the only thing would be that I would go younger. I would go down to elementary but that is the only thing I would change. I'd cannot even imagine being a regular ed teacher in any subject. I just, I just don't think I could bear to be spread that thin.

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THE GRADUATE PROGRAM?

I recommend this graduate program every year to somebody. I am forever telling them about Dr. Bullock's program, every year I do. I even recommend it to people who live out of state.

WERE YOU IN THE PROGRAM FULL TIME OR PART TIME?

I was a full-time Masters student. It took me about 18 or 20 months to finish the program. And I always, I always felt like I went through it with Dr. Bullock's foot in my butt, ha, ha, ha. Because he, he seemed to make me take so many courses and do a full time practicum, but it turned out to be really good. I think I was maybe a little timid at first that it really pushed me past that. . . We're finished? Thank you very much I enjoyed this. . . I just cannot praise Dr. Bullock's program high enough, I can't. You know, if either one of my sons had any aspirations of being a teacher at all, I would have sent them there. I would have. There's so much turned into this, so much. And, you know, the first time you figure it out, and you go back and your start looking and it's like, wow, we covered that and, wow, we covered that too! It's amazing! And I'm not just saying that because it's an interview and you're here. I really and truly praise that program all over the place.

Interview IV

DESCRIBE YOUR TEACHING EXPERIENCE LEVEL PRIOR TO ENTERING THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

When I entered the graduate program, I was in a first time program. . . I worked as a crisis intervention teacher; I was a specialist. I worked in a classroom but I did not teach academics. I taught social skills to kids, kindergarten through 5th. That was where I was when I entered the masters program part time.

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO ENTER THE MASTERS PROGRAM FOR EBD?

When I was completing the bachelors program at Baylor, I ran across, uh, a child, and uh, she was a drug baby and she desperately needed help. Not that I was compelled emotionally but I was also trying to help her and after …I knew I needed more information to help her. I had limited success but I was also fed up with what was out there, I wanted to head out beyond . . . so that was the basic factor. So I did the research and found Dr. Bullock's program. Looked into it, and it was in Denton and my parents were there. And that's what I did!

WHAT DID YOU HOPE TO GAIN FROM COMPLETING THE PROGRAM?

I think that, uh, first, there was the sense of satisfaction of doing something on my own. You know, I paid for it. Um, I committed, I committed to something . . . and I was interested in the topic. What was the question again?

WHAT DID YOU HOPE TO GAIN FROM COMPLETING THE PROGRAM?

To be able to help the people who needed a different type of stuff, instruction. To work with people with challenging behavior that's what I was hoping to do.

WHAT WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM FOR YOU?

The masters program? The practicum was really the most beneficial. And Dr. Bullock did a really great job of placing me in the right environments. Because of the practicums, ah, that taught me more than anything else because I could see it through their eyes, and you have to, you know, learn to deal with it and some of it, well, it's not a perfect class! I had two different experiences in my masters program in south Oak Cliff and then up in Denton. So that's the most beneficial part. I loved the literature, I love the philosophies, and the different camps of thinking. . . Freud and Skinner . . . Young, I loved the stuff! And to think about who I most identified with in terms of my identity, which approach that I would use to address behavior issues.

DURING THE PROGRAM, WHAT EXPERIENCES WERE THE MOST MEANINGFUL OR SIGNIFICANT TO YOU?

Oh, the practicum! My practicum in Oak Cliff and a summer day camps for children in Denton, it was fabulous! We planned for their days and taught them life skills. I was one of the staff and I taught them cooking and the social graces and sometimes we had little programs and we invited the mayor of Denton. We'd go shopping and they had to budget for the shopping, it was fabulous I loved every minute of it. Hmmm! You know, it gave me a forum to discuss current issues with people, besides the professors, who were in the same classes, in the same courses. It gave me a place to discuss issues that were important to students with EBD. It gave me an opportunity to sharpen my writing skills, get feedback, uh, on my ideas.

HOW DID THE PROGRAM HELP YOU WITH WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH EBD?

It gave me the opportunity to get feedback on my ideas and strategies. It gave me the opportunity to present at the state level and the national level; oh that was probably more with my PhD. And, obviously, it familiarized me with assessments, and professional literature, the journals that were current and relevant in the field, and people who were making a difference in the field.

HOW DID THE PROGRAM HELP YOU WITH WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH CLD?

Uh? Oh no wait. . .no, I can't really comment on that. Cultural and linguistic differences? Is that the question? . . .Obviously they, um, just that you want to make accommodations and have increased sensitivity with other professionals working with these students, and in the school environment.

WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, DID THE PROGRAM HAVE ON YOU ATTITUDE TOWARD TEACHING?

I loved it! I think the impact, the impact on my self esteem and my ability to work with other professionals, parents, and, certainly, the students.

WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, DID THE PROGRAM HAVE ON YOUR CAREER ASPIRATIONS?

Hmm. It certainly had some financial impact. It changed the pay scale. I think because I became so interested in working with these types of students and that I was so impressed with Dr. Bullock and his program I felt like it was right for me to continue on and I was excited about that. I think at one time, I felt like I might want to be in an administrative type position. But I really felt that the greatest impact that I had was working with parents, conducting parent training, maybe a professor.

DESCRIBE YOUR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING.

I was very young. So I felt that it was important that I, I really knew what I was talking about in order to gain the respect of my peers, who had been teaching . . . years, seasoned teachers. I guess I felt insecure and at the same time, excited and energized by what I always felt I was called to do. The first students, I think, uh . . . the first year really was an exploratory time of my life to, to try to figure out how I could best work with these students within the system that they had set up with the school, what the school would or wouldn't allow me to do and how well the teachers were going to respond to my instruction, and/or advice. It was . . . a time to learn.

WERE THERE SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN YOUR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING?

Yes, there were seasoned teachers . . . who might not felt that what I was doing was a legitimate job since I wasn't teaching academics. Maybe they were too confused as to what my role and responsibilities were. I think I had some pretty direct questions from the principal of the school in terms of how I could take a classroom learning to social skills experience, that they would pay someone to set up an environment other than of the school, uh . . . I wanted to take them on field trips, I wanted service learning programs, take them to nursing homes and teach them to claim responsibility and ownership and, uh, be successful. I had to learn where my limits were to work within the system.

DID THE GRADUATE PROGRAM ANSWER ANY OF THESE NEEDS OR DIFFICULTIES?

Yes, the graduate program gave me quite a bit of support. A place where I could perform, where I could express my concerns, get creative . . . get feedback and creative solutions to some of the things I was encountering . . . certainly a place where I felt grounded in who I was and what I was trying to accomplish. So in was nice to touch base, you know, with people and learn several times a week as I attended class.

THIS IS THE QUESTION. I'LL READ IT. WILL YOU STAY IN THE CLASSROOM OR IN THE FIELD OF SPECIAL EDUCATION? WHY? YOU HAVE NOT STAYED SO WHY DID YOU LEAVE THE FIELD OF SPECIAL EDUCATION?

There were several things that caused me to make a move. I was at the very point you are right now, I . . . was in my last year doing my dissertation. I was even thinking about going into administration. I knew I had to do something totally different than what I had done for six years was work with people who had a lot of emotional needs, it was an intense commitment to bear and I had recently gotten married. And I was not interested in discussing situations when I got home because I had been dealing with situations all day. Then I decided that my first commitment was to my husband. I wanted to free up some of my emotional energy and I also wanted to have a family. I wanted flexibility in my schedule, the ability to work when I wanted to work and so I took an inventory of my other interests. Real estate had always been an interest of mine. So while I was finishing up my Ph.D., I was also working on my real estate license on the weekends.

So I went through the coursework with the thoughts that I could always return to the school system. But I was taking the opportunity to focus on my family, the goals we had as a family. It was a risk. My mother-in-law was in real estate and was doing well. So I had a natural way . . . into the business. I utilized that. I miss having an impact on people; I have a different impact on people now but I still I feel I use what I know . . . to work in advocacy, how to work with people, how to manage concepts, how to address issues. I do that, daily. I think I am more effective as . . . an entrepreneur and happier that way than I am as part of a system where I have to report to work and stay for a certain number of hours. There was more . . . there appeared to be more opportunity for financial freedom than in the school system where they cap you, even If I were an administrator. What you can make in real estate . . . you can determine by how often you work and how much you make the effort. Even at that time, I wasn't clarified about the money. I hadn't done it before. I can't say that was the big driving force; it was sort of the furthering of myself the better, the tying up of emotional resources was probably part of the things that fueled the decision.

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THE GRADUATE PROGRAM?

Absolutely! That it is one of the best in the country; that's what I found from my research. Dr. Bullock has, um, committed himself to this field, in getting people to work with these populations; he's passionate about it. And . . . he does a fantastic job of acquiring funds and making it accessible to people who are interested in obtaining an education. I think . . .some of the key things is the staff and some of the opportunities to get involved in professional organizations, where you can meet some of the key players and the people that in the text books. And I think he can estimate people and shows wisdom as to where to place them to see what their growth potential might be.

Interview V

DESCRIBE YOUR TEACHING EXPERIENCE LEVEL PRIOR TO ENTERING THE GRADUATE PROGRAM.

Well I had just completed my first year as an alternatively certified teacher in a small rural school district. When I reported to the campus, it was announced that I was going to be piloting their new inclusion program. So I was the inclusion teacher for two fifth grade classes. The special education students who had been in resource class would now be in these two regular education classes. So I was about as popular as the skunk.

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO ENTER THE MASTERS PROGRAM FOR EBD?

Well in that first year I knew that I was not prepared to work with some of these kids, even though I had been in a really quite excellent alternative certification program. It did not give me what I needed to work with some of the kids who needed more than just academics. These kids were unable to learn and it was not just a learning disability. Some of these kids had . . . um, real problems, horrible life situations. They had been abused or were being abused. They had mental health issues and nobody was dealing with that. I knew, I knew I knew there had to be some class or program that would help me. It turned out that I received a flyer through the alternative certification program for a summer program up at UNT for working with severe emotionally and behaviorally disturbed students, and I said to myself, "This is perfect!" Now I had taken a financial blow when I left my job to go into the alternative certification program. I didn't have any money to spare so I was particularly pleased that this program was federally funded and I would not have to pay tuition. That class began the process of opening my eyes to behavior. It was wonderful! At the end of it, I asked Dr. Bullock for more. He suggested I enter the masters program so I did.

WHAT DID YOU HOPE TO GAIN FROM COMPLETING THE PROGRAM?

Well I knew that I would be in a better position to work with all students that they seemed to be sending to me. I know it sounds trite but I really did feel called to work with this population. I also wanted to get in to a school district that was closer to my home. However, I knew that many of the school districts were leery to hire an alternatively certified teacher so I thought if they knew I was working on my masters, they would feel a little better about hiring me. Most of all I wanted to feel secure in teaching or in what I was doing for the kids that seemed to gravitate to my classroom. The administrator, who was a great first principal for me, seemed to think I was good at dealing with "behavior." So when a student came in from juvenile detention or the DAEP, he or she would come to my resource classroom where I would teach them along with my kids with learning disabilities. It was a little insane and I loved it.

WHAT WERE THE MOST IMORTANT ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM FOR YOU?

All of it, absolutely all of it. The coursework, the classes were fantastic it was just amazing to me. I'm really understood that behavior is not the child. The child is separate and behavior is how they communicate to you that something is going on. It is a way to communicate; behavior is a way to communicate anger, depression, hurts, sorrow, just all of it. I loved, I loved my classes with Dr. Callahan–he is a phenomenal professor. . The internship was fantastic. I learned so much. When Dr. Bullock told me I was going to Gainesville state school, I was horrified. By that time I was working an elementary school and the idea of working with those men was a little scary. But of course Dr. Bullock knows best. I had a wonderful experience. Dr. Bullock, Dr. Bullock always manages to put you exactly where you need to be. It was during that internship that I really came into my own as a teacher.

DURING THE PROGRAM, WHAT EXPERIENCES WERE THE MOST MEANINGFUL OR SIGNIFICANT TO YOU?

Again, just all of the experiences were incredibly meaningful and certainly significant. Um, the internship. The teacher decided to go on vacation because that I was okay to handle the students and that I would be the teacher while she was gone. That was pretty amazing! Learning about behavior, reading B.F. Skinner and Freud, although I do have a problem with Freud. An again, going back to the internship, I realized that a teacher could make a difference in the life of a troubled student. And I really wanted to be that teacher who would make the difference.

HOW DID THE PROGRAM HELP YOU WITH WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH EBD?

The program was amazing. It helped me to a separate the behavior from the student himself. I became familiar with the various strategies from life space to the engineered classroom. I was blown away by the research which seems to be completely ignored by most school districts. I began my love affair with best practice. I really became the behavior terrorist. Oh not to the kids, to the teachers who were screwing up. It was during my masters I was introduced to ABA via Skinner. I began using the ideas and, what do you know, they worked! I am amazed at how far Dr. Bullock took me in terms of professionalism and experience. Other teachers were coming to me, the alternatively certified teacher, for advice and help in dealing with their students. And I really did help them and I really had an impact on students' lives. The program also helped me in dealing with parents. I had a very tough experience with a parent in my first year at Plano. I had dropped out for a semester but that experience had me scurrying back to learn how to do it better. And I did. Now I am a champion for parents and it is one of my pet peeves when districts do not deal honestly and compassionately with parents.

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HOW DID THE PROGRAM HELP YOU WITH WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH CLD?

Hmm, it was towards the end of my program that I started getting into disproportionality of numbers of students of African-American descent in special education. Where I was, we had all manner of different cultures. Plus I worked with two principals who were African-American. It all came together for me and I was able to overcome some the cultural barriers in working with students and parents. The program gave me a heads up in dealing with this issue. It is another example of how the program enhanced my professionalism.

WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, DID THE PROGRAM HAVE ON YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARD TEACHING?

The program made me a better teacher. It is funny how much you can love doing something once you feel that you are good at it. It gave me the means to realize success. I knew that this was the field for me and I loved working with kids and families. I loved working with teachers, helping them hone their skills knowing that I was reaching a larger number of kids that way. When I was growing up, they used to say, "Those who can do, those who can't, teach!" Now I know that teaching is a talent that must be nurtured in the right way to develop, to become the master teacher making an impact on many, many students' lives. A really good teacher is worth his or her weight in gold and then some. It kills me when I overhear someone saying, "Oh I am just a teacher." Teachers are the most important people in our society. We wouldn't have and, and without the money, I am a teacher. Can you put that in bold?

WHAT IMPACT, IF ANY, DID THE PROGRAM HAVE ON YOUR CAREER ASPIRATIONS?

Story time! I had been in the program one year and was moving to another district. My favorite 'good ol' boy" principal told me I would end up in administration. I asked him why since I did not want to be a principal. He said, "That's what happens to all the really good teachers. When you really know how to manage a classroom, you end up managing a school." Naturally, I felt overwhelmed at the compliment but I did not want to end up in administration. But he was right. I ended up on the district level, a coordinator, a principal, but my love is training, teaching. I came to know that I have to be in the classroom. You can fill it with kids, parents, or teachers but I have got to be teaching. I hate personnel, I hate budgets. I can do it all but teaching puts the fire in the belly. And there is what I want to do. The program clarified my position on this issue and it put me in a position where I have a choice. It is very nice to have a choice and it is best practice. . .Ha, ha.

DESCRIBE YOUR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING.

Oh the terror! Like I mentioned earlier, I piloted the first inclusion program at a middle school. All the other teachers hated me. I was alternatively certified; they did not respect me. My first day of school, I spent in ARD meetings with a controlled crazed diagnostician. I was so scared. The AC program was good, but when they heard what position I got, they even felt sorry for me. But I made it through the year, passed the certification tests, and spent the summer with Dr. B. I was on my way.

WERE THERE SPECIFIC DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED IN YOUR FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING?

Besides all the other teachers hating me, sure. There were the students who were so outrageous in their behavior, who were abused, and so tragic. I was trying so hard to help them and I did. I accidentally used strategies that turned out to be sound. How much easier it would have been to have had the knowledge acquired through the program. How much better off he students would been if I had had the knowledge then.

DID THE GRADUATE PROGRAM ANSWER ANY OF THESE NEEDS OR DIFFICULTIES?

I think I just said so. I wish they would fund a program that all teachers would go through programs like Dr. Bullock's before they started teaching. Do I dream big?

WILL YOU SAY IN THE CLASSROOM OR IN THE FIELD OF SPECIAL EDUCATION?

I think I answered that one too. Yes, absolutely! I have to have a classroom or a stage. It is funny because I am really rather shy. I have trouble speaking in social situations with large numbers of people around. Put me in a classroom and I'm off to the races. I love to watch the eyes following me and the heads nodding. I love checking for understanding. I am in the field of special education especially in the area of EBD for life!

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THE GRADUATE PROGRAM?

Oh yes, you bet I have and will continue to do so. We need more programs like Dr. Bullock's. We need more Dr. Bullocks, people who are determined to pursue excellence for the benefit of our students.

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